

Discovery Community School  
Steering Meeting  
March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at 6:30p.m.  
Sandburg Elementary Library

Present: Jeff B., Diane J., Janet Z., Lloyd C., Shelley G., Amy D., Cris P., Susan W., James W., Julie H., Denise C., Andrew S., Tom C-F, Laura R., Ingrid S., Christi D., Susan F., Greg P., Susan V., Sunni B., Lisa J.

**Welcome**

**Cris**

**Teachers Report**

**Diane**

Not much to report. On track, excited about Winter Event. Re: Rug – Sandburg gave \$200 to help cover cost. Beautiful, and the kids love it.

**Treasurer Report**

**Jeff/Drew**

Jeff and Drew presented two proposed budget options.

Documents for review:

Proposed budget:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/cc?key=0Ar5AIFGgWfJFdDZ2MDhKdEMyN1RpOXRQVFE0NnZSemc#gid=0>

Option A: Contribution per Olders student per year for IslandWood trip remains at \$150

Option B: Contribution per Olders student per year for IslandWood trip increases to \$200

DCS Financials:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/cc?key=0Ar5AIFGgWfJFdB5bDVvaG5kQktHTzh3NjNqU0pOTVE#gid=5>

It was discussed that we should clarify the labeling of line items to more accurately reflect Friday Specials, Learning Journeys, and other Enrichment outside of Friday Specials. The art budget line item is for classroom art. This year there is a hired art docent (covered by PTA), who may spend money from that line item. Otherwise the teacher may use it for classroom art.

The current actual account balance = approx. \$20K

Income status:

- We're currently ahead on overall contributions.
- Received additional \$800 contribution for Islandwood.

- Hopeful projection of approx. \$2K from Winter Event and auction

James: Grants are turned in, could potentially be additional \$3K. Unfortunately the lag time of grants don't fit tidily into budget schedule, and it's hard to set a number to the average grant income. This budget item is an ongoing unknown.

Comment on current budget: We generally underspend, but traditionally overspend on staff appreciation. Has been reduced from previous years.

Discussion of trying to spend down the surplus: Historically we have tried to project losing money so we would spend down the surplus. Also made larger expenditures for capital and activities.

When we wrote last year's budget, we expected a surplus of \$570. This year we're expecting \$1400 more. Last year's budget was conservative.

### **Islandwood and Fundraising**

Current expense of Islandwood: \$9600

There was a motion to approve an increased expenditure of teacher stipend of \$200. Approved.

Discussion of whether it makes sense to send both 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades to Islandwood vs. hiring a sub and sending only 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Cost balances out, but shared experience is an additional benefit. Islandwood is organized such that a group can go two years and have a new educational experience each year. One trade-off for 4<sup>th</sup> graders is not having the "rite of passage" of their final year at DCS.

Discussion about whether the fact that this year's social events have had an extensive fundraising angle has been somewhat overwhelming, and whether that has changed the dynamic of DCS. One big reason for the fundraising push this year was that Islandwood was an unknown cost, and to replace the PTSA money which had previously helped support 6<sup>th</sup> grade outdoor ed. Looking at this year's budget, perhaps the fundraising isn't as big a burden as it had been perceived. It was noted that this is a growing year, and the discussion was not to second-guess the decisions we've made so far, but to consider our decisions going forward. It was also noted that we did collectively pass this budget in April of 2012.

It's important to recognize that Islandwood does need to be sustainable, however. Also, the Islandwood contract requires that the kids participate in fundraising for their Islandwood experience, so student-driven fundraising needs to continue. It was also noted that DCS is a public school, and needs to remain affordable to all families.

Options were discussed for either raising the camp contribution per family or continuing with extensive fundraising.

Q: Can we have a self-selected tier system (families pay different amounts according to financial means)? That would be hard to budget initially. Some families paid the full cost for their kids this year.

Q: Should we trim the budget in other areas? A: Last year we did quite a bit of trimming. Could still look at more areas.

It was noted that fundraising for DCS has become co-mingled with fundraising for Islandwood. Perhaps Islandwood fundraising should be specific and different from overall operation budget, with an individual specifically responsible. We need differentiation of the kinds of fundraising and their purpose. DCS currently has 4 categories of fundraising:

- 1 Child-led fundraising
- 2 Passive fundraising (e.g., PCC scrip, box tops)
- 3 PTSA fun run (funds teacher stipend, art docent, enrichment)
- 4 Paying to attend school events (e.g., Winter Event)

It was noted to consider a DCS value: Community and Personal Responsibility.

Sum up: Group not happy to have so much fundraising at events. People seem willing to spend more for camp. Willingness to have a budget that doesn't exactly balance. This is a flux year. Needed to reboot passive fundraising, which we did this year.

Motion by Lloyd:

- 1 *Reduce our fundraising to that proposed under Option B, and minimize fundraising going forward (to the Option B proposed line item), and that Winter Event not be a paid event. Net 1500. Motion seconded by Lisa J. Motion carries, two opposed.*
- 2 *Parents of children attending Islandwood pay the full amount, with the option for abundant scholarships available for parents who cannot afford it. The current written budget would not reflect this. (Motion Withdrawn)*

Motion by Laura R:

*Pass option B budget as written, except eliminate the income item for Winter Event.*

*Motion seconded by Tom C-F. Clarification noted that the enrichment field trip reflects current reality. One opposed. Option passes.*

Proposal: At the final Steering meeting, do a post mortem on the fundraising for the year. Would like to see Winter Event get back to just being a community event.

**Prudent Reserve 25% or 10%**

*It was proposed to establish a policy of keeping a prudent reserve at a given point in time. Currently have about \$10K. Propose 10% (roughly \$4K) at the end of the fiscal year. Encapsulate in by laws. Motion passed.*

**Money Handling policy**

**Lloyd**

Discussion about details of money handling policy edited by Lloyd. Suggested changes were to have two unrelated community members counting, and a retention period of 7 years. Thanks, Lloyd!

Attachments: Submission of Money policy, Funds Received form

[http://www.lwsd.org/school/discovery/For-Parents/Documents/Official-Documents/DCS\\_Submission\\_of\\_Money-Policy.pdf](http://www.lwsd.org/school/discovery/For-Parents/Documents/Official-Documents/DCS_Submission_of_Money-Policy.pdf)

Note: At the time of publication of the minutes, this location still contained the old version.

**“Appreciation Box”**

**Christi D**

Like a “fill your bucket” for the community members. Put a box in the common area for appreciation comments. Christi and Lindsey will read notes at community meeting. Approved.

**Old Business?**

**New Business?**

Adjourn at 8:50