

West Hillsborough Elementary School
School Site Council Meeting
Wednesday, December 11, 2013
3:15-4:30 pm
West School Library

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. INTRODUCTIONS AT THIS MEETING

Roger Avedon (chair/parent), Leslie Huie (parent), Katie Pierce (parent), Megan Medvitz (4th grade teacher), Jen King (parent), Richard Miller (parent), Sherry Gavin (1st grade teacher) Anu Hoey (parent), Chris Flores (3rd grade teacher), Jay Beams (choral director), Valerie Leung (parent), Dr. Jamie Adams (principal), Don Geddes (trustee/parent), Sarah Adams (secretary/parent)

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. The Role of Competition at West School with comments, questions and responses.

- + a parent states belief that there is a sub-culture at school who views Competition as THE center focus.
- +examples....Speedy Math, what else?
- +Is Achievement about Effort?
- +a couple of parents mentioned that kids will be thrown into melting pot anyway—that expecting failure is part of learning experience and can lead to creative innovation.
- +one teacher believes that there's not much competition at West.
- + another parent speaks about progressing...Mathletics structured so that scores reflect "most improved" not highest achievers.
- +Gamification and Mathletics used to use leader boards and be based on group levels
- + ex: Soccer "participation level"

+ a teacher mentions that the students find team spirit when working together to be better and be competitive towards other schools.

+what does winning and losing mean? Responses?

+how much do we teach/pre-teach them how to deal with competition for when they'll really need it? ... goes back to the social/mindfulness.

+ Jamie: Easy to accept creative failure, but when in win/lose failure, that is a hard process.

Great to get feedback from parents...needs more staff discussion.
Resilience is learned from failures .

+re: Student Body Election:

Difference between teacher or student body making decisions. Not easy to lose, or be told you're not going to the next level.

Resilience comes the next day.....

Hope not too young for THIS. One winner. An Election is different from academic competition....addresses different kids.

+The Election process starts with 3rd graders. Want to make sure that it is the student who chooses to run and not the student's parent. The election should be based on that honest desire and hopefully not a popularity option. The interview process involved 50 applicants. (!!) They are expected to be forward thinking, and know how they want to contribute to the school. It's a great experience to go through.

+ a parent asked if there a sense of social strata (popularity) at West?

+ response?

+ The best Orator is not necessarily the best President.

+ a parent asked how does the competition play in daily life? At school, how?

+ a teacher responded that competition is offered in a healthy way

through games on day-to-day schooling .

+ ex: math games associated with math skills: Whip around, zip around, to review vocabulary, which are timed and against other classes.

+ a level of competition has been taken away since the existence of Standards based report cards...no GPA, no dean's list, etc. It has been eliminated except for 5th gradewhen there is parental pressure to acknowledge kids due.

+what happens with the kid who 'doesn't get it? Answer: If one individual is struggling, the other students help out and doesn't pick on that kid.

+ if the end of a Unit is every six weeks, how do you teach your kids to cope (with)?

+ what about spelling bees? No more.

+ Biz World is a unit of study in 4th grade Open Court.

+relate to Apple, strategize, venture capitalist, competitive- like SHARK TANK... ..they need to pitch to us ...company's compete...most profitable gets prize at end.. best job as Pres. or Sales, etc. get an award. (example from parent about real world, or example from teacher of games (Biz World) game played?)

+a parent brings up Work Ethic...then work that strength to gain confidence. How to educate the kid to be motivated to achieve....how to get more advanced kid to help the more junior.

+kids need to be acknowledged for actions, values, etc. Peer coaching can be invaluable also.

+every child has a KEY and they're going to find that soon. Amen.

+get out of comfort zone. Practice...work harder to get where you're going.

+there is Team building , cohesiveness in group, on playground / PE , as is done in real world.

+ a teacher told of example: can have structure in class and hope to cope with sense of inadequacy from loss. Personally for her family growing up ...the game winners clean up and non-winner doesn't....so then not so bad to lose....

+ a parent asked staff about PEPGOALS? A 4th grade teacher responded that there's enough competition with games and sports and that the students don't need more official competitions like Science Fair.

+ a parent asked about how to handle the athletic posturing/emulating on the playground...apparently learned from watch professional sports athletes?

+ a teacher responds that it is hard to compare classroom and athletics.....

+What about Sportsmanship? Gamesmanship? Ethos? Mindfulness?

+Dynamics can change with one kid. Jamie believes the West school kids are awesome in general.

B. Topic Selection for Future Meetings

+HCSD Forward---World Language/Culture

+Mindfulness/Executive Function (self-motivation) Focus

+Writing

+Gender Focus

+Managing Impulsivity

5. Items not on the Agenda

+ Jamie Adams reported that the Distinguished Award application was submitted. A copy of this was handed out at the meeting.

+ Desire the Crocker perspective of our students' writing skills.

+Announcement that there was a free Introduction to Coding class for kids today at Apple store in Burlingame at 5pm by a parent.

+Please refer to additional handout for List of Potential Topics for West SSC 2013-14.