

**6/2/17 Academic Choice Advisory Council (ACAC) Meeting
June 2, 2017, 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
Caroline Bettendorf	AC Parent	crbettendorf@gmail.com
Karen Chapman	AC Treasurer	kechapman@comcast.net
Sheryl Drinkwater	AC Parent	
Catherine Ference	ACAC Parent Rep at Large	candsfer@gmail.com
Shelley Horwitz	AC Parent	
Peter Kozelka	AC Parent	Peter Kozelka
Jodi Levin	AC Parent	jodi@sweetpickle.com
Rani Marx	AC Parent	
Lisa Miller	AC Parent	lisa@classroommatters.com
Eunice Paredes	AC Parent	eunice068@gmail.com
Elisabeth Ross	AC Parent	e@elisabethross.com
Candy Rupp	AC Parent	
Christine Staples	AC Parent	christineannestaples@gmail.com
Donna Storey	ACAC Secretary	donnageorgestorey@gmail.com

Academic Choice Lead Teacher Amanda Marini chaired this meeting.

Public Comments

Christine Staples has a seat on the BUSD Superintendent's Budget Advisory

Subcommittee and raised further concerns about the budget cuts that need to be made for the 2018-2019 school year. They are discussing cutting one and a half counselor positions and the position of Dean of Attendance. The budget will come up for full approval in January. The staffing of the Independent Study program is also under review.

Amanda Marini said that the current Dean of Attendance, Heidi Weber, will be taking the position of Independent Study Program Manager next year. Ms. Marini is more concerned about the loss of the counselor positions than the Dean of Attendance.

Elisabeth Ross reported that Berkeley High's first Celebration of Math informational meeting happened in May. Thirty-five people attended and it started well with parents solving a math problem in a way that is similar to the introduction of material in the Common Core math classes. However, when a parent asked about the availability of reference materials, there was some controversy. Math teachers are now working on developing some reference materials for students and also focusing on how to help struggling students next year. They hope to hold another math information meeting next fall.

Lead Teacher's Report

Ms. Marini announced that AC will be hiring one history teacher and one English teacher for next year. History teacher Mr. Zolezzi will be leaving at the end of this year, and English teacher Ms. Tammer will be cutting back her hours. There will be twelve sections of AC sophomores next year and a large freshman class. Ms. Marini said they'd interviewed many well-qualified candidates and expect to start the 2017-2018 school year fully staffed.

Ms. Marini said this year's seniors are ready to graduate. She will miss them, and has written a speech for the graduation celebration on June 7.

Rani Marx asked about the dead week policy of not assigning any new material before finals and wondered if the teachers could come up with a consistent policy for all classes. Ms. Marini replied that at the last general leadership meeting, Principal Erin Schweng asked teachers about their understanding of the dead week policy. There was no consensus among teachers, except that they shouldn't take field trips during dead week. Ms. Marini felt that there was less of a problem at the end of the year, and more in January when teachers are rushing to cover material. She said she will put that topic on the leadership agenda.

Ms. Marini said she would stay on as AC English lead teacher in 2017-2018.

Student Voice Subcommittee

Ms. Marx, Ms. Staples and Donna Storey attended the meeting of the School Board's committee on reforming the complaint process at the District Office on May 25. School Board Members Ty Alper and Josh Daniels, as well as the new Title IX Coordinator, Dana Clark, and Superintendent Donald Evans were among others present. Ms. Marx said that the committee sees their task as focusing on the process, not the content. If a student or family hasn't resolved the problem at the site (school) level or are not happy with the resolution, they take it to the District through a written complaint. Ms. Marx

said this puts more burden on the school to solve problems and Berkeley High doesn't have a mechanism that currently works. Administrators are over-burdened and don't have time to do a thorough job, so she still advocates for an ombudsperson. Superintendent Evans thought there should be consistency across sites.

May Treasurer's and Budget Subcommittee Report

AC Treasurer Karen Chapman reported that we raised \$2400 from our last fundraising appeal through the AC etree. We still have \$18,000 in unpaid grants outstanding. However, with no more spending this year, we will start the next fiscal year (July to June) with \$18,000.

Ms. Marini said the Budget Committee did not spend any new money because we were concerned about our budget, but today we have three final requests to consider.

Field Trip to See *Watch on the Rhine*

The first funding request was from Matt Carton, who will be teaching two sections of AP Literature (12th grade) next year and wants to take his classes to see Lillian Hellman's *Watch on the Rhine* at the Berkeley Rep in November. Tickets cost \$10 each, for approximately 70 students (two classes), plus \$100 to pay for Mr. Carton's substitute teacher.

Vote: Ms. Staples moved that we fund the field trip to the Berkeley Rep in November 2017. Caroline Bettendorf seconded the motion.

Action: The motion was carried unanimously.

Tenth-Grade English Collaboration on Curriculum Development

The second request from Mr. Carton was to fund substitute teachers for sophomore English teachers Mr. Carton, Ms. Theodore, Mr. Salaverry and Mr. Chernack so they can have an all-day meeting to discuss the successes of this year's new sophomore curriculum as well as get the units for the 2017-2018 school year ready before this school year ends.

Ms. Marini said that Mr. Carton leads sophomore curriculum coordination meetings once a week. Teachers do not have coordination periods built into their schedules, so they must do this outside of their regular schedules. Ms. Staples said it seems like a good idea to collaborate. Ms. Bettendorf asked why the district couldn't pay for this since it's professional development. Ms. Marini said there is no money for curriculum coordination, only a prep period. Often teachers give up lunches to meet. Several parents wondered if we could fundraise for and provide refreshments, lunches or other support for teachers so they could meet to plan and coordinate curriculum. Ms. Marini said the professional development calendar is fragmented among different groups, departments and all-school meetings, so it is hard to fit it in.

Vote: Catherine Ference moved that we fund Mr. Carton's request for substitutes for the tenth-grade English curriculum debrief for a total expenditure of \$500. Jodi Levin seconded the motion.

Action: The motion was carried unanimously.

Artist Workbooks for World of Media

Ms. Marini asked for \$550 to buy artist workbooks for the two sections of her World of Media class next year. Using the work of Kimberley D'Adamo's IB Studio Art Class as a model for Constructivist Teaching, she hopes to give her students more ownership over the work they do in her class. She thinks the exercise will make things come together for the students. She hopes her class will be a laboratory for adapting an artistic process to an academic one because her class lives in both realms. Eventually they hope to implement this approach in other AC classes as well.

Peter Kozelka said his daughter is doing this project in her art class and it's very impressive. Lisa Miller asked where the teachers keep the notebooks to prevent them from getting lost. Ms. Marini said Ms. D'Adamo gauges the maturity of the class. Some can take the workbooks home, but she keeps others in the classroom.

Vote: Ms. Ference moved that we fund the artist workbooks for Ms. Marini for \$550. Ms. Staples seconded the motion.

Action: The motion was carried unanimously.

Review of Process to Grant Request and Get Reimbursements

Ms. Storey said that the written grant application has only been in use for two years and there are still some areas to be refined. She encouraged the ACAC to make any necessary changes in the next school year. One possible change would be to set a definite deadline for grant applications to be turned in in advance of an ACAC meeting, in particular requests over \$2000. Parents need some time to read the applications and make a decision. Ms. Chapman also suggested there be a time limit on teachers requesting reimbursement—two or three months.

Ms. Storey's son is graduating this year, and she asked if anyone wanted to take over the duties of AC Secretary next year. Ms. Marini said they would rotate responsibility next year until they find someone willing to take on the position.

AC Graduation Celebration (June 7)

Ms. Ross gave an update on the 2017 AC graduation celebration. Many parents have volunteered to help, and if anyone else is interested, they should email her at e@elisabethross.com. Two great students are leading the planning and a parent, Noemie Hansen has designed postcard invitations and posters. Former ACAC webmaster Sam Arriola will be coordinating a slide show, and they are soliciting photos from parents, teachers and maybe students. At the reception there will be waffles, berries and other refreshments, and an AC banner where students can pose with their friends for photographs.

Update on Newcomer Small Learning Community Food Donations

Mr. Kozelka and Susie Marcus volunteered to deliver food to the Newcomer Small Learning Community on a weekly basis since March. There was a discussion of whether

it would be better to divide up the volunteering among many people, but it worked smoothly to have two. Ms. Marini said she would put it on the agenda for September to contact Marcella Taylor and BIHS about how to coordinate next year.

New AC Etree Editor

Candy Rupp volunteered to take over the AC etree from Ms. Ference. Ms. Marini suggested the newsletter might have an informational component for parents and she would try to get answers about how things work at Berkeley High for parents.

Freshman Family Welcome Event

Ms. Marini said that Berkeley High would not be holding a school-wide welcome event in August this year. She proposed that we have an event similar to last September's AC reception for freshman parents in the hour before Back to School Night began. There would be a quick turn-around in planning between the first ACAC meeting in September and the event, so she wanted to give us a heads up. Ms. Ross said she had some ideas about how to organize the event so that the food and the socializing area were not as far apart as they were last year.

Our next ACAC meeting is September 8, 2017.