

Pacific Spirit School
Parent Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 28, 2009

1) Shift in Leadership

- Ingrid's role, responsibilities and goals

As you all know, I am assuming the majority of Heidi's administrative duties. I spoke at the parent meeting about where I am coming from with my leadership role at the school. Below is a list of my goals, my goals for the program as well as a strategy I have identified to achieve these goals. Last, I outlined a list of expectations/responsibilities for all of us to help achieve these goals.

My goals:

- 1) To develop & implement a strong child honouring and academic program.
- 2) To develop a strong educator team who deliver the program to meet its outcomes and objectives.
- 3) To create a thriving school environment.
 - a. Fiscal responsibility
 - i. Run the best program we can with the means that we have
 - ii. Ensure that we are able to continue for years to come
 - iii. May start small but intentions to grow
 - b. Growth
 - i. Increase numbers and grades
 - c. Enhancement
 - i. Build on our program in very deliberate ways to enhance the learning experience of your children

Goals of program

- Child Honouring
- Meet/exceed Ministry learning outcomes

Strategy

Jan. – Aug. 2009:

- Build strong program
 - Develop and implement this year (develop & implement, assess)
- Develop strong educational team
 - Regular meetings for program development, creating synergistic learning opportunities for children, support from Heidi to "live the philosophy"
 - Work to support educators to enhance their teaching skills and ensure program is run to meet its goals
 - Ensure follow through in program regarding activities and assignments

Expectations/Responsibilities

- What you can expect of me
 - Work with educators to ensure that the program is well designed and meeting the ministry outcomes
 - Respond to any concerns that you have about the program or school
 - Deal with the day-to-day administrative tasks regarding the school
- What you can expect of the educators
 - Implement a strong child honouring and academic program
 - Ensure a supportive and safe environment for your children (social, emotional)
 - Work with you and your child to ensure program meets their learning needs
- What I expect of you
 - Contact me if you have any issues or concerns (please don't speak to the educators during class time – this is distracting to them as they are focused on working with the children. If you need to speak with your child's educator, arrange a meeting for a time when they are not teaching)
 - Support program/school/educators by engaging in specific activities (if you are spending time at the school between 9 am – 4 pm, it would be helpful if you could engage in specific activities to support the school. I

will be creating a list of these and posting it on the bulletin board at the east entrance – things like tidying up the library are most helpful to both the educators and the program)

2) Program

As I look back over the year, we have had many challenges this year that have required us to respond quickly. Losing the preschool as well as our original 2-3 educator less than 2 weeks before school started in the Fall were difficult. Because Kyla came in with very little notice, she needed Heidi's support to develop and run a strong program. As you all know, this is why we brought Carolin in full time to work with the K/1 group which allowed Heidi to mentor both Kyla and Carolin in their roles with the children. This move, while important for the quality of the program, was costly and, due to the requirements of continuing to receive government funding we cannot afford to continue with Heidi in this mentorship role (if any one wants to know about the government requirements, please let me know but it is more than I need to include in these minutes). Therefore, Heidi will be moving back into working with the K/1's the majority of the time and Carolin and Kyla will be working part time at the school. Kyla will be responsible for the 2/3 morning program. Kyla will also be the primary educator working with the elders in the afternoons, although Heidi will still be working with the elders one afternoon a week. Also, in the mornings, the children will still be in 3 groupings (K/1, 2/3 & 4-6) but in the afternoons, the children will be working in two large groups (basically K-2 and 3-6). This is basically what has been happening for a while, but it was just not formally identified. Therefore, there will be 3 educators in the mornings and 2 in the afternoons. Given our numbers, this model will help decrease our operating costs while still ensuring the quality of the learning program at the school. I have been working a fair amount with the educators to get the program elements clearly identified in terms of objectives, teaching/learning strategies and assessment techniques. My intention here is to have the program well designed and clearly meeting it's objectives. For those of you who don't know, I am an educator at UBC and have been involved in designing many curricula and courses. I enjoy doing this work and am excited about supporting the educators to implement a well designed program. I have attached the weekly schedules that I handed out at the meeting and have left hard copies of these in the entrance to the East Room.

For those of you who were not at the meeting, I am hoping the above information is helpful to allow you to understand our thinking around the program and educator team. If you have any questions, though, please feel free to send me an e-mail or catch up with me at school as I would be more than happy to answer them.

Jericho walk

At the parent meeting, it was requested that we bring back the famous "Jericho Walk". This has been done – it will be happening at 3 pm on Tuesdays. Any parents who are interested in joining in on the walk are more than welcome to do so.

School-wide opening

Every morning there is now a school-wide opening circle in the East Room. This circle starts at about 9:10 am and continues to about 9:20 or 9:25. If you are late and the circle has begun, please enter the school via the younger's room or the west room and wait with your child until the circle is finished (as long as there is one adult with the children, this is sufficient, the younger children should not be left unsupervised at this time). Parents requested that Heidi or Carolin stay in the younger's room to supervise the children who were late, however besides leading the circle, there are other housekeeping activities that the educators or engaged in at this time that may not allow them to stay in the middle room with your children. Therefore, please be prepared to have to stay with your child until the circle is complete.

3) Finances

Given our low enrolment, we are still running a deficit budget (even with the decreased educator hours), so I am looking to rent out one of our rooms (the east or west room) full time to another school group. If possible, I would like to have this room rented out this academic year. Also, I am not looking for a "permanent" resident as I would like to reclaim whatever room we rent out once we begin to grow. At this time, we are not thinking of having a preschool in one of the rooms as this would limit our ability to grow given a preschool would be a permanent resident in the space. I will keep you posted regarding whether we have found a tenant for one of our rooms.

4) Parent help needed

- Support to help organize field trips
 - o Kyla has many great ideas for field trips this term however she could use some support
- Promotions Committee (chair & members)
 - o Kim Frank volunteered to chair the committee, Lisa Eckmyn volunteered to sit on the committee. Ingrid will also be part of the committee.
 - o If you are interested in being on this committee please contact Ingrid or Kim.
- Policy & procedure manual (typing)
 - o Debbie Nelson & Gayle Ferrel have offered to help with this
- Fix up playground (ladder needs to be replaced)
 - o Are there a couple of people who are handy with tools that would be willing to do this? Please let Ingrid know.

5) Promotions

As we look towards next year, there are several events that you should be aware about. You are our best ambassadors, so please feel free to tell families how they can learn more about the school based on my list below.

Visiting Days

- I have scheduled monthly visiting days to allow families who are interested in having their child attend the school come and visit to see the school in action.
- The dates are:
 - Monday, February 2nd
 - Monday, March 2nd
 - Monday, March 30th
 - Monday, April 27th
 - Monday, May 25th
 - Monday, June 8th
- During this day, parents and their children should arrive at 10 am (I will be giving a general school/program orientation at this time) after which they can move into the age group appropriate to their child. These visits are for any aged child.
- During the parent meeting, it was suggested that current parents also attend the visiting days (or for as long as they can) so that they can talk to visiting families about the school and their experience of it. So, if you can be around on any of the above dates, please do so.

Open House

We would like to have an Open House either the end of February or early March, I am thinking possibly February 28th or March 7th – I will confirm this once I have spoken to Kim (our promotions chair) about the date.

Web site

With the help of Alec (Sascha's dad), I am working to keep the web site updated with visiting dates, posting the weekly schedules, registration information, etc. If you are talking with families, you can give out our business card (there are boxes of these in the school office that I would be happy to give you some of) so that they can access our web site for further information on the school as well as the visiting dates/open house dates.