

Peirce Elementary School Advisory Council

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: October 26, 2011 2:30 – 3:30 PM

Meeting Location: Conference Room

Attn: Karen Hartley
Daniela Cannella
Crystal Power
Charlie Radoslovich (absent)
Lisa Carlson-Hill
Cate Oranchak

1. The meeting convened at 2:40 PM.
2. We discussed the difference between the PTO and the Advisory Council- a question that came up at the Open House. Karen Hartley clarified by saying the PTO is an organization whose primary goal is to raise funds to be used for a variety of enrichment programs and community-building events. While the Advisory Council's primary responsibility is to assist with the development of policies and procedures and to help resolve school-wide issues that arise.
3. Karen Hartley distributed copies of the 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan.
4. Meeting minutes from 9/20/11 meeting will be distributed via email to the group for approval. Approved notes will be posted to the Peirce School website.
5. Review of 2010-2011 projects
 - a. Substitute Teacher's Checklist- folders are in, Karen Hartley to coordinate with Dorothy Schuette for completion.
 - b. Protocol used to plan School Enrichment Programs in cooperation with PTO or "How to put on an Event at Peirce" has been implemented. The group discussed ways to share the information with the larger community. Karen Hartley will add this and other Advisory Council items to her Principal's Blog. Karen Hartley will start a binder for the front office. The binder will hold the School Improvement Plan, the Peirce Guide and the summary blurbs developed for the Advisory Council table at the Open House. Cate Oranchak suggested adding the summary information to the Advisory Council tab of the school website.
 - c. Childcare for meetings: Karen Hartley was available during Curriculum Afternoon to watch children whose parents attended, no child care was requested. It was decided that children of parents attending the Advisory Council meetings can join the adults in the conference room if necessary.
 - d. "Strive to Shine" poster contest was discussed. Karen Hartley will announce the contest at the next Peirce Pride Assembly in November. She will also develop and print a sheet with contest rules which will be sent home in student's folders. Winning entry to be duplicated for every classroom- enlarged and in color. Second prize entries for each grade level will be displayed in the hallway for each floor (kindergarten, 1st/2nd grades, 3rd/4th/5th grades).

Teachers can give students 5 minutes to sketch an idea when they return to the classroom after the assembly. Submissions are to be:

- i. on white 8.5 x 11 paper
 - ii. colorful
 - iii. showcase Peirce's "Strive to Shine..." theme
 - iv. showcase Peirce Elementary School
 - v. include name and grade on the back of the submission
- e. Lunch Room Rules: There are a lot of notices in the lunch room but no posted rules. Karen Hartley and Daniela Cannella will work together with the students and the lunch aides to develop a comprehensive list of rules for lunch time. The rules could be discussed in the classrooms at Open Circle time.
 - f. Schedule change: 20 minutes for lunch and 20 minutes for recess, up from 15 minutes each—no issues have arisen. The schedule change is in effect and appears to be successful!
 - g. Tech Committee
 - i. In the past each Arlington school offered hardware and software to the teachers and students based on PTO funds. Now the Town has a Technology Department that serves all Arlington schools. This fall/winter, the Peirce Technology Committee will survey all teachers to get an idea of what technologies are missing and/or desired. Once the survey is complete, the information will be passed on to the Town. After which the Advisory Council will consider future roles and responsibilities for the Committee.
 - ii. A wireless router is desperately needed. Many presenters come to Peirce expecting to be able to easily log in to the internet. Karen Hartley will confirm whether the Town will provide a wireless router to Peirce or if funds need to be requested from the PTO.
 - iii. Karen Hartley will ask Nicole (last name?, Tech Department?) to come to an Advisory Council meeting to report on technology issues.
6. Karen Hartley discussed the request for a parent Council member to participate in the discussion for redistricting with the superintendent. Karen Hartley will confirm whether or not the position could be shared.
 7. Inclusion classrooms are still fairly new at Peirce. Cindy Revelle is working with Karen Hartley on an information sheet that would help families use the correct language in discussions with students.
 8. MCAS scores are in. The results will be discussed at the next PTO meeting. Karen Hartley noted scores remained high but that, as a school, our overall rating has declined somewhat.
 9. Other issues for future discussion:
 - a. Discovery Streaming
 - b. Need a parent member coordinator for Technology Committee
 - c. String Instrument showcase interferes with class schedules. Can this be modified in any way? Can the showcase take place during library or music?
 - d. A Birthday Celebration policy should be developed. Each classroom has its own policy that may or may not involve food being served. A school-wide policy should be implemented so that all classrooms celebrate equally and consistently. Considering common allergies, a finite list of food items that can be shared could be provided or perhaps celebrations are not food-centered.
 - e. Big Kid Playground drop off can be chaotic. Suggest marking the head of the line for each classroom
 - f. Big Kid Playground has an eroding steep slope with gravel migrating onto the basketball surface. This is unsafe and unsightly. Kristen Garigus had started to work with the town to

- fix the issue. Karen Hartley will pull out Kristen's work for the next meeting. Cate Oranchak will continue to work on this issue.
- g. More and more students are biking to school. Peirce has one bike rack near the boiler room door on the Newland Street side. However, it is facing the wrong direction. If bikes were to be locked properly, they would block the sidewalk between the Kindergarten and Big Kid Playgrounds. Bicycle Rack placement will be reviewed.
10. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

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