

Middle School CAT Team Meeting Agenda – January 20, 2010

A) Apologies - Introductions - Approval of Minutes - Matters Arising

- Apologies: Maya Williamson
- Zeina Darouni introduced a Grade 6 parent-guest attending today's CAT meeting.
- Michael distributed last month's meeting minutes; all approved.
- CAT minutes are now posted on website under CAT link.

B) CAC Board Election Process – Mary Marlowe

- Mary Marlowe announced that both community board positions would be on the upcoming spring election ballot for the next two-year term (2010-2012). Mary distributed a handout that explains the duties and level of commitment; she summarized its main points, answered questions, and encouraged CAT parent members to step forward to run for these community seats.
-
- Board Election Information Night is set for March 2, 2010, at which time the current Board will be present, and packets containing detailed information pertaining to Board member responsibilities will be available for distribution to all interested candidates.
- Candidate application forms are due on March 11th at 3pm. Candidates are encouraged to attend the subsequent Board Open Session on March 16th. Biographical info about the official candidates will be posted online on March 17th.
- The Annual General Meeting, also coined the "State of the School Address" is set for Monday, April 12th – at which time the candidates must be present to give a brief statement about themselves and answer questions from the floor. At 9 pm that evening all eligible voters will receive an email with instructions about electronic voting; this process remains open until 4 pm on Thursday, April 15th.
- Discussion ensued about how to communicate the election process to non-English speaking parents. CAT parent suggested that perhaps there could be written translations in Arabic, Spanish, and Korean as a start. Mary agreed to look into it.
- Mary stressed that parents who apply do so with a commitment to serve the full two-year term. (These positions are not open to parents who can only serve for one year).

C) Dr. Michael Thompson – Follow Up

Michael invited CAT parents to share their feedback about Dr. Thompson's presentations:

- Parents cited the father's breakfast as "a big hit." CAT parents and teachers shared that student feedback about the Middle School assembly was generally positive. However, some parents reported that the speaker was not relevant enough to the international community; others felt that while he was a good enough speaker, their questions were not directly addressed; "his message not tangible enough;" others perceived it to be "too agenda-based." Parents want to know which recommendations the school will respond to.
- Mr. Popinchalk reported that Dr. Thompson felt very positive about his "connections" with the CAC community.

- In the future the PTO feels that any sessions for parents will be open to all interested.

D) Parent Communication – Challenges

- Mr. Popinchalk offered a 5 LE muffin to every student who could show that their parents read the *News and Views*. The results were varied and highlighted the concern that parents were not reading the weekly communication from the Middle School.
- Mr. Popinchalk shared that we are constantly challenged with ensuring that parents are receiving and reading communications.
- A CAT parent asked how we track kids' absences. Mr. Ferguson explained how the Middle School attendance secretary and administration liaise with the Health Office.
- Mr. Popinchalk reminded parents about the postponement of the February Professional Development Day and explained that to avoid calendar complications, there will be two consecutive ABCD days – (Thursday and Sunday in February).
- CAT parents shared that there are a number of parents wondering about next year's calendar; Mr. Popinchalk informed the CAT that the CAC Board will approve it at their next meeting.
- Mr. Popinchalk encouraged and reminded CAT parents to feel comfortable going to the source for information.

E) Educational Continuity and Future Transition Process

- New building challenges: Mr. Popinchalk is well aware that once the building is completed, there will be a need to establish a common agreement with the Elementary school about both shared and distinct domains.
- Mr. Popinchalk reported that the building dust situation has improved, although some noise activity continues.

F) Health and Safety Committee Update

- Wendy shared that CAC will purchase a portable machine that will test the amount of dust in the air, and will ensure that AC filters are changed accordingly.

G) PTO Funding Requests –

- Mr. Popinchalk will seek PTO grants to help support the following Middle School initiatives: 1) The House System, 2) Outside Seating Areas (i.e. more round tables with umbrellas), 3) Educational consultants/speakers relevant to the Middle School learning community with a focus on cultural sensitivity.

H) Student Led Conferences

- Mr. Popinchalk shared that students will compose their second trimester comments in some classes as a prelude to the upcoming spring Student Led Conferences.
- Mr. Popinchalk reminded CAT members that parents may call for a traditional parent-teacher conference whenever they wish.
- Mr. Popinchalk informed parents that the latest MAP testing data would provide more concrete information about student trends in terms of their skill levels.

I) Cultural Sensitivity and International Relations – Update

- Mr. Popinchalk reported that we are still focused on this topic and raising awareness levels of the students. There is also sharing of information through discussions with the other divisional leaders as part of the CAC Cultural Sensitivity and International Relations Committee.

J) Other Business

- The invited guest stated that in her view as a parent, the “air quality” as a result of the building construction is unacceptable. She sees “plumes of dust” daily and feels it is not healthy for children to be outside. Mr. Popinchalk concurred with observation and asked the CAT Team representative to share this concern with the CAC Health and Safety Committee.
- Mr. Popinchalk announced that he would be traveling with Dr. Mockrish to recruit Middle School teachers for vacated positions. He will leave on 1/31 and return to campus on the morning of 2/15.
- Mr. Popinchalk asked CAT members to look ahead to help to recruit willing parents to serve on next year’s CAT.
- Mr. Popinchalk suggested that each CAT member invite an Egyptian parent to attend the February CAT meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2010 at 3:30 in the
Middle School Conference Room.

The Middle School Principal introduced the “Big Four” which were a focus for the new Superintendent of CAC, Dr. Rob Mockrish:

- (**Educational Continuity: Completion of the Phase One Project**
- (**Learning Support and Multiple Intelligences**
- (**Value Added Instruction**
- (**International Relations and Embracing Cultural Diversity**

As we review whether and how we are achieving our 2008-2009 professional goals, we have some highlights to share. First are excerpts from our World Language External Audit. Supplementing commendations of CAC's range of courses, resources, and the commitment of individual faculty members, some recommendations include: 1) Provide designated courses for Grade 6 students who have already begun a language. 2) In the Middle School, require a language of all students every year. 3) Review the efficacy of multi-level courses. 4) Ensure school wide curricular coherence in terms of delivery and assessment with an emphasis on thematic units. As you can imagine, staffing, budgetary, and scheduling issues dictate that not all recommendations can be accommodated immediately. Regardless, you will definitely see some modifications during the next school year, particularly in the Middle School.

Monica Greeley - CAC Cairo Glyphics - February 2009