
**Agenda:**

1. **Welcome New Members**
   Eileen Rubenstein, Jacqueline Park and Danielle Dixon were introduced as our new site council members.

2. **Title One Report by Priscilla Hooke**
   Priscilla Hooke, our Reading Club/LAP (Learning Assistance Program) teacher, gave her yearly report on this program. The report has not been finalized this year. All grade levels receive reading club support. Students are assessed using Fountas & Pinnel (F&P) and ranked using a combination of scores from Stanford, MSP, F&P, report card and teacher recommendations. All kindergartners are given the F&P assessment. The rank order creates a list of students that qualify for the LAP program with groups formed until space is full.

   Priscilla works with first through third grade with each grade level receiving 30 minutes, 3 days a week. The EA support, Karen Nelson, works with kindergarten, fourth and fifth grade. Kindergarten receives 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Fourth and fifth grade receive 30 minutes, 4 days a week. They are currently serving 72 kids this year. Students are pulled out of class for a quieter environment and also so they don’t feel like other students are watching them. Students don’t miss out on instruction by being pulled out. They actually end up receiving a double dose of reading instruction along with a bit of writing.

   The goal of reading club is to have students reading at grade level by the end of the year. Students exit out when they begin performing academically in the middle of the group without needing any extra support. Only 50% of kindergartners, first and second graders end up needing reading club the following year. Jacqueline asked if students need reading club due to the high standards with curriculum. Priscilla feels that some students just haven’t mastered basic reading skills. Often time parents with students in the upper grades opt out of reading club even if their student qualifies. Older students don’t want to be stereotyped as someone that needs extra help. Younger students often get their confidence boosted by participating in reading club. Michelle commented that she noticed her son Vinny was more self-aware of being in this program as he got older.
Priscilla and Karen meet weekly to discuss student progress. Parent communication includes monthly newsletters, having an open house during conferences and individual conferences if needed. PTSA has purchased Ipads for this program and Priscilla is looking at apps to use on them. Ipads will be shared with Special Ed. Edana would like feedback as to how the Ipads are helping out after they have been used for a while.

Question was asked as to why we don’t have a math program. Marla shared that since NC isn’t a Title 1 school we don’t qualify for funding for an additional math teacher. Schools get designated as Title 1 based on test scores. Several other questions that came up were: how does Priscilla’s time allotment get determined? Is historical data of number of qualifying students looked at? Is it possible to get District to up Priscilla’s time? Kristin and Laura both feel it’s important to be able to work with as many kindergartners as possible to help get their skills up to speed. This would be a definite advantage as they move through the school system.

3. **PTSA Report**

The costume carnival was a huge success. Michelle was in charge of the carnival and she expressed that she couldn’t have done it without the help of so many great volunteers. There were around 700 kids in attendance which brought up some crowd control issues. Feedback was to possibly do more events outside. The haunted house was outside but maybe next year they need to consider doing more. All ranges of kids had a good time.

There is a board meeting on November 18th at 10:30 am.

The food drive is over and pajama day is the clear winner. Pajama day will be Wednesday, November 6th.

4. **Community Report.**

Richard was unable to attend the meeting but he had forwarded a copy of a report that the City of Newcastle did for Marnie Maraldo in 2011. The report looked at traffic congestion concerns surrounding Newcastle Elementary along with suggestions that may or may not alleviate the problems. Marla handed this out to everyone to review and possibly discuss at a future meeting.

Jacqueline asked if we could do an e-mail blast regarding snow routes. Even though this information was sent to all Issaquah families from the District it was thought it would be handy to have this information sent out again from the school. Donna shared that she was already planning on putting this information in the e-news that is going home at the end of the week. People also need to realize that the ISD covers a large demographic area and sometimes weather on the plateau may be different than the weather we see here in Newcastle. The District bases their decisions on whether to close school or have late starts based on what is best for students and staff even if the entire District isn’t affected. Sarah asked if there could be a volunteer
group handy in case we ever end up having dismissal in snow conditions like we did a few years back. Volunteer group would need to be people from the neighborhood so that they would be within walking distance. The year of the Thanksgiving snow when District didn’t close school early staff was not only trying to take care of students that were waiting to be picked up but they were also out trying to sand the parking lot with bags of sand. Marla reminded that it is the staff’s responsibility to make sure the students are safe and picked up by the appropriate person but we could definitely use volunteers to help us with the process. PTSA said they could blast out a call for volunteers for this. Maybe this procedure could be a part of our emergency preparedness plan. Kristin offered to check with other schools on what their plan for this would be.

5. Building Report

Curriculum: F&P Assessments. Marla shared that the F&P tests that were done in the Spring have been uploaded to District. This information is used to help guide students to the appropriate reading levels when using the bookroom. PTSA donated money for purchasing higher end books for the bookroom. Books are barcoded and tracked. It was asked if the lettering system could be put on our website to help parents understand what level their student is at so they can help them pick out appropriate books. Laura shared that Scholastic has that information already posted. Laura also shared that you can bring up lists of level books on the library website. It was asked if information could go home to parents explaining how to do this. Marla shared that this information is discussed at conferences. Laura will provide screen shots to the teachers to have handy during conferences. PTSA wants to put this in their newsletter to advertise as it could be a good resource for purchasing books for gifts.

CIP (continuous improvement plan): This is a three year plan. This year we are focusing on literacy renewal. The District has given the ok to extend CIP for one year. There will be a leadership meeting to discuss and decide if we met our goal or if we need to keep literacy as our goal. Presentations are shared out at school board meetings. Information is used as a tool for educators.

Safety & Security: This year the District is studying all buildings and reviewing safety procedures. An independent company was hired to do walk throughs in each of the buildings. All schools received a 45 page document with questions that had to be answered. Michelle Trifunovic oversees District security which is a new position. Newcastle has already had our walk through and the evaluator was very pleased with what he saw. He felt that our school was welcoming but maintained the message that if you’re not supposed to be here then you shouldn’t be. Reviewing safety procedures is an ongoing process and reports with findings and recommendations will be provided to the District. Danielle asked if teachers and staff receive training and if it’s done yearly. Marla confirmed that we do multiple trainings a year. Question was asked if there was any type of training for volunteers. It would be helpful to them to know what to do if a gunman
walked into the school. Could this be part of PTSA parent ed? Might be helpful to have this training for all south end schools. Laura has a friend with the FBI that may be interested in providing training. Marla cautioned that any type of training would need to be in-line with District procedures. Question was asked about checking student's backpacks. Teachers and volunteers shouldn't be putting things in student's backpacks unless the student is there holding their backpack open. Marla will remind teachers and staff that we aren't authorized to check student's backpacks. Principals can do this if they have probable cause to do so.

The change in procedure for visitor/volunteer badges was based on feedback from our walk through. Someone could get ahold of one of our badges and use it to freely walk into and around the school and no one would question them. Through this new process of checking badges in and out Laurie has identified quite a few people that have been here volunteering without having their WSP paperwork done. We absolutely can't have people volunteering without this paperwork on file. Teachers need to be diligent in making sure their volunteers have cleared. WSP paperwork needs to be done yearly now.

The downstairs door leading out to the portable should be the only door left unlocked. All other outside doors and playground gates should remain locked. Gates and playground doors are unlocked before and after school and before large PTSA events. Eileen feels that the portable is unsafe. Anyone has access to it. How can we make it more secure? Even with the gates locked there are still lots of access points on campus. Someone could be on campus for quite a while before being noticed. The security walk through didn't say anything about the portable. The steps leading down to the portable can be dangerous especially if you are carrying a lot of items in your arms. Is District liable if someone falls and gets hurt? Might want to consider some signage.

Feedback & Adjustments made to Lunch Room: We have received good feedback to the changes made during lunchtimes. Students have open seating every Friday. Marla clarified that students aren't being asked to put on and model clothes from the lost and found. They hold up items for students to see and hopefully claim as their own. Students are given a five minute warning indicating that their lunch time is coming to an end. This sometimes seems to boost the noise level. Kristin shared that a school she worked at put music on for the last five minutes as their indicator that time is almost up. It seemed to be a smoother and calmer transition to the end of lunch. Terry will check with other EA's to get their thoughts on possibly doing this. Another suggestion was to have a large clock that counts down every lunch period. This would give students a visual as to how much time was left.

Shirley shared that she was asked during one of the Early with Shirleys why kids were told they couldn't run at recess. Shirley assured everyone that that is not the case—that would be like asking a fish not to swim. There could, however, be various times where students have been asked not to run for safety concerns, i.e., during fire drills. Kids aren't allowed to run and/or play tag on
or around the play structure (bark area) for safety reasons. We have had students get head injuries running into the play structure. Tag is to be played on the sand field only. No walking on slide, etc. It was asked if playground rules could be sent out to parents to clarify procedures and also so parents can reinforce the rules as well. Information is in the student handbook.

6. **Table Discussion**
   
   **Volunteers & Non-school Age Siblings and ISD Policy 4311**: Marla passed out some literature for everyone to take and read for discussion at a future site council meeting.

   **NC Handbook and Other School Practices**: Ran out of time to discuss.

7. **Other/Future Agenda Items**
   
   Change future meeting times to 8:00.