

Sky Mountain Charter School Meeting Minutes

SMCS Parent Council Meeting

Teleconference meeting October 22, 2009 1:30pm-2:30pm

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Introductions/Welcome/Roll Call

Attendees: Shana Fisk, Sarah Coyan, Susie Clark, Patti Larriva, Sandy Barela, Maria Kirkbride, Juliet Pailes, Kim Lovold, Shannon Towler, Catherine Hanna, Steve Askin, Melissa Hoyal, Shannon Schermerhorn, Claudia Marquez, Jackie Mears, Deborah Morehead, Renee Cowan, Kitty Handberry, Renee Canham, Josie Robles, Nicole Hebbard

4. Hearing of the Public

No comments

5. Presentation Items

A. Patti Larriva, Assessments

Discussion of STAR test results:

-SMCS had 99% participation; 95% participation is required to be in compliance with the Charter.

-AYP was up three points to 731 from last year which was 728

-Will be focusing on AYP program improvements, must show growth or the state will look for improvements.

-SMCS did not meet the goal/criteria for English and Math scores being the required state targeted percentages (English 46% Math 47.5%) to meet the AYP.

-SMCS needs to catch up and fill in the gaps for English and Math to work towards meeting the goals and criteria.

-Shana Fisk discussed that contract program classes will be offered in late winter to early spring; which are enrichment courses that will be helpful in bringing up math skills and scores.

-Catherine Hanna suggested more parent education on the importance of STAR test results for the school as a whole and also parent education on how to help students bring up those scores.

-SMCS will start with ES education so that the ES's can educate their parents on the testing process, the importance of test scores, and how to help students grow academically in areas of comprehension struggles.

-Nicole Hebbard suggested STAR test practice books for the students who may be unfamiliar with bubble style testing. Having this opportunity to become familiar with the testing approach may help the students be more confident and competent when officially STAR testing.

-Shana Fisk stated that SMCS has offered prep test materials in the past for 2nd -8th graders but with the large amount of growth over the summer there will not be enough funding for those prep test packets this year. SMCS will look into making prep tests available next year, but they are currently available to be ordered with Instructional Funds.

-Scantron testing is given at the beginning and end of the year to determine areas where standards are not being met and areas to focus on. Through the Scantron testing, the ES can create quizzes and study guides to be printed out to assist in meeting the standards.

-California Department of Education website for resources www.starsamplequestions.org

-Jackie Mears asked about standards in relation to grade level and when retention may be necessary for the students who are not testing or working at grade level; also how this issue could affect the school as a whole.

-Shana Fisk clarified that the goal is for the students to be working at proficient or above grade level and standards in Math and Language Arts; history and science have a bit more freedom.

-Any questions on assessments and STAR testing can be directed to Patti Larriva plarriva@ieminc.org or 800-979-4436.

B. Sandy Barela, GEA

-Sandy Barela would like to set up a trip for spring of the 2010/2011 school year to Washington DC and Virginia; students would fill out workbooks and this would count as elective credits.

-Typically this trip is for junior high and high school students, the possibility of 4th and 5th graders being able to attend is still being considered.

-The trip would cost \$1,800.00 per student (also per parent if parent wishes to attend), parents would not be required to attend; 1 teacher chaperone for every 15 students would be attending the trip.

-The \$1,800.00 would include all expenses including airfare, room and board, food, and insurance (including a Dr. visit to the hotel room if a student was sick).

-World Strides will have some scholarships available in the amount of \$400.00.

-Sandy Barela asked the parent council for help and support in putting together fundraisers to help make this opportunity possible for the students.

-The trip would be a total of 7 days (2 travel days, 2 days in Virginia, and 3 days in Washington DC).

-The educational philosophy would include how the government works, how government was created, and how Virginia was involved in government.

-Tours of Williamsburg and the city at night would be part of the trip.

-Tours of the capital that are only available to schools would be offered to the students.

-A portion of Instructional Funds can be used for this trip, but the details on how much are still being discussed and worked out.

-Sandy Barela would like to announce this trip Spring 2009/2010 school year to give parents time to plan for and accommodate the cost of the trip.

-SMCS Parent Council fundraising subcommittee would partner with Sandy Barela to help make this opportunity available to SMCS students.

C. Maria Kirkbride, WASC

-This year SMCS is addressing the eight critical areas for follow up; and working on a time line and action plans for those critical areas.

-Next year there will be more focus on self study plans with parent involvement.

-SMCS currently has a 3 year WASC accreditation status; after review following the 3 years, SMCS will receive a 3-6 year extension and then it will continue to grow from there.

-Catherine Hanna suggested parent education on the WASC process and what it means to the school, the parents, and the students.

D. Susan Clark, Parent Driven Schools

-Sky Mountain is part of Innovative Education Management (IEM), who also manages 3 other charter schools in California (about 5,000 students in California).

-IEM is the back office management company for SMCS, also a founder of the Parent Driven Schools philosophy and book by Randy Gaschler.

-Susan Clark highly encourages parents to visit the website www.parentdrivenschools.com (or call 800-893-6199) to learn more about individualized learning plans and request a free DVD.

-The website is a great resource, and educating on the philosophy reminds us that we are all part of something different; the philosophy is a change agent for public education.

-Parents who are advocates for their own children would enjoy this free and encouraging experience; and should consider visiting the website.

6. Discussion Items

A. Selecting of Subcommittees

-Current subcommittees are GEA, Fundraising, Grants, Yearbook, STAR, and Graduation.

-STAR subcommittee members would work with the STAR cite coordinators.

-Juliet Pailes would like to initiate a Park Days subcommittee.

-The subcommittees evolve into what the members want them to be.

-Sarah Coyan will be in contact with the council to further discuss subcommittee roles next week after some time to think about which committee each member would like to serve on.

-Parent Council Members will notify Sarah Coyan scoyan@ieminc.org or 800-979-4436 what subcommittee they would like to be on and this information will be added to the Parent Council contact roster sheet.

7. Action Items

A. To approve SMCS 403 B Plan Resolution

-The vendor for the 403(b) plan is CPI consultant plan administrators

-IEM researched a number of vendors after the law changes requiring a third party

administrator; IEM manages all finances for SMCS and uses this vendor for all IEM schools

-403(b) is an employee option/benefit

-SMCS is a public school and as a formality needs to have the Council aware of and approve the plan; this is required by the company, not the state or IEM

-Employees will be made aware of the benefit opportunity after Council approval

-SMCS Parent Council approved the 403(b) plan (11/14 votes in favor)

B. To approve SMCS STRS Buy Back Payroll Deduction for Employees

-SMCS Parent Council approval with 10 members in favor (10/14)

8. Adjourn

Thank you from Shana Fisk to the parent council members, we will meet again in the Spring.