

# Abernethy Community Meeting

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*Date: 9/29/2016*

## **Agenda:**

**1) Call to Order** – 6:11 pm, Jim Kohler

*2) Approval of Minutes (N/A)*

### **3) Officer & Committee Reports**

**a) Introductions of Officers and Standing Committee Chairs present:**

Jim Kohler, Lisa Delaney, Kirsten Isaacson, Amanda DeMoss, Leah Woods, Rene Hendricks, Laura Whipple, Sarah Warren, Beth Cavanaugh

**b) Basketball program update (Lisa Delaney)**

- i) Abernethy will have more teams than ever have this year due to changes in Cleveland/recreational programs.
- ii) Had a successful fundraiser Sunday (Basketball Jam) to handle increased cost that this growth will bring. Many people attended.

**c) School Kitchen Garden update (Laura Whipple and Sarah Warren)**

- i) Harvest Social is next Friday 10/7 at 3:30-6; There will be a harvest swap, donated tasting apples, wheat grinding for kids, passport stations and more. The event is to celebrate our garden and community.
- ii) GAP (Garden Afterschool) doubled this year to 30 slots and now has a program coordinated with school day garden program
  - Q: Do we need to sign up for harvest swap?
  - A: No, just bring what you have- canned, fresh or whatever else to share.
- iii) Need a few more volunteers for the event. Laura will send reminder for sign up- sign up if you can.

**d) Tour de Ladd (Hanna Nesper Newell)**

- i) The event is next Wed 10/5. Very fun annual event; pledge forms are due tomorrow (9/30). You can pay online, but pledges are documented on paper. All children must register in order to participate. This year's goal is to raise \$34K. Volunteer slots are still open, but please don't stay for lunch if you volunteer (it'll be too crowded). A film crew will be there filming the event for school use.

*4) Unfinished Business (N/A)*

### **5) New Business**

**a) School Update from Principal Heather Hull**

- i) Construction is almost done. Still need to change the skylights; this will happen on a non-student day. Also need to fix some new leaks- keep an eye out for leaks around the building (just in case there are more that haven't been noticed yet).
- ii) Kitchen sink in the garden class is cleared for use. The main kitchen sink may also be cleared soon which will allow us to go back to fresh menu items.

- iii) Have not been allocated any additional funding from district to address class size. Though the school has received a lot of generosity from parents to fund our special programs.
  - iv) There will be an artist in residence as part of the Right Brain Initiative starting next week. Last year we had a photographer; this year a movement artist will work with students in class. The artist will rotate through all classes to complete at least 3 sessions with each class, (may be able to do more).
  - v) Instructional Support continues this year with Julie Miller; she will begin working with kids for reading next week. Will pull kids (~6) from each grade level for sessions; for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will do an additional section in the afternoon due to class sizes at that grade level.
  - vi) District adopted new literacy curriculum and is rolling it out in 10 schools, however Abernethy was not selected as one of the schools in this first round. Abernethy will continue to work toward this new curriculum though.
  - vii) Lots of conversation about homework philosophy; going to site council to get feedback.
  - viii) Curriculum Night was in a revised format this year; looking at the feedback received on this new format.
  - ix) Class size issues: continuing to look at strategies to deal with classes of higher numbers.
  - x) TAG – looking at strengthening differentiation strategies/evidence of differentiation with staff.
  - xi) Character Parade will happen this year. We have decided to push the book character spirit day that was originally scheduled for earlier in October to happen instead in conjunction with the traditional Halloween Character Parade. Spirit days are now all on late start days and late start days have an assembly where students/classes are recognized according to a chosen monthly theme.
  - xii) Parent equity group has met once so far this year. Please join, you can watch the Monday Mailer for meeting dates/times.
    - Q: What is site council?
    - A: 3 parents and 3 staff members; meant to be a representation of the school to discuss things that impact the school – e.g., CAP plan. The main priority traditionally was to conduct a school survey.
    - Q: How do we find out who is on this and give them feedback?
    - A: Reach out to Julie Wood. Members include Dawn ?, Amy Newton Ernst, Jen Burkart
- b) PTA Standing Rules 2016-2017 review**
- i) Jim Kohler read aloud the new standing rules. Lisa Delaney noted we must change the fiscal year dates in the draft to July 1-June 30.
  - ii) **MOTION:** Kirsten Isaacson made a motion to vote to approve the 2016-2017 standing rules with Lisa's amendment. Rene Hendricks seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Unanimously approved.

## 6) Announcements

- a) PTA membership sign up continues – sign up to be a member to make your voice heard.

## 7) Program/Speaker (N/A)

## 8) Open Forum

- a) Costume parade – is this a book character parade, or a Halloween costume parade?
  - i) Brand this however you'd like at home. Was traditionally book character, but most any character can be found in a book. You don't need a special costume for it, but you are welcome to do that if you'd like. We just continue to stress the need to leave the scariest

- costumes at home so the younger students aren't afraid.
- b) Was there a TAG group formed by the administration with parents?
    - i) Cindy has been reached out to for this committee, so she is putting it together with the people that are getting in touch with her. If anyone is interested in participating in this feedback group, please contact Cindy.
    - ii) The district supports the differentiation model, not a pull out model for TAG. Abernethy has a very high proportion of TAG kids so teachers are teaching to the level of their class and then scaffolding up for the higher learners. Teachers often have to choose between increased communication with parents on each child's learning, and writing fulfilling, successful lessons for their class. The school staff is trying to find the balance for this communication about differentiation with TAG instruction. Very difficult for teachers to communicate the many small changes made throughout the day with every child – it happens organically.
    - iii) Heather noted that the school does not get district support for staff PD – it's school provided/created. Last year the TAG budget provided one of the best PD sessions on technology use in the class (PD was by Jennifer Gingrich). Abernethy staff is very motivated to find the strategies to reach all learners.
  - c) What are all the homework conversations mentioned before about?
    - i) Questions are being asked like what age does it start? What is the purpose of homework? Who is the homework for? Etc... The packets that were used in the past were very old and not very effective. So there have been different homework strategies with different classes to get beyond 'the packet'. Homework does provide parents a point to engage with the kids about specifics on class activities and learning, so from that perspective it can be good.
  - d) Under what committee does the Support Abernethy site live?
    - i) Fundraising.

## 9) Adjournment

- a) **MOTION:** John Grant made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Kirsten Isaacson seconded the motion. **VOTE:** Unanimously approved to adjourn at 7:27 pm.

Highlights denote items requiring follow up at the next meeting.

**NOTE: These minutes are provided for review and distribution but have not yet been approved by the general membership.**

Leah Woods  
Abernethy PTA Secretary