

## 1/9/15 Academic Choice Advisory Council (ACAC) Meeting

January 9, 2015, 7:30-8:35 AM BHS Conference Room B

### Minutes

#### In Attendance:

Who	Role	E-mail address
Tim Zolezzi	AC Co-Chair and AC Lead History Teacher	timothyzolezzi@berkeley.net
Daniel Nube	AC Vice Principal	danielnube@berkeley.net
Finn Collom	ACAC Student Representative	finncollom@students.berkeley.net
Hannalina Kalonji	ACAC Student Representative	hannalinakalonji@students.berkeley.net
Cherene Fillingim-Selk	AC Parent	mscherene1@gmail.com
Margaret Norman	AC Parent	margaretnorman@sbcglobal.net
Rene Kvidahl	AC Parent	
Rakhi Rao	ACAC Treasurer	rakhiprao@gmail.com
Johanna Reneke	ACAC Parent Rep at Large	j.reneke@gmail.com
Donna Storey	ACAC Secretary	donnageorgestorey@gmail.com
Jeremy Thorner	ACAC Student Support Coordinator	jthorner@berkeley.edu

#### Public Comments

An AC Parent had questions about the AP requirement for juniors. Her son is sophomore, and next year his course progression requires that he take AP Spanish and BC Calculus. He loves history and wants to take AP US History, but since AC juniors are required to take AP Language and Composition next year, a course load of 4 AP classes will be too much. The parent asked why juniors will be forced to take a specific class rather than being able to choose the AP of their interest.

Vic Principal Nube replied that this was a timely question because the teachers and administration were backing off from the English requirement. AP English was the best choice for transfer skills, but the revised policy for next year would allow juniors to

choose which AP class or classes to take. If language or science were more to their interest, they could take that. Undecided students would be encouraged to take English.

Another AC parent related that her freshman son was enrolled in two classes, Advanced Biology and Spanish, where the teachers were on leave or left in the middle of the year. Particularly in Biology, the replacement teacher also quit, and this disrupted the progress of the class significantly. The parent was concerned that her son and the entire class would be at a disadvantage when taking the final, because they had not been taught the same material as other Advanced Biology classes.

Vice Principal Nube said this class had bad luck, but he and the lead science teacher put together an online curriculum so the students could cover the material. He acknowledged that this particular science class had some behavioral issues.

Jeremy Thorner asked if someone needed a teaching credential to teach at Berkeley High. VP Nube replied that you did or you could be in the process of getting a credential. Mr. Thorner offered to put a Cal student in touch with the school. VP Nube said VP Melgoza hires for science.

Rene Kvidahl and Johanna Reneke said that their children had had similar experiences with teachers who left in the middle of the year and that some students are missing an entire year of education. Ms. Kvidahl said that she tried to get help from the administration, but did not get support. VP Nube said that he is one of the administrators that gives parents the run-around because there is nothing that the administration can do.

Jeremy Thorner asked what the mechanism for recruiting when a teacher leaves. He asked if there was a stable of retired teachers to help. VP Nube said there was. Donna Storey suggested that the relationship between the community and the administrators would be more positive for both sides if the administrators treated parent concerns with more respect.

The AC parent added that the students have taken control of the Advanced Biology class and hoped the administration could provide parents with advice on how they might handle their students' disappointment in such a negative learning experience. Johanna Reneke asked if the school could divide the students among other classes and VP Nube said no, that would not be fair to the other classes.

### **ACAC Budget Priorities**

Donna Storey presented a handout (appended below) detailing the expenditures the ACAC has approved in the 2014-2015 school year so far. She is concerned that with the increase in expenditures to support the mandatory AP classes, the ACAC funds will be spent to the point that we will have no funds to pay for long-term programs such as AC graduation and sashes and readers for freshmen and sophomore research papers.

Jeremy Thorner asked why the school did not allot funds to support the new AP classes when they made this policy of mandatory enrollment. VP Nube said it was an AC decision and the principal had no input, so it was up to AC to fund the support programs.

Mr. Zolezzi suggested that we develop a pie chart of priorities for expenditures at the next meeting and acknowledged that the ACAC could not support some of the more expensive programs indefinitely.

**Action:** Spending priorities will be discussed further at the next meeting.

### **Treasurer's Report**

ACAC Treasurer Rahki Rao presented a Statement of Activities for Academic Choice as of January 8, 2015. Donations so far for the 2014-2015 school year have reached \$16,687.70. Ms. Rao reported that she had presented Ms. Green's request for a reimbursement for her laptop to the Berkeley High School Development Group. They eventually agreed to fund it, but decided to come up with their own list of priorities on how to fund projects and said laptops for individual teachers will not be funded in the future.

### **AC Student Representatives' Fundraising Activities and New Image for AC**

AC Student Representative Finn Collom reported that the AC Students Advisory Council discussed a rebranding of AC. AC doesn't have an identity; for example AC graduation sashes are plain white so many students choose to wear other sashes. The students were going to discuss adopting a new AC color and logo.

The students were also discussing a T-shirt design contest. Jeremy Thorner offered to donate the prize for the contest. Mr. Zolezzi suggested having the students vote on the designs. He suggested that the student representatives survey classes about what they want and focus efforts.

Hannalina Kalonji said that the AC Student Advisory Council has been holding bake sales as a fundraiser and they are using their own funds. They asked for \$200 as start-up capital for more fundraisers. The money would be paid back to the AC treasury from the profits of the bake sales.

**Action:** Vote on \$200 for bake sale purchases by the AC student representatives passed unanimously.

### **AC Teacher Survey Update**

Last year all AC students had the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey of their English and history teachers at the end of both fall and spring semesters. Mr. Zolezzi gave an update on the initiative.

Teacher participation is entirely voluntary due to union restrictions about surveys of teachers. Only the teacher saw the results of the surveys by her/his students. AC teachers did discuss the results in general in their planning meeting and were encouraged to consider the feedback and use it to improve their teaching. Several teachers approached Mr. Zolezzi to talk about some of the write-in comments on a confidential basis.

The survey will be conducted again in the 2014-2015 school year at the end of fall and spring semesters. No AC humanities teacher has objected to continuing the survey.

## Possible Revision of Freshman History Curriculum for 2015-2016

Mr. Zolezzi reported that the history department is considering revamping the freshman history curriculum. Next year the first semester of freshman history would be an Ethnic Studies/Social Living class while the second semester would be ancient cultures and world geography. This decision has not yet been finalized.

### Next ACAC Meeting

Friday, February 6, 2015, 7:30-8:35 a.m. in BHS Conference Room B in the D Building.

## 2014-2015 Expenditures Approved in AC Minutes

Date of Expense	Program Funded	Amount	Students Served
August 2014	AC fundraising letter	\$1797.44	All AC Students
October 8, 2014	AP essay graders	\$6000	AC Junior class
October 8, 2014	Jessie Luxford case management	\$10,000	15-30 freshmen and sophomores
November 7, 2014	Erica Gratton teaching assistant	\$5280	15-30 freshmen and sophomores
November 7, 2014	17 Africa puzzles	\$260	AC Freshman class
November 7, 2014	Anthropology simulation game	\$150	Anthropology classes
November 7, 2014	APUSH curriculum redesign	\$300	AP US History students
November 7, 2014	AP Environmental Science field trip	\$1060	AC AP Environmental Science students
December 5, 2014	Ms. Coppola for APUSH tutoring	\$1000 to \$2000	3 juniors, possibly more
<b>Potential Additional Expenses</b>			
June 2015	AC graduation sashes and picnic	\$8000	AC senior class

2014-2015	Contribution to AP Coordinator position	\$20,000	AC junior and senior classes
Spring 2015	Graders for research papers	\$8000 (in 2013-2014)	AC freshmen and sophomores

2014-2015 Balance with donations (\$73,060.41 + \$18,792.50) \$91,852.91

2014-2015 Total estimated expenses—\$62,847.44

2015-2016 Rollover--\$29,005.47