

## **AELP Parent Organization Board Meeting Minutes August 31, 2012**

**Members Present:** Nicole Petersen, Karen Peters, Andrea White, Mariateresa Elia, Mary Bush, Cindy Bartek, Ann Wright, Matt Robie, Lisa Glenn (Director of Special Programs), Paul Gibbons (Guest)

### **Committee Reports**

#### *Finance*

- The account balance is \$680.00.
- We have two new memberships submitted this year.
- Lisa L. is considering the treasurer position, but we should most likely continue searching. It would be most beneficial to find someone from one of the schools that is not currently represented on the board. We will include information about the positions in the upcoming fall newsletter as well as ask AELP teachers for recommendations or to send out emails inviting interested parents to contact the board for more information.

#### *Communication*

- Website: Cindy and Nicole met with Carin Murphy to discuss building the website as a work project; she would continue to update as needed. Andrea and Nicole brainstormed website elements and passed them on to Carin to incorporate in the new design.

Timeline: couple of months for it to be functional

Cost: administrative costs (\$7–8/month)

Motion passed to have Carin design the website.

#### *Programming*

- The fall book club selection is *5 Levels of Gifted: School Issues and Educational Options* by Deborah Ruf. It was suggested that we look into starting a lunchtime group in Des Moines for people who work there. We will advertise the book club in the newsletter and proceed from there based on interest and availability.

#### *Programming*

- The first newsletter is in the editing phase. It will be sent out via email through the AELP teachers as soon as it is complete.

#### *Legislative*

- Ann met with Jen Lindamann to discuss the current course credit policy. Currently, higher level courses (Algebra 1, Geometry, French, Spanish) taken prior to 9th grade are not counted for credit (Ankeny policy), and three years of credited math classes are required for graduation (State of Iowa policy). This means that students accelerating in math are required to take additional classes in high school (that they may not want to) to meet graduation requirements even though they have taken the same classes regular-track students take in high school for credit. Students are, however, able to take math classes of interest (not necessarily high level) to fulfill high school credit requirements. One advantage of the current policy is that it keeps

students in math classes throughout high school, which is beneficial to students when taking college entry tests as juniors or seniors. Lisa added that it is legal to change Ankeny's policy regarding credits but we would need to take it to the school board for review. If the policy is changed, the district would also need to make sure that middle school teachers are properly endorsed to teach credited classes.

The parent organization will continue to discuss at future meetings to decide if we will advocate for a policy change.

### **Communication from Matt**

- The AELP fall presentation/meeting has not been formally planned yet; Karen and Ann will be the group's liaisons as plans unfold.

### **Other Discussion Items**

- Paul Gibbons attended the board meeting to discuss plans for starting First Lego League teams possibly affiliated with the school district either through PTOs or the AELP Parent Organization. Paul is a Prairie Trail parent with extensive STEM connections as well as grant writing expertise. He has acquired one grant for the team he has already assembled and is willing to pursue other grants if additional teams are formed. The deadline for one of these grants, a government STEM initiative (STEM hub) grant, has a September 14 deadline. It was decided through discussion of the group and input from Lisa Glenn that teams could be formed through PTOs or the parent organization with the support of grants as long as it was an extracurricular activity (vs. during the school day). Paul will proceed with applying for the second grant and meet with Lisa to iron out/confirm details. Karen and Ann will look into putting together a middle school team with parent volunteer coaches to use the second grant. The parent organization agreed that it will continue to support the formation of extracurricular teams (Lego League, Odyssey of the Mind, Quiz Bowls, etc.) in the future and these teams need not be limited to AELP students.

- AELP Information to Note:

Even with its very rigorous identification process, Ankeny identifies a much higher percentage of gifted and talented students than the state/national averages. Still, there are many high-ability Ankeny students who are not targeted for AELP services. Taking this information into account, we need to make sure the parent organization includes students who would benefit from enrichment activities but are not formally identified.

Next year, AELP programming will be under review.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, September 27 at 8 p.m. at Ankeny Pediatric Clinic  
Meeting Room

**Meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.**