

Volunteers Common Link

3/10/2010

Drinkward Center Conference Room

Attendance: Megan Bingham, Carey Killian, Kim Bissell, Madeleine Menashe, Janet Duffie, Sarah Grewe, Alicia Morissette, Susan Phillips, Melanie Clark, Taizoon Doctor, Teri Beatty, Kim Jensen, Willemijn Ilcisin, Jordan Elliott, Anne Marie FitzGerald, Cindy Plummer, Phillip Craig, Marty Jones, Tom Wheelock, Susie Gundle, Pat Trunzo, John Nakamura, Betsy Leonard, Courteneay duBrowa, Kristin Bradley, Eileen Pilkenton, Debbie Rischitelli, Jan Massaro

Phillip Craig Opening

Tom Wheelock

Reporting for Kathy Layendecker: We are in the midst of hiring an Upper School math teacher, a Middle School Humanities teacher and Head of Lower School. We will have candidates on campus today and next week for all three divisions.

David reports there is strong demand in admissions and strong applicants. Our acceptance letters will go out this week. Re-enrollment is consistent with the last few years.

Winterim begins this Thursday including the local activities. Science expo was last week and the exhibits were exciting, the kids worked really hard to present their research. The 2nd grade hero reports were also last week. These events confirm all the good things that are going on around here.

Our ski team did very well this year and boy's lacrosse beat Jesuit last night 8-3.

Jordan Elliott

There is high energy and spirit around the upper school; everyone is excited and gearing up for Winterim. A few trips left today with several others leaving tomorrow and the local events starting tomorrow as well. Winterim brings together all of the safety issues and procedures to make sure everyone is prepared for their trips. A couple of highlights are Art in Portland, a trip to Ashland to see plays, and Aerial Flyers, trips to London and Uganda. You can see all the offerings on the OES Upper School webpage.

The Science Fair was very successful. In the non-judged section, the Upper School faculty and seniors all interviewed the projects. The Middle School faculty also went and supported the kids. We have a student from Afghanistan who has received an award from OSU for his work. Thank you to Bill Lamb and the Science Department for organizing this event.

The College Counselor reports that all applications have been turned in and the kids are starting to receive acceptance letters. There are many decisions to make and we will include information later in the year about where everyone decides to go.

The first OES Diversity Conference was held here yesterday with 35 students and 10 adults attending. Many of the students have attended NAIS and PNAIS diversity conferences before; this conference was put together by Upper School students from OES. The themes of the conference were: Taboo – things we don't want to talk about and why, Religion and Multi-cultural Identity.

Anne Marie FitzGerald

Student led conferences will be held this week on Thursday and Friday. The teachers and students have been preparing for the last couple of weeks. The work we did with Bonnie Campbell Hill in February is already being used during these conferences. There were multiple assessments the teachers could use right away. They have and will be incorporated into the conferences.

Music informances are being held in the Lower School. Hero speeches in 2nd grade were last week and the work that goes on behind the scenes is the most important part of this for the kids. This year's second graders were very poised and confident.

5th grade is working on Revolutionary Debates. We are also focusing on Service Learning including puppet plays they are performing for preschoolers who are Spanish native speakers. Kathy Layendecker noted that this was one of the best service learning projects we have done in this division.

We had a very successful shoe drive (over 700 pairs). Nick DePreter is going to Uganda for Winterim with Upper School students. He is sharing his work there with his 4th graders and enriching his curriculum with his experiences with the Upper School. Kara Tambellini, assisted by US Students as part of their Winterim experience, is taking over while Nick is away. She is a current Upper School teacher.

Cindy Plummer

Volunteer Hours:

(A handout was given to the group showing current volunteer hours reported.) The hours are broken out by divisions. Please be diligent with your reporting because of the impact it has on our grant applications. It is really important that we remind people to report their hours. We are working to make the reporting easiest as possible for everyone.

Marty Jones

Director of Marketing and Communications

Marty's immediate goal is to learn and then tell the story of OES – share our wonderful news with the city and beyond. It's an amazing place that needs to be showcased, and OES does a lot for the community and our children, which we need to get out to the public. We need to be proud of that and not be hesitant to share it with the world. Telling our story is very important. I've met with a lot of people; alumni, staff, bus barn staff, kids, behind the scenes people, learning how the school works.

I heard from a parent that we need to make sure we don't do just "one-message", there are Upper, Middle and Lower School parents and one hit won't always do it. Being specific to the level in regards to communication.

Eileen Pilkenton: I agree with what you said. When my children were in Lower School I didn't have a sense of what was going on in the Upper School and it would have been beneficial to have cross-divisional communications. Knowing what is going on helps the kids get excited about what Middle and Upper Schools have to offer.

Pat Trunzo: Being able to tell a better story about who and what OES is about.

Melanie Clark: 6th grade is an adjustment, 8th graders know where they want to go to high school. 7th grade is the key year to make sure the kids have a good understanding of why they would want to stay at OES.

Tom Wheelock: What are you looking for (the middle schoolers) and making sure the fit is right and what the fit is. Sharing experiences from Upper School about what they do, especially Winterim. Creating more of a 7th through 10th-grade class curriculum span to help with that.

Kim Jensen: As the parent of a 8th grader, we'd like a more aggressive sell for sports – the kids think they want to leave for sports and then don't end up playing at the school they move to.

Tom Wheelock: Also, arts, robotics, etc. We want to start in Middle School to encourage the families about all areas of school life.

Susan Phillips: We need a more proactive forwarding of information about the kids and school to the media. Other schools are doing things that OES is doing and they have articles in the paper and on the news. How does the information makes it to the media?

Marty: It's very much an important part of what I've already been working on. We will definitely be cleaning this up and build relationships with the appropriate media sources.

Marty: Casey Cowen from OPB was here twice during arts week and she said two things. One, she had never been here before and thought "what an amazing place". Two, she is doing a piece on arts in schools this May and I talked with her to make sure she knows we'd like to be included in their piece.

If you have any connections to media or information you think should get out to the media please email or call me.

Eileen Pilkenton: In terms of athletics, the scores only get posted locally if someone calls it in. It would be nice to know that all the scores would be reported. This would be an easy way to get OES in the paper.

Melanie Clark: You should interview a few lifers in the Upper School and ask them what are the traditions that are important to them and that they remember, let potential applicants meet with kids who have been here for their perspective, a student-to-student meeting.

Kim Bissell: How would you like for us to communicate with you?

Marty: Please email or phone me when something is happening. The sooner the better so we can get it out there and know where/when the best time to get it out and in what format.

Alicia Morissette: This is something internally I have noticed. We had an author come to Lower School for an author visit and the 7th graders happened to be reading a book by that author. We missed the opportunity to have the author speak with the 7th graders. How could we handle that?

Tom Wheelock: We are working on looking at the calendar more often to help make sure all divisions are informed of events.

Willejmn Ilcisin: How much do we promote things the kids are doing outside of OES (for example Portland Youth Philharmonic, and others)? It would be beneficial for us to share this information. Many kids are doing amazing things outside of OES that we could be sharing.

Cindy Plummer: If parents know which Lower School experiences lead to what students can do when they are in Middle and Upper School it would help show the value of the Lower School. Hero reports, for example, help the kids from an early age to discover what they might be interested in later.

Marty Jones: Current OES students took him through the divisions when he was on a visit prior to being hired. He wanted to apply to OES...it was so impressive.

Susie Gundle: Another valuable resource we have is the alumni. It is always very impressive to me when I'm around the older alumni because they have great experiences to share. Many alumni are back for spring break so you could interview them in the next week or so to glean stories about their time at OES.

Janet Duffie: Lower School parents don't have the same experiences until they get to Middle and Upper Schools. Somehow as a community we don't understand what the kids will be learning and experiencing and how it flows.

There was a blip in an external "blog land" last spring. When is it appropriate to interact with those sources?

We are well thought of nationally. Our academics and faculty have a relationship above the clouds and I as a parent are under the clouds and there are two different groups. Wouldn't it be great if we could be brought up above the clouds (parents).

Marty Jones: Being aware of the communications with the parents I can see that there needs to be more connections with especially Lower School parents.

Melanie Clark: There will be 32 kids per classroom at my public elementary school (Alameda). The teachers only plan together every 3 weeks. This is so different than what are kids are getting at OES. The habits they learn in Lower School are invaluable for Middle and Upper School and beyond.

Willemijn Ilcisin: We need to make sure we understand what's going in public school. It is hard to see what we haven't seen.

Kristin Bradley: I think there is a group of Beginning School parents that need to be marketed to quickly. Parents are asking me, "I want to know why I pay all these taxes and don't just go to Riverdale?" These families are in (OES) now and we need to nurture them now, they don't see the value.

Marty Jones: How do you respond to that (those questions)?

Kristin: I bring up the amazing science programs, the safety, connections (community), buddy program, public speaking, individual support (for the kids). I think it comes down to value, double working parents who need to hear why it's so great. "Here's what we do at OES", how we link it.

Melanie Clark: Public School only have little slivers of art, music, and PE which we need to remind our parents.

Marty Jones: Once this discovery process is over, it's not going to stop. I will be having round tables, and open sessions to continue the dialog about who we are.

Madeleine Menashe: When we were looking at OES, all the things we are talking about we heard about. We had older children in our neighborhood that would look you in the eye, were very articulate, the kids here are so polished and confident. The kids are joyful here and not afraid.

Jan Massaro: The kids from OES are so different and more willing to talk to me (adult) about all sorts of things.

Pat Trunzo: Foundational elements in the Lower School aren't being articulated to the parents. It shows up in the Upper School but we don't know it yet if we are only in the Lower School. We need to make sure we include detailed information to our parents to understand what 10 semi-finalists for National Merit Scholar means (we only have 80 kids in the class so that is huge).

We are well balanced – sports, art, music, and academics.

Eilieen Pilkenton: Lower School parents are handing off their most valued thing (their kids) and the expectations they have are important to know.

Marty Jones:

Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

Think of this, what is the USP from your perspective of OES? Please Email it to me.

Alicia Morissette – Lower School PAL

One of the greatest things about this month's PAL meeting was having the 8th graders come down and share their musical with us. Having the Lower School parents see the kids confidently getting up and performing is a good way to show them what can lie ahead.

Jan Massaro

How can we get the information out of this meeting out into the community? Give me feedback by email and be prepared to discuss at next month. Please remember to check in with new families, see if they have questions about what is going on at this time of year.

Grade reps – please let me know if you are interested in being a grade rep again (if you've only been there 1 year).

Teri Beatty - Auction

Aardy – went to science fair, and now he's in the Lower School, check him out.

I made 50 phone calls to our new families yesterday to invite them to the auction personally; will be contacting more today. I wanted them to understand what it was about. Invites out in the mail yesterday. You can pay and RSVP on line. There will be a wall of wine. Our raffle is a Volkswagen Bug

that will be on campus just after spring break. We have 200 tickets for only \$100 each. Appeal to the kids and staff, we have permission to sell the tickets at the MAC for a couple of days too.

Michele Ackerman

We are looking for volunteers for the auction. Curbside for wall of wine April 7-9, auction set up, during event if you aren't going, etc. Really good food will be supplied for the volunteers; the set up is the day of the event, April 17th, 8am.

Kim Bissell – FOESL

GOBS is coming up and our first collection date is 3/17. More information will come out soon. Volunteer form coming around please sign up to help out during this event. This is an all school event in the Lower School library.

Shanda Bhasker started a text book swap we would like more people to know about.

Susan Phillips: Community Diversity Link

Our next meetings are:

Friday, April 23, 8-9:30am, OES Dining Hall: Books and Breakfast Meeting to Discuss *Dreams From My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* by Barack Obama

Friday, May 14, 8-9:30am, OES Dining Hall: Books and Breakfast Meeting to Discuss *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

Please share your ideas for parent diversity programs (books, authors, speakers, cultural programs, etc) for next year with Susan Phillips or Anne Nedrow.

Everyone should be reading the book Half the Sky. Our students have been raising money for Woman of Congo, which is exactly what is needed to change these women's lives, family, village. Please let me know your ideas for next year. What books have a diversity component, we are looking for anything that raises global awareness, nationally, here in Portland, speakers, authors, books, presentations, workshops... We are open please send your ideas.