

VALENCIA ELEMENTARY HOME & SCHOOL CLUB

MEETING MINUTES

April 6, 2006

I. Call to Order and Welcome/Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Letty Bess.

Present: Letty Bess, Katrina Walkinshaw, Renee Roberts, Julie Holser, Robin Elliot, Mary Baugher, Acacia Talpas, Aimee Martin, Surangee Gunawardena, Kate Sandusky, Jennifer Nowark, Gabi Estill, Jody Cole, Sheri West, Kelly Austin, Cristina Locke, Christine Cornejo, Sarah Walls, Nathalie Manning, and Dian Higginbotham

II. Additions/Changes

The topic of a H&SC storage shed was added to the agenda under section VI.

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the March 9, 2006 meeting were reviewed, and with a motion from Katrina Walkinshaw and a second from Renee Roberts the minutes were approved.

IV. Principal's Report – Dian Higginbotham

A. CA Distinguished School Site Visit

Dian Higginbotham reported that the CA Distinguished School Site Visit took place on March 28th, and that it went very well. It was our day to shine, and the six representatives that came wanted to pat us on the back, not hear about things that we needed to improve. The representatives were from the area and they said that they saw a lot of good things happening at Valencia. The reps reported that what makes Valencia special is the parents. Letty Bess commented that the "Report Out" by the reps was very special, and that people were almost in tears listening to what the reps had to say about Valencia. Letty mentioned that the teachers said it's the parents that make it special here at Valencia. Letty also said that the reps liked how open we are at Valencia – our Open Door policy is very evident.

Dian stated that we will hear later this month, and that we expect the award to come through. Dian will be going to Disneyland over Memorial Day weekend with Ms. Flynn and Dr. Gary Woods to receive the award, and the District is supporting us by helping to cover the cost. The first Monday in June there will be an official flag raising ceremony to celebrate receiving the award. Dian mentioned that of the seven schools in the county that applied, five are finalists and will likely get it. Bradley Elementary School is one of the finalists for the CA Distinguished School award. The award lasts for four years.

B. Valencia Website

Dian reported that the Valencia website is being updated, and we are finally getting it current again. Al Smith is doing most of the work. Kristin Tyra is helping with the design and graphics, and Kate Sandusky is helping by gathering information to put on the website. Ms. Christie is the first teacher to have a class website link on the Valencia website, thanks to Gabi Estill who got the link working. Mr. Lober is working on a website for his class.

V. **President's Report – Letty Bess**

A. CA Distinguished School Site Visit

Letty Bess did not report anything further on the CA Distinguished School Site Visit than was mentioned earlier during Dian's Principal's Report.

B. Adoption of Bylaws

Letty reported that the Executive Committee changed the H&SC Bylaws to state that "At the May Elections Meeting, which will take place during Open House..." and "Election of Directors shall be held by ballot at the annual election meeting in May." In the past we have not had a separate annual election meeting during Open House. Elections were held during the general monthly meeting. The Executive Committee thought that the annual election meeting should be a separate meeting, and that Open House night was the best time to hold it since a lot of parents were at the school. The H&SC will still have its regular monthly general meeting on the second Thursday in May (May 11th). The election meeting will be a separate meeting at Open House on May 18th.

With a motion from Kate Sandusky and a second from Aimee Martin, the revised Bylaws of the Valencia Elementary Home and School Club were unanimously approved.

C. Goals for 2006/2007

Letty reported that it was time to think about our fundraising goals for next year and what we want to fundraise for in 2006/2007. This past year we put a lot of focus on Technology, so now we need to decide what's next. Robin Elliot mentioned that there will be an Auction next March and it will need a specific fundraising goal. Sheri West asked if there was anything that the students needed, or the teachers. Letty mentioned that she did a survey of the teachers last fall and got a very low response. The main two things that were mentioned on the surveys that were turned in were a track and an auditorium. The topic of school lunches was brought up, and if asked, the students would probably say what they wanted was better lunches. There was a discussion about the options and feasibility of improving the school lunches, and whether or not a salad bar could be put in the cafeteria. Renee Roberts and Kate Sandusky mentioned programs that they had seen information on that might be worth checking out. Ms. Richmond and Ms. Christie are both working on

healthy eating programs. Cristina Locke suggested that a salad and food bar be set up, with a different protein food provided each day.

Another fundraising focus discussed was expanding the Art program and/or developing a Music program. Letty stated that it would be better to work through Spectra to do this rather than try to hire a full-time teacher ourselves. Aimee Martin mentioned that the challenge of adding a Music or additional Art program was the issue of available class time. We could fundraise for these programs, but not have to class time available for them. We would need to figure out how much class time there would be and then fundraise accordingly for such programs. Dian mentioned that it would be nice to have an additional Spectra assembly that was fun for the last three weeks of school when things are winding down. This year there is a Shakespeare assembly on May 17th, but it is only for the upper grade classes.

Playground improvements were also mentioned as a possible fundraising focus, and there was support for improvements being made to the playground and also additional equipment being added. Letty summarized the discussion by stating that Art and Outdoor items seemed to be the fundraising focus.

VI. Financial Report – Renee Roberts and Julie Holser

A. Review Financial Report

Renee Roberts reviewed the H&SC Balance Sheet and explained that the numbers shown were not YTD figures. This is because we had to start the budget over when the unincorporated H&SC association transferred the funds to the new Valencia Elementary H&SC Corporation on February 23, 2006. Renee mentioned that we only need to use \$2,000 of the \$10,333 in the Outdoor & Recreation Fund for the track that is being built.

B. Microscope - \$1,245

Ms. Guiley, the Science teacher, would like a microscope that she can hook up to her laptop computer and use in the Science classes. All students taking Science would be able to use this microscope. Dian was planning to buy the microscope, but she does not have the budget money to do so. The cost of the microscope is \$1,245. The H&SC would like to purchase the microscope for the Science program using money from the General Fund. Renee asked for a motion to purchase the microscope for \$1,245 with money from the H&SC General Fund. With a motion from Sheri West and a second from Kate Sandusky, it was unanimously approved to purchase the microscope for \$1,245.

Ms. Guiley was able to purchase a Weather Station for the Science program using money raised from the Bake Sale held during the Science Fair. Enough money was raised to purchase a better Weather Station than she originally wanted. Dian mentioned that there is a new Greenhouse in the Valencia Garden that was donated by the Riker family. Ms. Guiley plans to use the Greenhouse in the Science program.

C. Sacramento Trip

Letty reported that the total cost of this year's 4th grade Sacramento trip was \$6,265 for 77 students. The 4th grade class now has enough money to cover the cost of the trip thanks to a very successful Coin Drive fundraiser. The Coin Drive raised over \$1,300. The final bill for the Sacramento trip is not in yet, so the exact final figures are not yet known. Surangee Gunawardena mentioned that only one scholarship was needed for half the cost of the trip.

D. H&SC Storage Shed

Letty reported that the H&SC would like a storage shed to hold supplies that currently are being stored in various people's homes. For example, Katrina Walkinshaw has two boxes of H&SC supplies, Jody Cole has Harvest Festival Halloween decorations, and Liz Wong has boxes of tablecloths and other items from when she cleaned up the Staff Room. The storage shed needs to be high quality so that it won't be broken into, and about 10'x10' in size. The suggestion was made to use money from the Outdoor & Recreation Fund to purchase the shed since it will be located outdoors. Katrina asked if there could also be a cabinet or small storage bin in Room 25, where our monthly meetings are held, for H&SC supplies. Dian said that they were planning to clean out Room 25 over the summer, and after that we could see what kind of space was available. Letty made a motion to spend up to \$1,500 on a storage shed, but there was no vote because it was decided that more research was needed. Jennifer Nowark offered to look into the possibility of getting a storage shed donated from a local business such as Home Depot, San Lorenzo Lumber or Orchard Supply. Jennifer also offered to search Craig's List for a used storage shed. A vote to purchase the shed will be taken once we hear back from Jennifer.

VII. Fundraising Report – Katrina Walkinshaw

A. Domino's

Katrina Walkinshaw reported that Domino's said that Valencia's "Dough Raising Night" pizza fundraiser was their best fundraiser, and that they would like to do one again with us. Domino's will be giving us about \$221 from this fundraiser. Although there were some issues with delivery and not getting to certain areas, the fundraiser was easy to do and there was no cost to us to do it. Ms. Flynn's class won the contest for most participation and will receive a pizza party or field trip to Domino's.

B. Baskin Robbins

Katrina reported that the Baskin Robbins fundraiser raised \$88; however the flyers cost \$44, so we only made \$44. The night of the fundraiser it was pouring rain, so that may have impacted the amount of money raised. Keang, the owner of the Aptos Baskin Robbins, would like to do the fundraiser again and he is willing to give us 20% instead of 15% of the profit. The negative to this fundraiser is that we have to pay for the flyers. There was a discussion about what date would be a good one for a

second fundraiser, whether the afternoon would be better than the evening, and the possibility of doing a “Celebrity Scooping Night” where Valencia teachers work as ice cream scoopers behind the counter.

C. Open House Dinner

Katrina reported that three 3rd grade parents are organizing the Open House Dinner. Open House is Thursday, May 18th. Katrina mentioned that it would be really helpful to keep information on the number of people served and the quantity of food needed for the various dinners so that this information could be passed along to organizers from year to year. Knowing the number of people to serve and the quantity of food to buy is one of the toughest things about hosting these dinners, so Katrina asked that we start keeping this information.

D. Box Tops for Education

Katrina reported that Ms. Flynn’s class came from behind to win the Box Tops contest for the lower grades, and that Mr. Miller’s class won for the upper grades. They each win a pizza party.

E. Drawing for Parking Space

Katrina reported that there will be a drawing at Open House for the reserved parking space at Valencia. The winner will get the parking space for the next calendar school year. The cost of the tickets for the drawing is \$5 for 1 ticket and \$25 for 6 tickets.

F. Next Year’s Fundraising Plans

The topic of next year’s fundraising plans was moved to the end of the meeting. Letty Bess stated that we need to decide on the fundraisers that we want to have next year. There was a discussion on the various options for fundraisers, including Sally Foster, See’s Candy, the Auction, the Harvest Festival, Walk for the Arts, a REV Drive, Surf City Coffee, and Coupon Booklets. It was decided that we will do Sally Foster again next year, and Sheri West agreed to Chair this fundraiser again. Sally Foster raises a lot of money for the General Fund, with little cost to us. It was also decided that we will do a Surf City fundraiser next year and sell Surf City coffee. We have not done this fundraiser before. Jennifer Nowark mentioned a fundraiser involving Coupon Booklets, where each booklet earns \$100. No decision was made about whether to do this fundraiser next year. The Harvest Festival, Walk for the Arts, and the Auction will all take place next year. Even though Aptos Jr. High made a lot of money on the REV Drive they just did, it was decided that we would not do a REV Drive next year. With the Auction and Walk for the Arts both taking place next spring, a REV Drive seemed like too much. Instead, a REV Drive might be a good fundraiser to do the years that we don’t do an Auction. Surangee Gunawardena mentioned a possible fundraiser with Green Valley Cinemas where we would get the ticket sales and they would keep the concession money. This would be a one-night event similar to the Domino’s and Baskin Robbins fundraisers we did this year. Finally, Surangee reported that we have made \$382 so far from the

Recycling program that she has been running. In addition, Surangee reported that the last payment period for eScrip brought in \$340 – the highest amount ever for one payment period. The payment period was for December 2005, so it may have been high due to Holiday spending.

VIII. Other Items

A. Arts Program – Aimee Martin

Aimee Martin reported that Jenni Ward, this year's Spectra artist, is wrapping up her Spectra residency at Valencia. There is one last Spectra assembly for this year called "Shakespeare to Go." It will be on May 17th and is only for the upper grades. Aimee reported that several people volunteered to help with the upcoming Walk for the Arts including Jody Cole, Acacia Talpas, Libby Wilson, and Kalena Allard. In addition, Mary Baugher volunteered to help Aimee with planning next year's Spectra Arts program.

B. Nominating Committee Report – Aimee Martin

Aimee Martin reported that she has some preliminary names of nominees for next year's H&SC Executive Committee. Letty Bess and Jennifer Nowark may run as Co-Presidents, Gabi Estill is willing to run for Vice President, Kelly Austin is willing to run for Corresponding Secretary, Nathalie Manning is willing to run for Recording Secretary, Renee Roberts and Julie Holser have agreed to run as Co-Treasurers again, and Acacia Talpas has agreed to run for Volunteer Coordinator again. Aimee also reported that Katrina Walkinshaw may be willing to be the Auction Chairperson for next year's Auction Committee, and Christine Cornejo has agreed to help with the Auction.

C. Yearbook Update – Julie Holser

Julie Holser reported that the Valencia yearbook already went off to the publisher, and it is due the second or third week of May. Julie said that everyone who worked on the yearbook did a really good job, and that the yearbook is beautiful and unique. Julie reported that the yearbook costs \$15 this year, which is a \$3 increase, but the yearbook is twice the size. Dian mentioned that we do not want to increase the cost of the yearbook very much and that she prefers to keep the price low and affordable.

D. Teacher Appreciation Luncheon – May 16, 2006

Aimee Martin reported that Liz Wong could use some help with the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon that is coming up on Tuesday, May 16th. Lety Rodriguez is helping with the luncheon, but Liz could use some additional volunteers.

IX. Meeting Adjourned

The Valencia Elementary Home and School Club meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is May 11, 2006 at 12:15 pm in Room 25.

Submitted by: Robin Elliot