

ASHPAC Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 1, 2021

Meeting hosted via Zoom and Google call-in (by DD) due to pandemic.

Attendees: Board members Kristine Kaveney, Jill Fulhan, Diana Davis, and Anna Bukina; Kathy Silva (Director of Student Services), Kathy Bates (School Committee) and others via Zoom.

Welcome: All were welcomed to the meeting.

Topics with Kathy Silva (OSS) and Kathy Bates (SC)

Hybrid Learning update - Per KS, hybrid learning continues to go OK, staff are working with daily situations and the goal continues to be collaboration. There seems to be an increased energy amongst staff with the vaccine on the horizon. There is also a new push for all students to return in person in the spring with recognition of the reality of how to do so safely (what does 3ft apart spacing and passing each other in the hallway look like?) and in a thoughtful manner for all involved. Questions include would there be homeroom changes, service provider changes in schedules and enough staff? Elementary schools survey went out to assess if families would send their children to school full time. Could be as early as first week of April for elementary schools.

Tiered Focus Monitoring – KS starting to upload documents for the pending evaluation.

Pittaway Preschool – depending on # students returning, Wednesdays may be utilized for initial in- person evaluations and assessments.

New Psychologist at Mindess – Julia Dewalt has been hired through a temp agency through June.

Saturday workshop – per KS was held on Saturday to discuss re-opening all schools. DESE Commissioner Riley looking to April 5th as elementary school opening day. Superintendent Adams is going to be meeting with Warren and Mindess staff to address their questions and concerns. School committee to review parent surveys.

Progress Reports update – Per KS, OSS is looking into making a video to explain use of ESPED to make it simple for families so that families know when they can access it for student documents including Progress Reports, some of which are not yet available in ESPED. OSS working to correct discrepancy.

ESPED – Can families without sufficient access to or knowledge of technology access ESPED? Per KS, may currently still be missing some families but hotspots were given out and increased connectivity has been provided in areas of Ashland with poor signals. Parent concern for desire for time and date stamping on documents signed in ESPED was expressed for completeness of file records.

IEP Meeting Notes – Notes previously copied and received directly after IEP meetings have not been happening 100% district wide due to remote meetings. KS has recently shared with staff that meeting notes should be copied by team chair and emailed to families within 24 hours of meeting's end.

New check box on Consent to Evaluate forms – If you check the box to get your reports 2 days ahead of meeting you should get them 2 days ahead. If you did not check the box, an email or verbal request should get you the documents as well. Concern was expressed to KS for 'if you don't know about this request box or miss it, you will/may not get the reports in sufficient time to review before a meeting.'

ESY (Extended School Year) – Parent attendee asked about plans for summer programs. Per KS, current planning is for ESY to be a six-week program, Mon thru Thurs, 9a-12p from July 5-August 12. Related services will be flexible with in-person and remote. Tutoring will be offered in-person and remote on Mon-Thur between hours of 8a-3p. ELL will run Mon-Thurs 9a-12p. Some teacher interest has already been expressed to KS. KS also stated Assistant Superintendent Caira is developing a 'recoupment camp' for intensive tutoring for students identified as having the most significant challenges during the pandemic. This is not part of OSS programming. Per KS, one of the biggest struggles is finding staffing for summer programs. She prefers teachers who already know Ashland students but if need be, she will look to hire outside of current APS staff for the summer programs. Location TBD, program moves each summer so each school can have space for building improvements.

Lighting the Way for Excellence Award Presentation recap – KK presented last school year's awards to staff at the school committee meeting on Feb 18th. Many awardees attended and emailed afterwards to thank KK. KK

thanked KB for adding ASHPAC to the agenda that night for the awards and KB was impressed by the presentation; it was a positive event during a challenging year! Typically, written descriptive nominations are read aloud during the award presentation but given the venue and time allowed, were not read this year. They were not emailed to awardees since no consent was sought at time of nominations. A nomination form will be created this spring for this year's awards that will give parameters for the descriptive and ask for consent to share with those receiving award and at public ceremony.

ASHPAC Website – Per AB, concerns sent to her via email previously have been fixed on the website. All school links to the new website are now present and correct. DD to send the workshop flyer so it may be posted. List serv still needs to be developed, will add to bundle of concerns (also including updating town website link to ours) to complete with IT by end of the summer.

Upcoming virtual workshop – Basic Rights: Evaluation and Eligibility - Monday, March 15th at 7pm – DD to send flyer to KS to distribute via OSS listserv and it will be posted on FB and Twitter. DD also noted the link for registration was difficult to put on flyer so will be sent in email as well.

FCSN Visions of Community Conference – ASHPAC board provided a complimentary admission (received via our MassPAC membership) to the online conference to an Ashland parent. The offer was emailed to several parents who had attended ASHPAC meetings in the last year and was awarded via first come first serve strategy. KS offered the second complimentary pass for teachers to APS staff but no one has confirmed yet.

Next ASHPAC monthly meeting and board election is Tuesday, May 11th at 7pm – Please share with all interested.

New topics/concerns:

AREA (Ashland Residents for Equity and Action) – New group within Ashland is on agenda for next school committee meeting. Board asked KB to mention at the meeting that ASHPAC would like to connect with AREA.

ASHPAC:

Vote to approve January meeting minutes – AB noted an error, need to change total number of ASHPAC scholarships awarded for 2020 graduating class to 4. DD made the motion to vote to approve minutes based on this change, JF seconded the motion. All were in favor of approving said updated minutes.

Basic Rights workshop – flyer pending, JF to send to Criterion EI, KK to email to preschool director. JF coordinating with FCSN speaker.

Scholarship 2021 – KK to lead, JF to assist with scholarship form, due date established for April 30th.

Lighting the Way – KK to develop nomination form that will outline the award criteria, ask for 2 paragraphs highlighting why this person is being nominated, and ask for consent to share the paragraphs publicly and/or with the awardee.

FCSN VOC attendees – as above.

Treasurer update – Previous fundraiser not completed. Ideas discussed where to sell Ashland reusable bags. DD to check with WAITT – maybe for welcome bags for new Ashland residents or Rec Center for camp attendees personal items.

Website update – Per AB, website calendar is public, the flyer can be posted to calendar.

New items/concerns –

Board Elections at next meeting – Several openings exist, including member-at-large.

Meeting ended: 8:30pm

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Jill Fulhan, ASHPAC co-chair/Secretary