Parent Community Link Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2014
8:00-9:30am
Drinkward Volunteer Room

Attendees: Mo Copeland, Chris Schuck, John Holloran, Andrea Bride, Jordan Elliott, Scott Hardister, David Lowell, Susie Gundle, Liz MacDonell, Marty Jones, Phillip Craig, Alicia Morissette, Kristin Bradley, Clare Rathbone, Ruchi Prakash, Soolyn Chang, Lisa Kellogg, Kim Bissell, Diane Polscer, Jana Reddoch, Stephanie Knight, Jane Langley, Kay Pinkava, Jan Massaro, Michele Ackerman, Courtney Fitzloff, Madeleine Menashe, Jodi Wilkins, Mary Lou Green, Mari Schwalbach, Ann Perry, Brandi Ettinger, Kristina Davis, Kristin Barnett, Sandy Patrick, Julie Kuni, Margueritte Kim, Jennifer Baumann.

Rev. Phillip Craig -- Welcome
Reverend Phillip Craig, inspired by the Middle School “Wonder” day, opened the meeting with reflections on kindness drawn from different religious and secular backgrounds.

Welcome, Introductions and Role of PCL
Alicia Morissette – Chair of PCL
Alicia Morissette welcomed everyone back to a new school year. Her goal is for the PCL meetings to be “information-filled” and she commits to cancelling the meeting if she can’t fulfill that goal. In addition, she would like to showcase student work at the meetings. She reminded PCL members that they provide invaluable feedback to the school administration. PCL members are all leaders in the school, and the community will come to PCL members not only to seek advice but also to vent. She reminded us that it is not our role to solve problems, but to direct questions and comments to the right person. Alicia asked PCL members to be mindful of issues regarding confidentiality.

Mo Copeland – Head of School
Head of School Report and New Administration Introductions
Mo wished everyone a Happy New Year! The summer was long and quiet and she was glad to have the community back on campus. She thanked Phillip Craig for the Belltower ceremony which was a great success (and 25 minutes shorter!)

Mo reflected on the enjoyable time spent with her family over the summer. But globally it was a difficult summer with much bad news (Mo cited the situation in the Ukraine, in Gaza and Syria, and the Ebola outbreak). The common thread through all these tensions is cultural strife, whether racial, ethnic or otherwise. She was particularly glad, therefore, that OES has made a commitment to cultural competency and the need to appreciate the ways in which we are different. She read out the OES Mission statement and the call to realize our “Power for Good” as citizens of the world and this community. She reminded us that we get to work closely with this next generation shaping this call. The Seniors put on a great Senior Entrance on Monday and established their theme for the year as V15ION. This group is wrestling with becoming adults and how they will recognize their own power for good in
the world. They have set a great tone for the year and Mo looks forward to working with them.

On the housekeeping side, Mo emphasized that we need to continue to structure our school around our strategic initiatives. She has hired Chris Schuck as Associate Head of School. Chris will oversee the program initiatives and Mo will oversee the Master Plan (the building and funding.) Chris has previously held many roles: teacher, division head and Head of School. When reviewing his portfolio with him, Chris adroitly shaped his role into 4 thematic goals and he will discuss those later. Mo is committed to being connected with the program, the children and the faculty. She will accomplish this in various ways, including continuing her commitment to PCL, and engaging in the Senior Exit Interviews. She reiterated that her primary focus moving forward will be on the school’s strategic initiatives, including the buildings and the campaign.

**Chris Schuck – Associate Head of School**

Mo introduced Chris Schuck. Chris is excited to be here and to meet the students. While he was in the process of looking at OES, the school was highly recommended by Patrick Bassett the Head of the NAIS, Gene Batiste, a Vice President of NAIS and Lisa Pullman, the executive director of a consortium of independent schools, as well as by his mom’s friend, Jane Pontius, retired head of and Episcopal school in Rockville, MD. Chris was drawn to the job because it involved all the things that as Head of School he could not attend to. He described his role as having 4 main areas:

1. He will be working with Division Heads on “all-school” initiatives. OES has 3 incredibly well-positioned, thoroughly mature, masterful division heads. All are educational leaders across the school and not “ghettoized” in their own divisions – this can be seen in their work on the Essential Competencies.
2. He will be working on the “Pre-K through 12” program. The Division Heads focus on their own division; he gets to work across divisions to think about the structure and content of the program K-12.
3. He will be working on information technology. This is an area that is moving and changing very fast but it is very important because it allows OES to attend to what is happening in the outside world as well as here.
4. He will be working on creating community in school. School is always an inadvertent community but OES takes pride in creating of disparate pieces a community that is characterized and challenged by its new Community Statement. The Community Statement is an ambitious statement of who we are and who we aspire to be. The Administration team needs to work towards this goal.

**Liz MacDonell – Director of Development**

Mo introduced the new Director of Development, Liz MacDonell. Randa Cleaves has moved back into a consulting role and transition plan and we are lucky that we could fill her shoes with someone of Liz’s caliber.
Liz attended an independent school (Andover) and so understands the culture. She was the Executive Director of the Randall Children’s Hospital and she oversaw the campaign that raised $25 million. The transition to this new role has been very successful and she is already “up and running.” She announced a reception today (September 10) at 4:30pm to say goodbye to Randa. Liz’s goal is to help raise money for the building campaign whilst keeping up momentum in the OES fund. She applauded the OES Fund which has raised more money in the past 2 years than ever before. Her role is to lead a wonderful team already in place.

**Administrative Team Updates**

**David Lowell**

This is a time of innovation and collaboration in the Lower School. Like Mo, he sees the contrast between the state of the world and the state of the Lower School. His hope is that the Lower School is preparing children to make a difference. The Lower School has faculty committed to the Essential Competencies that children need. At the core, children need to be skilled enquirers who seek after answers and make a commitment to do something with what they have learned. The day after the last day of school, 41 LS faculty gathered for a full-day workshop on “enquiry learning.” The next day, 18 faculty met to assess what they had learned. The LS Faculty is getting ready for October 10, as OES is hosting the annual NAIS conference. 19 LS faculty have been selected to present at this conference and are collaborating across grades and divisions as Lower School and Middle School teachers will be presenting together.

**Jordan Elliot**

Jordan also stressed the need for collaboration and innovation. He reiterated that it had been a terrible summer and that, as a community, we need to commit to intercultural competency. We have now created a “Community Statement.” Some feedback from the intercultural competency training has been that the training is abstract. Lower School, Middle School and Upper School faculty and staff therefore worked together to create a case study that dealt with real student, faculty and staff issues. The discussion on this case study went well and was challenging. The Upper School has focused on how to live out the OES Mission Statement outside of the classroom, for example during Octoberim and Winterim. Tna Meyerhoff, the Director of the Winterim program, led the US faculty in an exercise that involved making up cards that had random topics, e.g. cooking in the SW, singing. Each faculty member took a card, and then had to find a partner and build a Winterim course. The result is “collaboration outside of the box,” for example, Adam Steele, and VJ Sathyaraj are putting together an interfaith choir with the Muslin school over Winterim.

**Scott Hardister** (present only for a short time of the meeting because of 8th Grade Partnership Day)

Scott discussed the Middle School “Wonder Day” and the theme of kindness. The Middle School wanted to find one book that the whole Middle School could read. That is not an easy task because of the wide range between 6th and 8th graders. The Team Leaders and Patrick Fuller worked together and then Lara Ingham (the Lower School librarian) suggested “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio. Everyone was very enthusiastic. Sarah Grenert-Funk
and Patrick Fuller had the vision of setting up a “Wonder Day” in which everyone in the Middle School was committed to various workshops on themes raised in the book. This would set the stage for the year as a community and as learners. Sarah and Patrick sent out e-mails to the teachers over the summer asking for workshop suggestions. They needed 13 workshops and came up with 20! The workshops were organized round 3 of the Essential Competencies – I explore, I create, and I connect. For example, Ryan Holland ran an exercise in empathy, etc. The kids were totally engaged, with no cynicism. The 6th, 7th and 8th graders were combined into groups all day. In the 20 years that he has taught, this day will stand out for Scott, in terms of the process and collaboration and the faculty commitment. It is obvious about how much the faculty care about our kids – and not just their academics, but their character and becoming people we want them to be. The stage is now set for the rest of the year.

Alicia Morrissette agreed and reported that her own Middle School sons thought the day was great.

**OES Pocket Guide**

**MARTY JONES -- Direction of Marketing and Communication**

Marty described the journey that began 4 years ago to put together and identity and a brand. The goal, as described by Mark Kemball who headed up the effort, was to find an answer to the axiom “know thyself.” We have not discovered or created anything new, but we have been able to consolidate our message into something meaningful. Marty handed round the OES Pocketguide which reflects the culmination of this work. This is something that OES can use to share with the outside world.

Mo Copeland described how, when she was interviewing at OES, she was asked the question “What are the most important things for us to do as a school?” One answer was evident – the facilities do not match the program. But the other piece that Mo picked up was that OES did not have a clear identity – we need to know who we are and be able to articulate that identity with a common voice. This led to the 4 year project. The project has had great leadership with Mark Kemball, Jordan Elliott and Marty Jones. The PCL has also played an important role in answering that question. As part of this process, it became clear that “community” was an important value to the school and that is how the Community Statement got started. This was a project with many dead-ends, then, finally after months of work, a small group put together a statement and sent it out for lots of feedback. This group then came to the Board with a final draft. The statement has potency and is controversial; it compels us to act. But the Board agreed and adopted statement.

Marty also reported that at the NAIS meeting in Boston in February, OES has been asked to tell the branding story.

**Development Report**

Liz MacDonell, the new Director of Development, introduced herself. She complemented the community on the respect and maturity of the children. She has greatly enjoyed her first 2 weeks and is thrilled to be here. Randa Cleaves has done great work and she gets to stand on her wide shoulders! Liz will work with Marty on the Marketing and Communications
side, Jennifer Baumann on the Capital Campaign, and Michelle Tubbs on the OES Fund. The Capital Campaign and the OES Fund are linked and walk hand in hand.

Liz introduced Jennifer Baumann, the Director of the Capital Campaign, whom she has known for 10 years. Jennifer distributed the updated campaign brochure. As leaders in the community, she wants to arm us with the talking points contained in the brochure. If PCL members have any questions, please go to Jennifer. As a brief overview, OES is in the second year of a 3 year campaign. So far, OES has raised $3 million from the Board and has held small outreach meetings to introduce the project to the community. This year, OES will hold larger events with a goal of raising 80% of the $16.5 million needed. We want to break ground in June 2015 but to do that we need to raise 80% of funds. At end of October, we will start events. Next year will see the public phase of the campaign. If all goes to plan, by September 2016 students will be in new building.

Michelle Tubbs spoke as Chair of the OES Fund. At the last PCL meeting in May, we celebrated the success of the OES Fund for the 2013-14 year. Margueritte Kim has accepted the role of co-chair! They have been working through the summer with Kelsey Cleveland and Lisa Degrace. She has 5 things to talk about:

1. OES Fund Team for 2014-15 was already in place by the end of June 2014, Pre-K through 12, with one or 2 fund volunteers for each class/grade, including veterans involved with the Fund for years and new parents; some people even approached Michelle to see how they could help.
2. The team has adopted the theme - “Every student, every day.” Every child in the school is impacted by the Fund on a daily basis.
3. The goal for the Fund this year is $900,000, $3000 more than last year.
4. The campaign will be launched in October with a letter that outlines the goals of the Fund and how the Fund supports students. The letter will include an envelope to give. Throughout October, Fund leaders will be at parent gatherings. Also, in October, OES will hold the 1869 society dinner – celebrating philanthropy in school.
5. The phone-a-thon will be held in October and parents, alumni and grandparents will be called unless they have already donated.

Michelle thanked everyone at PCL as the philanthropic leaders of the community who give of their time, talents and treasures. Members of PCL may not be the official leaders of the fund but we are a vital part of its success.

Question from Coutney Fitzlof who asked how should people give to both the Capital Campaign and the Fund – should we split our donation down the middle? Give to both? Answer: Jennifer answered that we should donate to the Campaign and the Fund. Both efforts are important! Gifts for the Capital Campaign can be pledged over four years, which may enable people to donate to both the Campaign and the Fund (and the entire amount of the pledge will go towards the 80% goal). The OES Fund helps us for this year and our needs for this year. The Capital Fund is important for the future. Michelle Tubbs said that one way to think about it is that the OES Fund is like a checking account gift; and the Capital Fund is like a savings account gift. Margueritte Kim said that the Capital Fund is
about a building that works with the things that the school is trying to do with kids; the OES Fund is what makes the building hum.

As with the OES Fund, please remember that you can look for matching contribution for the Capital Fund.

**CDL and Bookfair**

**Kim Bissell**

CDL offers free breakfast! This is the parent-piece to understanding each other and our community. Kim is Co Chair of CDL this year along with Lucy Shanno. They have put lots of thought into the program and, in particular, how can we broaden our awareness of diversity. The first meeting is this Tuesday, September 16th and the book is “Wonder” by R.J. Palacio. Kim read an excerpt from book. CDL will also participate in Multnomah County Library “everybody reads’ program and is hoping to get seats for the event. We will also be reading “Americanah” and “Quiet”.

Jana Reddoch and Diane Polscer are FOESL co-chairs. FOESL will no longer be working with Powells for the Book Fair because the Book Fair is just not profitable for Powells. We have chosen to do a 4-day book fair in Annie Blooms in Multnomah Village. Kim acknowledged that Powells was very generous for many years and the OES community is grateful for that partnership.

**Homecoming**

**Stephanie Knight**

Stephanie Knight encouraged everyone’s participation in Homecoming as one of the few events when the whole school and alumni comes together. Festivities start on Monday September 22nd with Spirit Week. Themes for the week will be announced soon when they have been approved by the US and the Administration. On the Friday of Homecoming, there will be many activities. If your child wants to participate in the PEP squad, they must RSVP today. The LS choir will perform the National Anthem and there will be a MS Kazoo Band. Lisa DeGrace will be setting up an alumni tent. Please reply by September 19th to help the organizers plan, and to be part of raffle. The school store is well stocked with spirit-wear. There will be a concessions stand at homecoming but typically this is very busy so please go before. We need volunteers particularly in 5th grade, MS and US. Stephanie acknowledged the tremendous work done by Cindy Plumner.

Suzie Gundle announced that a new enrollment season is starting and handed out Open Houses postcards.

Alicia closed meeting at 9:30am.