

Redwood High School

Department Chair Council

Minutes of the October 18, 2006 DCC Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 3:36 p.m. Present: Karen Barrett, Erik Berkowitz, Peggy Bogason, Heather Curtaz, Tara Donoghue, David Goldsmith, Steve Hettleman, Jennifer Labovich, Skip Lovelady, Nancy Neu, David Plescia, Sue Shirley, LaSandra White. Parents: Elaine Bengle, Carol Kuhn, Suman Vyas. Students: Sara DaMert, Beau Shaw. Guests: Stephanie Haver and Wendy Stratton. Peggy Bogason took minutes.

Minutes of the September 20, 2006 Meeting

The minutes of the September 20, 2006 DCC meeting stand as submitted.

WASC Action Plan Preparation for 10/19 Home Group Meeting (Stephanie Haver)

Stephanie Haver discussed the plan for tomorrow's WASC home group meeting. She distributed information packets to the department chairs to use at tomorrow's meeting. She explained the expectations and answered questions.

Ideas for Encouraging Students about State Testing (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu distributed the list of ideas that had been generated at the September staff development day to encourage student performance on state tests. Mrs. Neu explained that one of our goals is to increase our API scores, and noted that some students, particularly juniors, may be too relaxed about the STAR test. She emphasized the importance of taking these tests seriously. She noted that many universities compare API scores between similar high schools. Mrs. Neu asked the DCC to take the list of ideas to their departments, choose the top five ideas, and bring them to the next meeting. She said it would also be fine to come up with new ideas that are not listed on the sheet. LaSandra White is contacting schools similar to Redwood to find out their STAR testing schedules to see if there might be a more efficient way to administer our tests. Nancy Neu will e-mail the list of ideas to department chairs tomorrow.

Cost of Dance Tickets – Feedback (Steve Hettleman)

At the last meeting, Steve Hettleman said that school dances are an important part of the high school experience, but the \$20 tickets for the homecoming dance may be too expensive for a portion of the Redwood student body. After some discussion, it was decided that the DCC would discuss this matter with their departments and bring feedback to this meeting. Some of the feedback included:

- School or community service hours in exchange for full or partial payment.
- Subsidize tickets for students who have demonstrated financial need.
- Do nothing; some did not feel that \$20 was excessive.
- Have students raise money to put on the dance so that tickets would be free.
- ASB issue; perhaps they should fundraise and lower the ticket price.

David Plescia thanked the DCC for their ideas; he agreed that there are students who cannot afford some of the dances and other activities. He reminded the DCC that scholarships are available for these students. Mr. Plescia explained that the Leadership class does a lot of fundraising, and that the school dances are part of those fundraising efforts. He noted that the \$20 homecoming dance tickets were not too prohibitive as that dance had the highest attendance yet: 845 students. The Leadership class will work on new fundraising ideas. LaSandra White asked the DCC to spread the word about scholarships for students in financial need and send those students to her.

Staff Development Calendar Change – October 26 (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu said there has been some confusion about the staff calendar. She will send e-mail reminders about Thursday afternoon activities.

California Distinguished School (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu said that Redwood is eligible to submit another application for the California Distinguished School (CDS) recognition. The application is due in December and she would like two or three teachers to work with the administration to write the application. The teachers would receive stipends. She reminded the DCC that there will be a validation visit for CDS. The CDS rating is an honor that is noted by colleges, realtors, and the general community.

Staff Development Requests (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu asked the DCC to remind their departments, particularly new teachers, that the administration rarely turns down staff development requests. She explained the process and discussed some possible staff development opportunities, including conferences, workshops, visiting other schools, visiting each other's classes, etc. Mrs. Neu noted that many of the same teachers continue to take advantage of the staff development program; it is time to encourage others to participate.

November 1 DCC Meeting/Minimum Day (Nancy Neu)

Nancy Neu said the next DCC meeting falls on a minimum day. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the November 1 meeting will be canceled.

Additional Items

Tara Donoghue expressed a concern that the Halloween costume contest may reward students who are dressed in inappropriate and/or revealing costumes. She noted that costumes should adhere to the dress code.

- David Plescia explained that the contest winners are determined by a panel of staff members. He suggested making an announcement in homeroom about appropriate Halloween costumes.
- A suggestion was made to have staff members patrol the line of contest entrants and remove students who are dressed inappropriately. Nancy Neu asked the DCC to ask their departments to help with supervision; teachers who help will be compensated.
- Mrs. Neu noted that students who are dressed inappropriately will be sent home to change. Any absences or tardies stemming from being sent home will be unexcused.

Meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.