

School Governance Council
Wildwood Elementary School
Minutes of the meeting of Nov. 18, 2013

Attending: Nick Yaffe (principal), Kerry Crosby, Laura Quilter, Sarah Marshall, and Joleen Millar (guest). Absent: Chris Eggemeier.

Membership

The group welcomed Joleen Millar to the Council - she is a member if she wishes to be. As the Council still seeks a community member, Kerry will reach out to a parent at her child's preschool and Nick to a contact at the Umass School of Education. In addition, the Council seeks more teacher representatives – Nick will make another appeal. Nick and Sarah will continue to act as co-convenors this year.

Communicating to the Wildwood community

The Council will aim to post its meeting dates, agendas, and minutes to the school web site and to the PGO's Facebook page.

PGO project

Kerry brought to the group for discussion the PGO's proposal to use a web application, such as NeighborGoods or ShareTribe, to gather and display, in a searchable form, wants, offers, needs, etc. from teachers, staff, and parents pertaining to enhancement of the curriculum. For example, a teacher might ask for an expert in geology to visit the class during a unit on rocks and minerals, or a parent might offer expertise in Mexican culture to a music class. The SGC thought the goal laudable but feared that the target audience/users might balk at the request to learn and use one more on-line system. Other ideas were suggested that would extend web-based sites already in use, such as the official school web site (on which each classroom will eventually have a page), the PGO's site (perhaps offer a community bulletin board), or the PGO's Facebook page (add teacher wish-lists, for example). The group asked Kerry to report back to the PGO.

Mission of the SGC

Participants expressed a desire to more specifically detail the function of the SGC and to provide practical support to the principal, rather than engage in wide-ranging discussions with no clear outcomes. Nick discussed several ways in which the SGC could be helpful, such as (1) helping to craft a school policy regarding classroom visits by parents, (2) assisting with home-school connections, (3) facilitating translation of PGO documents to enable participation by more families, (4) beginning a discussion with the PGO and others about the PGO fundraising program and the degree to which it supports school goals of equity and access for all, and (5) encouraging continued communication by teaching staff of learning goals. The group decided to tackle the first item before the next meeting, by contacting the other regional elementary schools, as well as Leverett and Shutesbury schools, to get their visiting policies, if any.

Next meetings: Dec. 11, Jan. 15, Feb. 12., 3:30-4:30 pm in Nick Yaffe's office.