

3/3/17 Academic Choice Advisory Council (ACAC) Meeting

March 3, 2017, 7:30-8:35AM Berkeley High School Conference Rm. B

Minutes

In Attendance:

Who	Role	E-mail address
Felicia Phillips	AC Vice Principal	feliciaphillips@berkeley.net
Sheryl Drinkwater	AC Parent	
Karen Chapman	AC Parent	kechapman@comcast.net
Maren VanPuyn	AC Parent	
Sharon Freidman	AC Parent	SGFreedom1@aol.com
Catherine Ference	ACAC Parent Rep at Large	candsfer@gmail.com
Peter Kozelka	AC Parent	
Jodi Levin	AC Parent	jodi@sweetpickle.com
Susie Marcus	AC Parent	
Sabina Aurilio	AC Parent	S_aurilio@yahoo.com
Lisa Miller	AC Parent	lisa@classroommatters.com
Eunice Paredes	AC Parent	eunice068@gmail.com
Elisabeth Ross	AC Parent	e@elisabethross.com
Amanda Marini	AC Lead Teacher	
Christine Staples	AC Parent	christineannestaples@gmail.com
Hugo Wildmann	AC Parent	HLWildmann@yahoo.com

Academic Choice Vice-Principal Felicia Phillips chaired this meeting.

Public Comments

AC Secretary, Donna Storey, was absent so ACAC Member-at-Large Catherine Ference took the minutes at this meeting.

After introductions, AC parent Jodi Levin said that she is working with the League of Women Voters to register young people to vote. Young people can pre-register at age 16. Ms. Levin is looking into registering students at BHS and those who are interested in helping should contact her. Ms. Phillips said that Ruby McDonald is helping kids register through history classes.

Elisabeth Ross gave an update on the parent group working with math issues. Dr. Susan Craig and at least one other administrator have agreed to discuss the complaint parents have against one of the math teachers. In addition, the parents who filed the Williams Complaint were told that the complaint would not be addressed because it was never BUSD's intention to have a text book for Common Core math. Ms. Ross shared that the March 22 school board meeting will have math at BHS on the agenda. Both Ms. Ross and BHS parent, Zeph Landau, have met with the lead math teacher, Ms. Garfinkel, to plan a math round table discussion, perhaps a math newsletter and a FAQ sheet for parents and students about math at BHS. A math night for next school year has been suggested as well. Ms. Ross has agreed to bring breakfast foods for the math teachers at least once a month when they have their planning meetings with the goal of improving teacher-parent relations.

Ms. Phillips confirmed that everyone is up to date on the news that Erin Schweng is the new BHS principal and that Sam Pasarow resigned. Christine Staples asked if the new VP who replaces Ms. Schweng would be an Executive VP or just a VP. Ms. Phillips was not sure of the answer. Ms. Phillips mentioned that the Executive VP does the master schedule. Although the position for Executive VP has been posted internally, no one from within BHS has applied so far. Ms. Ross pointed out that the open position is a great opportunity to get someone in who is strong in both math and science and who might be a strong leader for those departments.

Treasurer's Report

Karen Chapman, our ACAC Treasurer, provided us with the Berkeley High Development Group (BHSDG) financial report as of March 2, 2017. She said that she gets the information from the BHSDG on the first or second of the month so she doesn't have as much time as she would like to review it before meeting with AC. Ms. Chapman reminded us that we are still behind on our annual fundraising goal by about \$5000 (current donations total \$14,860). To date we have approved spending of about \$47,487. (This amount includes the grant we voted on later in the meeting.) According to the budget, we have about \$15,763 left to spend, but AC graduation must be included in that amount.

Ms. Chapman brought up the request from some science teachers for donations of money for classroom supplies. Money for science was down this year and consequently, science teachers do not have all of the supplies they need. To better explain the situation, Ms. Staples said that the science department gets 80% of its funding from regular sources, BSEP covers some and site funds normally donate as much as \$20,000. This year, the shortfall was \$10,000. Ms. Staples suggested that ACAC donate \$2,500 to the science department and that we approach BIHS to do the same and that BHSDG donate \$5,000. This will take care of the \$10,000 shortfall for the science department.

Although we did not take a formal vote on this because there is no grant proposal yet, Ms. Phillips asked for an informal show of hands to see who supports the idea and there was a great deal of support.

Parents asked how much BHSDG normally raises. Ms. Staples said that the BHSDG raises as much as \$600,000, but that at least half of that money is "restricted", meaning parents ask that it go to a specific place like BIHS or AC.

February Budget Committee Report

Ms. Chapman said that she urgently needs information from the Budget Committee meetings so that she can track the spending in our budget. Reporting on the committee's most recent meeting, AC Lead Teacher, Amanda Marini, said that the committee agreed to fund:

- Books for World Lit Classes (Into the Beautiful North, The Seven Good Years, Men in the Sun)
- A wireless LCD and Document Camera
- Funds for a social studies teacher to attend a conference

Amanda explained the need for more computers and computer carts. At least one existing cart is on its last legs and another doesn't have enough computers for a full class. Therefore, she has asked ACAC for a grant of \$20,612.46 to purchase two new computer carts for AC students with 35 computers in it each AND additional computers to bring existing carts up to 35 computers each. The carts will be shared among at least 22 teachers in AC. With the purchase of new computers, AC will have approximately 210 computers for all 1100+ students. Ms. Staples moved that we approve the grant. Ms. Levin seconded the motion and the grant was approved.

Everyone expressed a giant thank you to Karen Chapman for taking on the role as AC treasurer!

Time Management Workshop

Ms. Phillips reminded us how fortunate we are to have Lisa Miller of Classroom Matters with us at BHS. Ms. Miller is planning another workshop for all 9th and 10th grade students on Time Management. The workshop is scheduled and filled to capacity! Elisabeth Ross suggested that while Ms. Miller has been very willing to generously donate her time and energy to these workshops, it would be a nice gesture on AC's part to give her an honorarium. Ms. Miller excused herself while we discussed the honorarium. While all agreed that it is an excellent idea, we couldn't agree on a sum and decided to mull it over and discuss it again next month. Ms. Miller returned and reminded us that she is happy to have the opportunity to do the workshops and that she hopes that the team involved in the re-design will strongly consider having executive functioning skills as part of the advising classes. Ms. Miller is happy to help in any way she can by sharing information about a high school age student's development and executive functioning.

AC Graduation Celebration Planning

Ms. Ross is hard at work and holding regular meetings to make plans. AC seniors are

on board and excited to plan a nice event. Ms. Phillips is working hard to confirm the date, but that is still TBD.

Food Donations to the Newcomer Small Learning Community

Peter Kozelka and Susie Marcus have volunteered to be in charge of AC's efforts to provide food donations for the Newcomer Small Learning Community that serves students who have been in the United States for less than five years. They will begin bringing food donations this month and continue through the end of the school year. BIHS has been donating the food for Newcomers the last few months.

Spring AC General Meeting and Course Selection

BHS students have made their course selections for next year. A draft of their selections will go home for parents to see and changes can be made if needed at that point. No date has been set for a Spring AC General Meeting. Course selection is usually discussed at that time, but this year, the meeting - if there is one - will fall after course selection has been complete. Parents had many questions about Advanced Placement courses (AP), electives, access to counselors and more. Parents spoke of how difficult it can be for students and parents to reach counselors at this time of year when counselors are reaching out to middle schools, but BHS students also need a great deal of guidance around course selection. Ms. Ross asked if there is any way for parent volunteers to support over-burdened counselors. Ms. Staples asked if some sort of workshop around course selection for both parents and students might take place in the future. Ms. Ross said she would take a stab at writing up a FAQ about course selection.

Our next ACAC meeting is April 14, 2017 (because of spring break).