

11/4/16 Academic Choice Advisory Council (ACAC) Meeting
November 4, 2016, 7:30-8:35AM Berkeley High School Conference Rm. B

Minutes

In Attendance:

Who	Role	E-mail address
Amanda Marini	ACAC Co-Chair and AC Lead English Teacher	amandamarini@berkeley.net
Felicia Phillips	AC Vice Principal	feliciaphillips@berkeley.net
Mayou Roffe	AC Student Representative	mayouroffe@students.berkeley.net
Caroline Bettendorf	AC Parent	crbettendorf@gmail.com
Karen Chapman	AC Parent	kechapman@comcast.net
Ramona Coates	AC Parent	rcnuttebuddee@yahoo.com
Carmen Drake	AC Parent	carmen_drake@yahoo.com
Milan Drake		misterdrake44@gmail.com
Catherine Ference	ACAC Parent Rep at Large	candsfer@gmail.com
Shelley Horwitz	AC Parent	sahorwitz@comcast.net
Peter Kozelka	AC Parent	
Jodi Levin	AC Parent	jodi@sweetpickle.com
Susie Marcus	AC Parent	
Rani Marx	AC Parent	
Lisa Miller	AC Parent	lisa@classroommatters.com
Eunice Paredes	AC Parent	eunice068@gmail.com
Rakhi Rao	ACAC Treasurer	rakhiprao@gmail.com
Elisabeth Ross	AC Parent	e@elisabethross.com
Candy Rupp	AC Parent	candyrupp@aol.com

Bethany Schoenfeld	AC Parent	
Dobee Snowbar	AC Parent	dobeesnowbar@gmail.com
Christine Staples	AC Parent	christineannestaples@gmail.com
Donna Storey	ACAC Secretary	donnageorgestorey@gmail.com
Maren Van Duyn	AC Parent	maren.vanduyn@sbcglobal.com
Hugo Wildmann	AC Parent	HLWildmann@yahoo.com

Academic Choice Vice-Principal Felicia Phillips chaired this meeting. In lieu of public comments, the ACAC devoted that time to the discussion of student voice issues. At our December meeting, we will resume open public comments at the beginning of our meeting.

No student representative was present at the October 7 meeting, so the ACAC voted on three time-sensitive funding requests by email.

Email Vote: New Computer Cart and Completion of Older Carts of \$17,000

The AC teachers asked for approximately \$15,000 to buy mobile security carts and computers through the tech department, as outlined in the proposal submitted by Amanda Marini. This is an immediate need. (The proposal was later amended by email by Ms. Marini to include three carts and a remaining number of Chromebooks to have 35 on each cart for a total of \$17,000).

Christine Staples moved by email on October 7 that we approve \$15,000 (amended to \$17,000 on October 8). Catherine Ference seconded the motion.

Action: Eleven ayes, one abstention; the motion carried.

Email Vote: Field Trip for American Literature Classes to Berkeley Rep

Rosa Guzman and Matt Carton requested \$880 to take their American Literature classes to the matinee viewing of *It Can't Happen Here* at the Berkeley Rep on Wednesday, November 9.

Ms. Staples moved by email on October 7 that we approve the request. Ms. Ference seconded the motion.

Action: Eleven ayes, one abstention; the motion carried.

Email Vote: Field Trip for US History to *Birth of a Nation*

Angela Coppola asked for \$800 to take her AP US History classes to see *Birth of a Nation* at the California Theatre on Thursday October 20.

Ms. Ference moved by email on October 11 that we approve the request. Ms. Staples

seconded the motion.

Action: Eight ayes, two abstentions; the motion carried.

Vote: Creation of Budget and Finance Committee and Approval of 2016-2017 Budget

ACAC Treasurer Rakhi Rao presented the Academic Choice Statement of Activities as of November 4. Because we have not started our annual fundraising campaign yet, our donations for the year are at \$60. Reimbursed expenses include one item of \$215 and a payment of \$2725.31 for expenses for the class of 2016 graduation celebration.

Candy Rupp, the organizer of our new Budget and Finance Subcommittee, gave an overview of the purpose of this subcommittee. At our September meeting, she proposed that we shift the discussion at ACAC meetings about small funding requests to a budget and finance subcommittee. This small group (membership including teachers, VP, parents and student representatives outlined in Attachment #1 below) met on October 25 and developed a budget for the current school year. Members present were Alice Bynum (AC history teacher), Ms. Marini, Ms. Phillips, Rakhi Rao, Mayou Roffe, Ms. Rupp and Donna Storey.

The subcommittee felt it was important to spend the resources we have because parents donate money to benefit the students while they are here. The chief annual expenditures for AC are: the graduation celebration for seniors; the teacher retreat in August; hospitality for our small learning community meetings; field trips, because it was not a tradition for AC in the past and we want more opportunities for AC students; a pot of money for teacher support such as curriculum development and graders; and computer carts so AC students can complete writing assignments in class. The subcommittee also allocated \$2500 for AC-directed initiatives from the parent community.

The "Creation of Budget and Finance Committee for ACAC Review and Approval" memo (attachment #1) describes the process. A written funding proposal from our website is still required when making a request. This goes directly to the AC lead teachers and AC VP, who make a decision for funding requests up to \$2000 per project or per teacher. Proposals for larger amounts will come to the entire ACAC for a discussion and vote. The teachers and VP will make decisions on a weekly basis; the ACAC will receive monthly reports from them. At mid-year the ACAC can revisit and revise the budget depending on fundraising. A priority of the AC teachers would be another computer cart, if we have those additional funds.

At this meeting, Ms. Rupp was asking for a vote on the acceptance of the committee and acceptance of the budget (Attachment #2 below).

Jodi Levin asked what expenses were involved in the \$8500 for graduation. Elisabeth Ross, the parent coordinator for the graduation celebration last year, said most was spent on food and drink for 800 people as well as decorations, custodial fees, certificates and programs. Ms. Phillips said we didn't spend \$8500 last year, and Ms. Ross confirmed it was closer to \$5000, but this year we might explore making it more of a special event.

Hugo Wildmann asked if there was any limit to the amount approved in any one week.

Ms. Rupp said no, but they could only approve up to the \$2000 limit per teacher or project. Ms. Marini said that teachers aren't aware that money is available and she's trying to let them know. Rani Marx said it would be useful to have a list of what was funded this year so that parents will know how it was spend. This could be useful in fundraising. Ms. Rao said that she would provide the details next month.

Ms. Rupp asked what our fundraising appeal looked like. Ms. Ference, who is the editor of the AC newsletter, said that up until last year, the ACAC sent out a snail mail appeal for donations, but that wasn't especially successful in 2014-2015. An email appeal through the AC newsletter last year was more successful, so we will continue to send it out by email. Susie Marcus asked how many people donated. Ms. Ference said it was under fifty families and ideally we would have more people donating. She invited anyone with tips to share for fundraising to contact her.

Ms. Staples explained that last year the small learning communities worked out a cooperative agreement with the Berkeley High Development Group. The BHSDG sent out their appeal in early November and the small learning communities sent theirs the week after. Both organizations made it clear that it is preferable to donate some money to both because they cover different areas. The BHSDG funds all-school services like after-school tutoring, while the small learning communities do SLC-specific events like graduation and field trips.

Peter Kozelka moved that we accept the Budget and Finance Subcommittee structure. Bethany Schoenfeld seconded the motion.

Action: The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Staples moved that we accept the proposed 2016-2017 budget. Ms. Ference seconded the motion.

Action: The motion carried unanimously.

Student Voice Subcommittee

Ms. Phillips thanked the ACAC members who attended the meeting of the Student Voice Subcommittee on the afternoon of November 2: Ms. Marx, Ms. Ross, and Ms. Storey. This issue is a work-in-progress and the subcommittee wanted to share our thinking about how students can self-advocate at Berkeley High.

Ms. Marx gave a recap of the Wednesday meeting. She said many teachers at Berkeley High are terrific, but we are concerned about problematic classrooms and what students can do. Over the past few years, we've had conversations with the principals, vice principals, student leadership and others advocating for student surveys and an improved complaint/grievance process with little progress. In our meeting on Wednesday, Ms. Marx said she learned some new things about the rules governing the complaint/grievance process, in particular the agreement between the administration and the teachers' union about parent complaints. According to this agreement, administrators are supposed to encourage students or parents to meet with the teacher and if they won't, direct the parent to write a written complaint, which will be sent to the teacher. This is in contrast to the BUSD protocol that specifies students or parents should address concerns directly with the teacher but if they are unwilling or unable to

do so may bring concerns to an administrator or the teacher's supervisor. Most of the time, administrators refuse to speak with students and teachers and direct them to speak to the teacher. She hopes that the subcommittee can move things along so that families will know where they can go and what they can do if they have a problem. The subcommittee has the following suggestions:

Make sure everyone—students, parents, teachers, and administrators—understands the steps of the complaint/grievance process and publicize this widely, including the working agreement with the union. Bring this agreement in line with BUSD policy. Mystifying these steps only creates more problems for those with a complaint.

Make it explicit what happens after each step in the process, the “then what?” and what you can do if the problem isn't addressed satisfactorily at a particular point. Help students and families with the grievance process, because it is daunting.

Utilize existing Berkeley High resources. For example, make sure students know they can go to see their academic counselors when they have a problem in the classroom and not just for a schedule change. The Parent Resource Center is also available for consultation for families.

Explore using our restorative practices resources, especially at an earlier stage in the process. The subcommittee talked about inviting the restorative practices staff to conduct systematic check-ins in all classrooms to encourage student feedback. It is better to catch things early before more serious problems arise.

Support a student bill of rights and a student pledge, along with a teacher and administrators' pledge, so that students know what they can expect and what is expected of them.

Reach out to other small learning communities to see how they handle the grievance process and get input from other administrators.

Above all, create a climate at Berkeley High that doesn't discount students and families when they have a problem and make them feel they *are* the problem. We want them to know they are heard.

Ramona Coates asked if there was a student bill of rights and code of conduct at this time. Ms. Phillips said no, although some of this information was in the student planner, but there was no single source of information. Mr. Villavicencio of the Student Leadership Office is overseeing the development of the student pledge. Ms. Phillips repeated this is a work-in-progress, so it's not decided how many of these suggestions will be taken up by the administration. Ms. Storey invited all the parents in attendance to join in the subcommittee's effort to make these changes.

Lisa Miller asked what was in the working agreement between the union and the administration. Ms. Phillips replied that the agreement deals with what happens when a complaint arises. The district policy encourages families to handle this at the lowest level—that is, meeting with the teacher—but they say you can skip the meeting with the teacher if you feel uncomfortable with that. At Berkeley High, the administration has an agreement with the union to encourage families to go first to the teacher, but if not, they will engage. Mr. Wildmann asked if we could get a copy of the agreement. Ms. Phillips

said she was not sure, she would check. Ms. Marx said this agreement led her to understand the disconnect between the official BUSD grievance description and what was actually happening. Step one of the agreement directs you to speak to the teacher, but if not you have to file a written grievance. Ms. Storey asked if there was any step in between. Ms. Phillips said there was, but it might not seem friendly to parents. Mayou Roffe said that for students whose parents can't come to the school and advocate for them, they feel powerless. The school is telling them to self-advocate and then don't really support that.

Ms. Phillips said she wanted to make sure that we have a crystallized statement of our "ask" before we bring in the union representative for a consultation. She will check with the union on how to make information about the parent complaint process available. She also said that the three academic counselors in AC are going to be going around to classes to introduce themselves and talk about how they can help students. As we move towards the redesign and have a daily advisory for underclassmen, self-advocacy will be an important part of the advisory curriculum.

Ms. Phillips said there will be future meetings of the Student Voice Subcommittee and all AC parents would be welcome to attend. She then invited two of the AC counselors who were at school, Debra Clark (Gi-Ng) and Terrance Christianson (Nh-Z), to introduce themselves to the parents. Juan Rodriguez is the counselor for A-Gh, but was not present.

Vote: AC Support of All-School Breakfast on November 7

Ms. Staples submitted an AC-parent-directed funding request of up to \$750 for the ACAC to provide catering for the all-school breakfast to which all Berkeley High staff (230 people) are invited on November 7, a staff development day. Ms. Staples said that the school had put out a call for donations of food and funds, but few people had signed up. The purpose of the all-school breakfast is to foster community in a school that is fragmented into small learning communities. She said this is an opportunity to build community, address equity issues and give ACAC a chance to do something we can be proud of. The ACAC has a high balance in the Berkeley High Development Group fund at this point, so we do have the resources. Any parent who has already volunteered to donate food should still contribute to the breakfast.

Jodi Levin moved that we provide catering for the all-school breakfast up the \$750. Ms. Rupp seconded the motion.

Action: The motion carried unanimously.

AC Webmaster Report

Mr. Kozelka reminded us that a teacher wish list is online so that AC parents can donate specific items. The wish list is available here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e084eacac2aaaf58-acac> Currently parents must donate through a link in the AC newsletter, so he and Alan Dyck will put the link up on the AC webpage as well.

Classroom Matters Time Management Workshop on November 2

Ms. Phillips thanked Lisa Miller of Classroom Matters (<http://classroommatters.com>) who donated a workshop on time management for AC students and parents on the evening of November 2. The workshop was well attended and appreciated by participants. There will be two more workshops on study skills and test preparation over the next few months, which will be announced in the AC newsletter.

The handouts for the Time Management Workshop are available online for parent reference:

A Step-by-step Guide to Time Management

<http://berkeleyschools.net/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Step-by-step-time-management-double-sided-2016.pdf>

Distractions: Identify, reduce, eliminate!

http://berkeleyschools.net/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Distractions_time-1.pdf

Hourly Planner

<http://berkeleyschools.net/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Weekly-Planner.pdf>

Monthly Planner

<http://berkeleyschools.net/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Classroom-Matters-Monthly-Planner.pdf>

Memory and Your Planner

<http://berkeleyschools.net/ac/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Memory-and-your-planner1.pdf>

Next ACAC Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Friday, December 2, 2016 at 7:30-8:35 a.m. in BHS Conference Room B in the D Building.

Attachment #1

CREATION OF BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR ACAC REVIEW & APPROVAL 11-1-16

ACAC By Law provisions which are relevant:

1. Section VII – Treasurer has responsibility for presenting a budget in the first quarter of the new year for adoption by ACAC members
2. Section VIII – Allows for the formation of other committees as agreed to by membership

ACTION: CREATE BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 1) Create a Finance & Budget committee: this would be the group that develops the annual budget for ongoing activities of ACAC and the overall budget for special projects for the school year. The Finance & Budget Subcommittee would include:
 - a. AC VP
 - b. ACAC Treasurer
 - c. ACAC Chair
 - d. AC Lead Teacher
 - e. AC Student Rep
 - f. AC Teacher
 - g. Up to an additional 3 at large ACAC members who volunteer (teachers, students, parents)
 - h. For meetings a quorum of 5 would be needed

- 2) Duties of Committee:
 - a. Developing and presenting budget for review in first quarter of school year
 - i. First by ACAC Executive and ACAC VP
 - ii. Second adoption by full ACAC
 - b. Reporting to full ACAC, reports prepared by AC Treasurer monthly comparing budget to actual

- 3) Approve all funding requests at \$2000 level or below:
 - a. Lead Teacher and AC VP would approve all requests in budgeted areas from AC teachers so long as each individual request were \$2000 or less; and no cumulative single AC Teacher requests exceeded \$2000 without further approval required by ACAC.

- 4) All expenditures from ACAC funds would require third party receipts, vendor invoices, or staffing proposals per BHS guidelines.

- 5) No later than April ACAC meeting a revised budget may be presented reallocating or increasing fund

- 6) Finance & Budget would meet once a quarter may convene meetings via telephone or email

Attachment #2

AC 2016/17 Budget	
Revenue	
Balance carried forward	\$71,095
Annual Campaign	\$20,000
Total	\$91,095

notes

goal for 2016/17 revenue from families

Annual Expenses	
Graduation	\$8,500
Teacher Retreat	\$4,500
Hospitality/Meetings	\$750
Field Trips	\$15,000
AC Teacher/VP Approved	\$15,000
IT - Computer Carts	\$17,000
ACAC Directed Projects	\$2,500
Total	\$63,250
Surplus/Gap	\$27,845

for 2017 graduation event
AC teacher retreat at kick off new school year
misc events fall info night, teacher appreciation
fund available for AC teachers
fund to support teacher requests under \$2,000 per single
already approved and committed
fund for ACAC for special projects as determined

Note: Any single request in excess of \$2000 will be brought to the full ACAC for a vote
Requests at \$2000 or less and cumulatively not to exceed approved budget will be approved by AC lead teacher & /