



Northside College Preparatory High School

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John Ceisel
Chair

Jon Feiger
Vice Chair

Cathy Quigley
Secretary

Local School Council Minutes June 17, 2010

Commencement

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by John Ceisel.

Present: Robert Albritton, Scott Baskin, John Ceisel, Jon Feiger, Nicole Flores, Eileen Murphy, Meredith O'Connor, Cathy Quigley, Barry Rodgers, Mary Lou Schmidt

Absent: Petrina La Faire, Vicki McMannon

Guests: Tim Devine, Jim McVane, Crystal Melto, Gail Myers Jaffe, Georgia Williams (LSC), Robert Wiggsby (LSC), Julie Ellefson, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher (parents of a student going into 8th grade), representative from a local civic association)

Public Comment

- Mr. Ceisel recognized Tim Devine, a member of the Northside LSC since the founding year of the school. Mr. Devine, who served as a teacher representative on the Northside LSC for 11 years, provided a strong, clear voice; maintained a focus and attention to detail; and demonstrated an unwavering passion for preserving the identity of Northside. Mr. Ceisel thanked Mr. Devine on behalf of the Northside LSC and presented him with a gift from the council. Mr. Devine thanked Mr. Ceisel and the LSC and expressed his appreciation of the members of the council and his gratitude for the important work that the LSC performs throughout the year.
- In response to an inquiry about the Northside LSC summer organizational meeting, Mr. Rodgers indicated that the scheduled date for that meeting is July 8th.
- Mr. McVane provided information to the council regarding revisions of the Freedom of Information Act and Notice of Meeting Act. He indicated that June 30th is the deadline for at least one member of the LSC to go through the online training process to learn about the changes to the laws and how they would affect local school councils. Mrs. Jaffe volunteered to attend the training and inform the LSC if it would be valuable for a wider audience.

Approval of Agenda

To approve the Agenda for tonight's meeting (see **Motion #1**)

Approval of Minutes

To approve the Minutes from the previous month's meeting on May 6, 2010 (see **Motion #2**)

Communications

- [none]

Principal's Report

- Mr. Rodgers reported on the current stalemate between CPS, the state of Illinois, and the Chicago Teachers Union. For example, CPS has approved a higher class size limit of 35; reportedly, the teachers' union will challenge this increase and ask for transparency in budgetary matters.
- The CPS budget office is not releasing any additional money nor making any budget decisions at this time.
- Mr. Rodgers has communicated Northside's budgetary needs to CPS.
- Currently, Northside is slated to lose 7 teachers and 4 support staff personnel.
- Mr. Rodgers described current state of affairs in somber terms: if these cuts become a reality, Northside will lose talented, caring teachers and aides, including a significant portion of the youngest generation of Northside's faculty.

- Teachers have not received official notification from CPS regarding their employment status: it is possible that CPS will cite a clause covering this situation “in the event of an economic crisis,” so that teachers and other personnel may be laid off without compensation.
- The monetary deficit has “improved” to \$427 million, but circumstances are still problematic at this point.
- Northside is fortunate to have the opportunity to creatively circumvent funding shortfalls via fundraising by Friends of Northside and the generosity of Northside families and contributors. Because of this, we are able to maintain the Wellness Center which provides important services for our children and to finance other immediate needs.
- Mr. Rodgers requested the following funds from Friends of Northside:
 - \$5,000 for end-of-year expenses, including graduation
 - \$9,653.35 for copier service and maintenance
 - \$1,000 to fund the budget of the Parent Network
 - (total requested = \$15,653.35)
- To approve the allocation of monies to fund end-of-year expenses, copier maintenance, and the Parent Network budget (**see Motion #3**)
- Mr. Rodgers reported that Northside did fall in the *Newsweek* rankings this year, but he wanted to clarify the criteria which the magazine used to rank schools across the nation. For example, our school’s “college readiness index” improved, but this criterion was not factored into the ranking process. *Newsweek* bases its rankings on the sheer number of students taking Advanced Placement or IB tests; performance on these tests is irrelevant. Northside students perform very well on AP tests; 100% of our students scored 3 or better on at least one AP exam, and our students took 1,400 AP tests this year. Even though our overall ranking fell on the *Newsweek* scale, we still were the highest ranked public school in Illinois.
- Tomorrow at Northside there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the installation of solar panels on the roof of the school, including some panels above the swimming pool which will provide the energy required to heat the pool.
- Northside students will celebrate the last day of school by participating in Field Day activities. Many activities are coordinated by the students themselves, helping to underwrite the cost incurred by the day’s festivities.
- Mr. Rodgers expressed the opinion that the Northside family is completing an amazing year, despite the ongoing budget crisis. The Northside College Prep High School Class of 2010 celebrated their graduation in a ceremony on June 14th. Mr. Rodgers distributed copies of the graduation program which included information about the various schools students will be attending next year and awards they have received.
- Mr. Rodgers commended the counseling department for their efforts in insuring that students completed the college application process, both for school acceptance and admission and also for scholarship awards.
- Some parents had suggestions for future graduations, including a guest alumni speaker and a student speaker who is chosen on a basis other than grade point average (perhaps interested students could submit an essay or speech).
- Regarding the NCLB students, 16 of the 25 students offered positions at Northside have accepted. The other schools selected for NCLB students had comparable acceptance rates. 14 of these 16 students also enrolled in the Freshman Connection program.
- The incoming freshman class will have 279 students: about half of these students are registered to participate in the Freshman Connection program, and about 200 students have signed up for Snake Road.
- Mr. Rodgers is very confident that the programs we have in place will give the NCLB students their greatest opportunity for success. The At-Risk team will identify students requiring special services.
- Northside is already working with incoming freshman families to address issues like transportation costs, technology, and even housing!
- Regarding the status of 21st Century Computing at Northside, we did not receive the NSF grant we were hoping for, and so we will not be able to expand the 1:1 computing initiative to include all students in the school.
- On the other hand, our technology program will be featured in a television program to be aired next year on the Bravo channel and the Discovery channel. Our school and our program were very well received by the interviewers. CPS also expressed renewed interest in helping Northside continue to grow our technology program.
- Next year, Mr. Rodgers plans to replicate this year’s cohort with 100 tablet computers being distributed to freshmen. In addition, there will be carts of computers for some departments that can be shared among the teachers for classroom use.
- There is an opportunity for discussion about how to best implement technology in the classroom at Northside; we would like to be at the forefront of this debate, and we are in a good position to fill that role in the CPS system.

Teacher's Report

- Mrs. Virginia Apel coordinated the induction of students in to the German National Honor Society.
- The Art Department sponsored the annual "20-Hour Show," featuring projects created by Northside students and representing at least 20 hours of work by each student.
- Mr. Park, Mr. Lill, and Mrs. Martinez conducted a concert featuring all of the advanced ensembles in the Fine Arts – Music Department.
- Several teachers celebrated an addition to their families at the end of this school year.
- Mr. Albritton reported that teachers definitely have the CPS budget crisis on their minds, and morale is "not good at all." He commended Mr. Rodgers and Dr. Murphy for conducting an activity during which teachers and staff could say "good-bye" to their colleagues who would not be returning to Northside next year. Feelings range from anger to depression, and it will be difficult to get the faculty back to where they need to be in the fall, mentally and emotionally, as they cope with these losses.
- Outstanding performances by the English department drama program, the Latin Club, and the Math Team help to remind everyone about some of the good things that are always happening at Northside.
- Rallies attended by students to support teachers help the teachers realize that there are young people who care about what happens to them.
- When prompted by a question, Mr. Albritton expressed the opinion that the new teachers' union president, Karen Lewis, would strive to create a unified voice for the teachers, stating that "we're not going to strike" but that teachers are not willing to give up salary increases or lose positions. It appears that CORE's main push is to gain transparency in matters related to the allocation of funds. Most Northside teachers were CORE supporters and were happy with the outcome of the election for the union presidency.

Student's Report

- [none]

Finance Committee

- Mr. Baskin reported that an article was submitted to *EPIC*, the Northside parent newsletter, regarding changes in student fees for the 2010-2011 school year.

Friends of Northside

- As reported last month, Northside parents and families continue to generously support our fundraising efforts.

Northside Parent Network

- [nothing to report]

Building and Facilities

- [nothing to report outside of what Mr. Rodgers already covered in the Principal's Report]

Community Relations

- [nothing to report]

Principal Selection and Evaluation

- Mr. Rodgers did not have any comments on the Principal's Evaluation submitted to him in April.
- Mr. Ceisel briefly discussed an evaluation of the process; most feedback was positive.

Old Business

- [none]

New Business

- [none]

Upcoming Meetings

- LSC: July 8th, at 7 p.m., in the faculty lunchroom

- This is the summer organizational meeting mandated by LSC guidelines.
- Mr. Rodgers will conduct the meeting and provide the agenda.
- Officers will be selected, and committees will be reconstituted.
- Members will set the schedule for meetings for the 2010-2011 school year.

Thank you...

- Mr. Rodgers recognized the outgoing members of the Northside LSC, expressing his appreciation for their support and feedback, their emphasis on teaching and learning, and their mutual respect.
- He presented certificates and Northside mustang blankets to Petrina La Faire, Scott Baskin, Eileen Murphy, Jon Feiger, and Mary Lou Schmidt (concluding 8 years as a member of the Northside LSC).

Proposed Agenda

There is no pro forma agenda for the summer organizational meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. (**see Motion #4**).

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LSC will be on July 8th at 7:00 p.m. in the faculty lunchroom. Public participation is welcome.

Motion #: 1
Motion made by: Mary Lou Schmidt
Seconded by: Scott Baskin
Motion: To approve the Agenda for tonight's meeting

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Jon Feiger (parent)	X			
Scott Baskin (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)				X
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Mary Lou Schmidt (parent)	X			
Eileen Murphy (community)	X			
Meredith O'Connor (community)	X			
Robert Albritton (teacher)	X			
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Petrina La Faire (student)				X
Total	10	0	0	2

Motion #: 2
Motion made by: Jon Feiger
Seconded by: Eileen Murphy
Motion: To approve Minutes from the previous meeting (May 6, 2010)

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Jon Feiger (parent)	X			
Scott Baskin (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)				X
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Mary Lou Schmidt (parent)	X			
Eileen Murphy (community)	X			
Meredith O'Connor (community)	X			
Robert Albritton (teacher)	X			
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Petrina La Faire (student)				X
Total	10	0	0	2

Motion #: 3
Motion made by: Mary Lou Schmidt
Seconded by: Jon Feiger
Motion: To approve the allocation of monies (total amount = \$15,653.35) to fund end-of-year expenses (\$5,000); copier maintenance (\$9,653.35); and the Parent Network budget (\$1,000)

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Jon Feiger (parent)	X			
Scott Baskin (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)				X
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Mary Lou Schmidt (parent)	X			
Eileen Murphy (community)	X			
Meredith O'Connor (community)	X			
Robert Albritton (teacher)	X			
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Petrina La Faire (student)				X
Total	10	0	0	2

Motion #: 4
Motion made by: Mary Lou Schmidt
Seconded by: Scott Baskin
Motion: To adjourn the LSC meeting

Record of Votes on Motion

Council Members	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John Ceisel (parent)	X			
Jon Feiger (parent)	X			
Scott Baskin (parent)	X			
Vicki McMannon (parent)				X
Cathy Quigley (parent)	X			
Mary Lou Schmidt (parent)	X			
Eileen Murphy (community)	X			
Meredith O'Connor (community)	X			
Robert Albritton (teacher)	X			
Nicole Flores (teacher)	X			
Barry Rodgers (principal)	X			
Petrina La Faire (student)				X
Total	10	0	0	2