

Thunderboard Minutes - March 2, 2016 - 4-5:30PM, THES Library

In attendance: Wes Paparone, Beth Gehrlach, Melissa Bowman, Julie Urlich, Kelly Guerra, Tonya Penney, Will Meyer, Mary Friedman

1. **Welcome and Introductions (7 min)**
2. **Approve minutes from last meeting (3 min):** Tonya Penney acted as chair. Minutes were approved as read
3. **Community Input (5 min)**
4. **PTA updates (5 min):** PTA Board update was given by Julie Ullrich. The "I heart THES" is at around \$27,000 so far. A crew went to February retreat until next time. Colin Clark shared the Austin Interfaith Retreat information via email. Wildflower Congregation pledged to identify 40 leaders. We will partner with Wildflower to find leaders. Beth asked about the impact of immigration on our campus. Currently we have lost 4 families and only one was in the DL program. Beth brought up the issue of how to help. She will contact Maile and share with the board as a whole.
5. **Reports (30 min)**
 - a. Review Action Items/Any Updates from Last Meeting
 - i. Communicating about absences & attendance policy & STAAR results –*Lisa Robertson*: A document was shared that will go home with parents to clarify some information from Istation. Thunderboard discussed information that could be added/changed to make the information clearer for parents. Individual student reports are available through Istation. The discussion also included information about the fact that reading testing in Kinder & 1st in Dual Language are only testing reading in Spanish.
 - ii. Communicating to parents about Lexile level/Conversion charts -ISIP
 - iii. Early release for professional development survey—(Data attached) Tonya shared the information from the staff survey. The comments regarding the survey were: 80% of classroom teachers completed the survey. Question 1D clarified that teachers would agree to the time being used for professional development or PLC. The next steps would be :
 - A. Is this legally possible and feasible? (Lisa)
 - B. Cost analysis after if the information is positive.
 - C. Parent survey on the days that would benefit them.
 - b. Recess Policy & AISD – *Ken Zarifis*
 - c. PBL & AISD: Promoting THES as Trailblazers –*Ken Zarifis*
 - d. February Retreat Write-Ups - Group Recorders
 - e. Status of Native Spanish Speaking Families & Enrollment (Lisa)
 - f. Advocacy Team – *Colin Clark*
 - g. To be or Not to Be: Universal Breakfast - *Lisa Robertson*: 16/28 classroom teachers want Universal Breakfast. Thunderboard decided there needs to be more discussion among the faculty about Universal Breakfast to clarify. These results are not conclusive one way or another.
Budget - *Lisa Robertson*: (Documents available in the office.)
6. **Data Available for Review (5 mins)**
7. **Upcoming events (5 min)**
 - a. Austin Interfaith Events - For details, visit <http://www.austininterfaith.org/events>

- b. SRCC: Tuesday, 3/7 –Potluck (6pm); Elections (7:30pm) (Life in the City United Methodist -205 E. Monroe)
 - c. Advocacy Team Meeting, TBA
- 8. Goals for 2016-2017 (30 mins)**
- a. **Recognition from AISD as an innovative school & Our 4 Pillars Now**
-Cathy Lippincott, Mary Friedman, Kim O'Driscoll
 - b. **Academics/Funding**
 - Master Schedule to support teacher planning
 - Master Schedule to consider adding Spanish/PE daily rotation
 - Creating clear policies for campus: Homework, Recess and Wow
 - Sustainable funding/mentoring (training DL, PBL, BL, SEL; PSS, technology, software)
---- Julie Ulrich. Will Meyer,
- 9. School Climate**
- a. **Relationship building**
 - Support for teachers; Support for students/families; Special needs population
 - Open, supportive, and safe communications among individuals: Admin/Teachers, Teachers/Admin, Teachers/Parents, Parents/Teachers, children/teachers
 - Supporting SEL schoolwide; Mindful practices (*moment of silence*)
----Beth Gerlach, Daniela De Jong, Kim O'Driscoll
- 10. Cross-cultural outreach**
- What resources are in Austin? Refugee services in north Austin for Arabic bilingual, Arabic college students (St. Ed's, UT).
 - Are there communication Apps? What are other schools doing to enhance cultural relations (e.g.,Matthews, Hart, Doss)?
---Tonya Penney, Daniella Licon, Wes Paparone, Rosa Rostro, Melissa Bowman
- 11. Next Steps/Action Items and Agenda Items for next meeting (5 min)**

Attachments Follow

Feedback from THES 2nd and 3rd Grade Parents at PTA Meeting On November 17, 2016

I. What Makes Us Feel Welcome and Part of a Strong Community at THES:

A. Our Educational Programs:

- The education the teachers give to the children.
- Dual language pre-K.
- Project based learning.
- Less or no homework for most grades.
- Great outreach to local universities and use of student teachers.

B. Our Community:

- The children are kind to one another.
- The diversity of the students and the inclusion of all families.
- The community of parents at the school.
- Respect.
- The volunteers help and are appreciated by teachers.

C. Other Aspects of The School Day:

- 30 minute recess – new AISD policy.
- That parents can join children for breakfast and lunch.
- Prime Time.
- Fitness activities and family fun and fitness day.
- English classes for the Spanish-speaking parents.

D. Our Community-Building School Events:

- Carnival
- Tamalada

A. Communication with Parents

- Teachers and administration really listen to the parents.
- The office communicates well.
- Electronic newsletter
- One class uses “Bloomz” – a parent-teacher communications app.

II. What We Would Like to See Improved at THES:

A. More Empathy from Some Teachers:

- Some teachers lack patience, understanding, and sensitivity with students who need more attention and help, whether with school work or with their emotions.
- Some teachers lack warmth/engagement – don't seem to understand what it's like to be a parent.
- Some teachers need to do a better job to make children feel welcome in the classroom and need to build better relationships with the children.
- Some children do not want to go to school when certain substitute teachers are there.

B. Better Communication with Parents:

- Teacher-Parent Communication – giving parents more detailed and advanced notice of events, including field trips.
- Teacher-Parent Communication – telling parents what the students are learning each week.
- Better advance notice and communication about events, including PTA meetings.
- Electronic school calendar includes items that don't pertain to us and we can't edit it.
- Put more information and resources on THES website about STAAR testing and how it might affect individual students, the anxiety it might create, and how parents can help.

C. Improvements to Educational Programs:

- Parents noted that their 3rd graders are “stuck” on 1st grade Dreambox because the child keeps doing the same things and is not being monitored so she isn't advancing.
- Do science fair projects as part of the regular school day, not just for the science fair.
- Better organization for magnet prep – start the spring before 5th grade.
- More outside time and more nature time for the children when possible.

D. Physical/Safety Improvements:

- Better crosswalk in front of Travis Park apartments at Oltorf.
- Students pick-up area is not organized well.
- School facilities are out of date.
- Better security in light of the school's surroundings.
- More bike racks.

E. Community Engagement:

- Engage broader group of parents as volunteers – maybe survey parents to find out what they need to be more engaged – is it more advance notice of volunteer opportunities?
- Explore opportunities for community partnerships.
- How do we finance programs once the grants run out – seems that we need to focus on fundraising, including individual donations and community donations.

Staff Survey for the Thunderboard Study

This quick survey has Likert type questions where you will circle your response, as well as open ended questions to gather feedback from our staff. Please make time to share your thoughts. **Please return to Lisa by Wed 3/1 EOD**

31/44 returned = 70%

23/28 classroom teacher return – 82%

1. Regular Early Release

- A. I believe having regular early release schedule would allow time for teachers for professional learning communities or professional development.

Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	19	12

- B. If the school community approved early release time which of the following is preferred?

Late Start	Early Release
2	29

- C. What day would be better for a planning time?

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4	16	7	1	3

- D. If the school community approved early release, I am comfortable using that time in PLC work or professional development.

Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	22	7

- E. What other comments, thoughts, or questions do you have regarding an early release time?

2. Universal Breakfast

- A. I am in favor of universal breakfast for our campus.

Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	11	11
All 5 th = no		all PK/K = yes

- B. What other comments, thoughts, or questions do you have regarding universal breakfast?