

**César Chávez Climate Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2013**

I. Introductions

Present: Denise Beck, Anastasia Panagakos , Amy Duffy, Janet Brown, Sylvia Kwon, Lisa Baumeister, Rosa Ramirez, Christine Dahlgren, Mark Damesyn, Cindi Sreetharan, Marsha Baird, Katherine Allgood

II. Counselor Report

Sra. Allgood updated the committee on her work with the students:

a) Grades K-3 - Kelso's Choices - She has finished the program except for 2 classes which each have about 4 weeks left. She noted that many of the third graders remember the program from when they received it in kindergarten. She also has shown them a short Kelso DVD, used the puppets and skits, and will do booster lessons as reminders.

b) Grades 4-6 - She alternates going into classrooms either every week or every other week. She began by segueing from Kelso's choices (which some of the fourth graders had) into discussions on what is a small from a big problem. She tailors her lessons to fit the class and is empowering students to deal with issues like theft (what can the student do, how to tell parents). She has also done work with friendship issues - how to be a good friend, how to disagree productively. She is also doing some small groups based on gender - for boys she is discussing issues of aggression and "triggers" to anger and for girls friendship skills. The students in these groups were identified by teachers, she is hoping that when these groups end to form new ones with other students.

c) The Climate Committee thanked Sra. Allgood for her presentation at the parent education night on January 17, 2013. The event was attended by about 30 parents and refreshments provided by SIPAT. Her presentation is available on the Climate Committee website - both the video of the presentation and the handouts she prepared.

III. Climate Survey

Anastasia reported that the climate surveys for students (3-6 grades), parents, and staff are now ready. The survey window will open Feb 11-Feb 25th. Sara Caulfield and Sharon Davies are coordinating the computer lab time for teachers to have their students take the survey. The teachers have already been emailed the protocol on how to administer the survey. This new protocol includes suggestions and changes from last year's. This year's surveys are available in Spanish and English but on one survey instead of two separate ones. Anastasia noted that this is easier for data processing later on. Hard copies will be available in the office for parents who do not have access to computers. Lisa Baumeister has once again helped with the promotion of the parent survey by contributing brightly colored stickers for the students to wear home. The student council will also contribute the thermometer posters as was done last year. Anastasia discussed the definition of bullying used on the survey and there was discussion regarding how to get at "relational bullying" (psychological or emotional bullying often done by girls) which is harder to quantify because it is often less visible than physical bullying.

IV. Updates

a) Student Council

Sara Caulfield could not attend the meeting but sent an update via email to the committee. The Climate Committee appreciates her efforts, and those of the other staff, in promoting student council which has had a busy fall:

1. USED BOOK SALE & PURCHASE OF NEW LUNCH TABLES. Our Used Book sale put on Dec. 10-14 netted \$1575, which far surpassed our expectations. In partnering with the Reading Specialist, our goal was to raise money toward the purchase of two new lunch tables to alleviate crowding at lunch, since at the time of planning, Rigo was wheeling out two cafeteria tables each day to accommodate the student seating. Denise was able to find tables online for about \$600, so effectively the Student Council fundraising will pay for the outright purchase of two new tables and half of a new one. We had written a letter to SIPAT requesting matching funds, and with Denise as our representative, SIPAT not only matched, but exceeded our profit. Therefore, Denise is going to use the matching funds towards purchasing more tables to replace old and

damaged ones. Concejo Estudiantil is very proud of its role in contributing toward a more comfortable lunch time eating experience for the Cesar Chavez student body. Lynn Alvarez is working with Denise to order the tables and we have been told to expect the tables in March at the earliest. Concejo Estudiantil voted to repeat this fundraising, community-building event next year as well.

2. NEW CLASS REPS. In January, classrooms in grades 4-6 had two new reps elected to represent their classrooms at our weekly Wed meetings.

3. ON CAMPUS STUDENT COUNCIL RETREAT. On Jan. 9 I held a half day Student Council retreat in the music room and MPR for our new reps and returning officers. Raychel Adler generously donated her time again to lead the students in an hour long team building Playworks activities so everyone could learn names and start getting to know the other members better. New reps received their official tie-dye t-shirts and the fall reps trained them on how to set up their student council binders. After the fall reps were thanked and applauded, they left and we held a training meeting for new reps run with parliamentary procedure.

4. PRIMARY TEACHER LIAISON: Lynn Angelo is now officially working with me to help lead Concejo estudiantil. We get together regularly on a weekly basis to plan on how best to include primary in our school wide activities. Her only regret is that we meet during the intermediate lunch so she is unable to attend meetings.

5. CASC CONFERENCE. On Jan. 23, fall reps, new reps and officers (34 students in all) had the amazing opportunity to participate in an Elementary Leadership Workshop put on by the California Association of Student Councils <http://www.casc.net/programs/elemiddle/>. The day focused on training students in how to take on leadership roles and activities that contribute to a learning organization. While students were led by highly skilled "counselors", as the Advisor I received intensive training on creating a master plan for our school's student council. This training was outstanding and I rate it among the top 1% of trainings I have experienced in my professional career. For the nominal registration fee of \$35 per person (donated by parents), our students received six intense but fun filled hours of skill-based training including exploring their identity as a learner, learning what makes a good presenter and then presenting and receiving feedback, learning about group dynamics and tools for reaching consensus. They practiced all day long using a strategy of reflective goal setting identifying what went well in the activity and what they could change to improve the next time. Student Council members utilized those same consensus building strategies last week when working with their classmates to submit ideas for characteristics. 10 fifth grade student council members went into three 1st and 2nd grade classrooms (Angelo, Mendoza and Ramos) to lead small groups in this consensus building task. It was very powerful and effective! We are making plans to return next year. Kids were super tired at the end of the day, but collectively thought it was a very worthwhile experience.

6. MASCOT SELECTION. Lynn Angelo, myself and Eva Dopico are the teachers working regularly on this process. All grades are invited to participate. Last week students in grades 1-6 discussed characteristics/attributes of the Cesar Chavez student and submitted their ideas for the mascot selection process. Last Friday, the committee of teachers met to eliminate duplicate submissions across classes. We now have a list of 19 characteristics submitted by students to help guide our selection of the school mascot. School mascot forms have been provided to teachers so students can submit mascot ideas through February 15. We are asking classroom teachers and student council members to have everyone submit in class and try and narrow down the number of ideas. The student body will be voting on a final mascot sometime in March.

b) Playworks

Raychel Adler send an update via email:

1. Things are going really well. Getting bigger and bigger groups each week. I had a suprise dance party last Friday which was a HUGE success. Kids that I had never seen came out. Will try to make this a once a month treat.

2. Clark Bryant came to check out Playworks last Thursday. It was a fun game with lots of participation so hopefully he will bring feedback on the program to the district

3. I am still struggling with volunteers. Right now I have to teach the game alone on Mondays (which is hard since it is the first day and needs more explanation than other days) and nobody

on Fridays. I would love to coordinate more with the 1st grade playground volunteers to see if we can work together somehow.

4. In the next month I hope to start working with the student council members who want to help out as Playground Pals for the younger kids at recess. Working with Sra. Caufield on this and hope to connect with Denise about it upon her return as it involves the older kids missing their lunch period.

c) 1st Grade Playground Transition & Parent Volunteer Supervision Program.

Marsha Baird was present to give an update and notes that she could use a few more volunteers to help with the 1st grade playground supervision. It was noted that it is difficult to recruit volunteers midyear for many things. Marsha has also started to look for her replacement for a next year, a kinder parent who would be able to coordinate the lunch supervisors. The committee also discussed the redesign of part of the grassy/tree area where first graders tend to play as a way to give students more play options. Amy Duffy discussed the idea of landscape design and Mark Damesyn brought up the possibility of getting design students from UCD to help with the project. We all agreed that this is very preliminary in the discussions and that perhaps a subcommittee could be formed to work on the issue.

V. Parent Concerns

a) Lunch Time Issues

Several parents have contacted the climate committee regarding the theft of lunches from some fourth grade students. A fourth grade parent observed the lunch time scene and noted that girls especially have a tendency to trade and share food. Sometimes the trading and sharing of "highly desirable objects" (such as Pop Tarts) can lead to certain power dynamics that have a negative impact on the students (either because they are excluded from this trading or don't have desirable lunches themselves). The parents noted that this has the potential to harm the girls by creating food issues for them and making lunch time less enjoyable. It was noted that the boys do not seem to use food in this way (as a power or friend making/excluding tool). A lengthy discussion followed about how students are actually not supposed to share food (for hygiene and allergy issues) and that perhaps a parent and student information sheet should be sent out to raise the awareness on this issue. Other lunch issues were discussed including a longer period of time for students to eat their lunch (perhaps changing when the first bell rings to excuse to the playground), going back to three lunches instead of two, and moving recess to before eating lunch.

VI. New Discussion Items

a) AB 9 - Seth's Law

Anastasia has been attending meetings at the school district to discuss the implementation of Seth's Law which requires school personnel to report incidences of bullying and for schools to provide training on how to recognize and intervene in bullying and make resources available to the victim. The meetings, which have included high school students, counselors, staff, parent volunteers, and administrators have discussed a wide variety of ways that the various schools are already addressing the issues of bullying but also how much farther they must go. Committee members have discussed a variety of programs - such as using restorative justice for solving bullying problems, Kelso's choices, and how to provide training on bullying to the district employees. In the last meeting it was noted that more parent education also needs to happen in order to further define the difference between bullying and conflict. It was also noted that students should not be punished for doing things that are developmentally appropriate for their age. It was agreed that there needs to be a change in culture and climate to make this work, particularly a focus on pro-social behavior and how to address bullying as not just an issue between a bully and victim but as a problem the community must solve together (including the bystanders). Anastasia will continue to attend this group and has been keeping the group updated on the efforts at CCE to define bullying, quantify and identify it among the students, and to identify instances of discrimination through the climate survey. The school district is interested in following our progress.

The film "Odd Girl Out" was mentioned as a good resource to discuss the often psychological and emotional bullying that happens among girls, as was the workshop on girl bullying that Jann Murray-Garcia presented last year. There was discussion of starting a parent resource library at the school.

b) Sra. Allgood's Maternity Leave

Sra. Allgood discussed her upcoming leave at the end of March until early May. She is hoping to find a substitute for that time that she is gone and will address this through the school district. A discussion ensued regarding whether she would be back next year and the committee discussed how that was dependent on SIPAT's budget. Sra. Allgood is very excited to continue her work at the school and enjoys it very much. It is noted that both the staff and parents have many wonderful things to say about the positive changes she is making to student behavior and overall social climate. The climate committee sincerely hopes she will be back next year and will work with SIPAT to make it happen.

VII. 2012-13 Remaining Meeting Dates

February 26 at 3:30 p.m.

March 26 at 7:00 p.m.

April 30 at 3:30 p.m.

May 28 at 7:00 p.m.

Questions or comments about these meeting minutes should be directed to Anastasia Panagakos (panagaa@crc.losrios.edu) or 530-753-2378