

Academy at Charlemont Parent Council
6:30 PM Tuesday March 28, 2017
President's Conference Room, GCC

Present: Penny Michalak, Carol Foote (Development Director), Martha Tirk (Admissions Director), Katie and Peter Boyd, Ken and Diane Bigelow, Phoebe Walker, Cynthia Poirier, Sue Draxler, Gretchen Dobosz, Marla Brodsky, Paul Catanzaro, Mo Turner, Jean Zimmer, Brian Bloomfield (Head of School)

1. **Financial decisions.** Votes taken to approve the following purchases from our account (current balance \$2,786):
 - a. Up to five wall-mounted fans, for \$65 each, for the hottest classrooms. Ken to work with Mr. White on installation.
 - b. A congratulatory ad in the Grove for the seniors, for \$40. Diane to design and submit.
 - c. Food for faculty for lunch on both parent conference days. Dr. B to arrange.

Also considered sponsoring Screenagers showing (\$500). Would ask Mohawk if they would like to co-sponsor. Jean and Rebekah Boyd to do some research, and maybe host in the fall. Dr. Bloomfield will check in with Dr. Miller about what she knows about the film, and if she would be involved.

2. **Check in on upcoming events**
 - a. Grandparents day Friday April 28 (Rebekah Boyd APC Contact)
 - b. Meeting and work bee Saturday 5/27 (Phoebe Walker APC Contact)
 - i. Meeting will include discussion of FY18 financial goals and auction
 - ii. Work Bee duties self-assigned by Doodle Poll or similar software
 - c. Staff Luncheon Tuesday 6/13 (Kathy Osborne APC Contact)
 - d. Hikes or other get-togethers -- Jean and Marla and Cynthia offered to organize outings in the spring and summer -- hooray! (Note: first one on 5/13 at the DAR, see school calendar).
3. **Update from Dr. Bloomfield**
 - a. Honor Code -- vote on four different options is coming up in the next month.
 - b. Summer internships for students -- only had one taker this year. Parents shared that they had not gotten any notification about it so had been unable to work with students to explain, encourage participation. Dr B will fix this for next year.
 - c. Schedule -- X Block, the new addition for this year, is not being discontinued. It will stay on 3 of the 5 days.
 - d. Dr. B was asked how he thinks the relaxation of the cell phone rules has worked this year. He said faculty and staff have not noticed any negative side effects, and rules are clear that they are not allowed in use in class.
 - e. Homework survey has been completed, and showed that 30% of students are spending about 2-3 hours a night on homework, 7% 3+, and the rest less. Faculty believes that this does not show that the homework burden is too much. Dr. Bloomfield continues to stress that no homework should be assigned that requires a teacher to complete.
 - f. Finally, Dr. B shared the curriculum sequencing work that the school is undertaking, to make sure that there is a clear progression across courses and years that results in a

specific set of skills being taught in addition to the curricula. Faculty are reading books and having discussion on this subject. Priority skills include:

- i. Creative thinking
- ii. Critical thinking
- iii. Communication
- iv. Self-advocacy
- v. Empathy
- vi. Self-management
- vii. Self-control.

4. **Marketing/Parent Outreach Update** from Ms. Tirk on applicants for this coming year, and thanks to all the parents who have served as contacts for the new families.

6. Parent Participation in Annual Fund -- Carol Foote shared the very low response rate this year (about 20%), and how important it is for higher numbers to participate, as a signal to higher donors.

69 families attend the Academy. 34 have never donated to the Annual Fund.

The group suggested asking Class Parents to send out requests and reminders, as their emails get read (vs. the one that Phoebe and Paul sent earlier this winter). Carol could also offer Class Parents info on the participation rate from their class to share with the group to spur donations.

Phoebe suggested asking the faculty first, and reporting that % to the parents -- this was effective at Bement.

Other --

The school seeks a host for French exchange student Jon's brother Julen for next year.

Cynthia and Paul are interested in a cross-country ski team next year.

Next meeting:
Saturday, May 27 9-10 before the work bee