

Official Meeting Minutes of Parent Council Meeting on Nov. 26, 2019

1. The meeting was called to order at 19:08 and all representatives and guests were welcomed to the parent council meeting.

2. Agenda: The agenda was approved by unanimous vote.

3. Meeting minutes from September 24th, 2019 parent council meeting were approved unanimously.

4. Student Council (SC) Report: Emma Nathenson and Sahra al-Malahi

Upcoming events:

- Holiday Spirit Day on December 18
- Spirit Week is planned for mid-January
- HS IDEAS club just released new journal edition on LGBTQ issues.
- Students are considering doing yearbooks for 7-9th and 10th-11th grades and are looking for sponsors.
- For an AIDS charity fundraiser, the HS students will dress up as Santa and elves for photos with ES students.
- Domkonzert is Wednesday Dec. 4th at 7 pm.

5. Elementary School Report: Ashia Bell, American Elementary School Vice Principal

-New dismissal time affecting lunch:

3rd-6th graders can eat hot lunch from 11:25 to 12:15. 1st and 2nd graders eat hot lunch after 13:20 and EC students eat closer to 13:40. Before that they have their "big" snack in their classrooms, consistent with the routine from previous years. Children who have activities or remedial help eat at 13:05 or are given a packed lunch. New lunch tables are ordered and will be on campus in December. The administration is working to improve this new process.

-The Hort Double Room Usage Task Force is creating a list of criteria based on the needs and wants of different stakeholders on campus (teachers, Hort staff, students, and parents). This will be used to develop alternative solutions to share with the School Conference for their review/approval. The task force has already met four times this year and expects to take the rest of the year to find a solution.

-Three new German teachers will be joining in the second semester. Final teaching assignments will be determined toward the end of the semester. Parents will be informed if their children are affected. The new colleagues will help ensure smaller class sizes in German language instruction and will teach several sections of sport.

6. High School Report: Birgit Hinrichsen, Assistant German High School Principal

-New regulation regarding attendance:

Parents must inform the homeroom teacher via email on the first day their child is sick.

-Delia Simons is the contact teacher for students regarding any problems, questions, or communications about drug use. She is working to foster increased communication among teachers, students and parents regarding drugs and to track incidents on campus.

-Teresa Gebhardt is working with the teachers and administration to develop a HS course catalog.

7. Elections

The following parent representatives were elected to the Educational Directorate (ED) and School Conference (SK):

ED American main: Sarah Gross

ED German main: Anja Hollman

ED American alternate: Kristen Winkler

ED German alternate: Hanne Defty

SK German main: Carola Frege (replacing Marion Patt)

SK German alternate: Alexandra Albanese (replacing Anja Hollman)

Committee Reports

Anti-Bullying Working Group: Birgit Hinrichsen and Sarah Gross

A summary of the anti-bullying survey results was presented to the parent council. A similar presentation was given to HS teachers last week followed by a teacher workshop on the topic.

On December 9th at 7:00 pm, parents, students and faculty are invited to participate in a workshop that will build on the survey results and develop ways to create a better atmosphere at the school.

In late winter/early spring, an all-school presentation will be made. Members of the *Senat* will attend. Further information will follow once the date is set.

Educational Directorate (ED): Julia Wachs

-By the end of 2019, we will have security lighting on campus installed. By the end of the current school year (July 2020), the security booth, cameras, and new locks will be installed on the main gates and doors.

-Admission policy for Entrance Class has changed: Pre-admission language testing has been eliminated. A child must have German or American citizenship and at least one parent must also have this nationality. Parents indicate the child's dominant language on the application, and that determines the initial language for classroom teaching. All EC children will be tested mid-year to assess their mother tongue competency. If a child does not have native-speaker competency, parents will be informed that the child may not pass the probationary period. Another language test will be given in May. If a child does not pass, they must leave the school at the end of the EC year.

-JFKS is currently in the process of hiring a German HS principal and ES principals (US and German).

BEA/BSB: Eva El-Alfy

-A lot of new construction in Zehlendorf will affect students on their way to and from school. Other schools are encouraging children to walk or take BVG to school, similar to the former JFK "walking school bus."

-Bezirk schools are also applying for DigitalPakt funding to improve infrastructure and media competency of both teachers and students.

-Providing hot lunches is a challenge at many schools due to the increased number of free lunches.

School Conference (SK): Kristen Winkler

SK is looking for a parent volunteer to take meeting minutes at upcoming SK meetings. The person needs to understand both English and German, but minutes can be in either language.

8. Miscellaneous

Food committee report, Bethany Vaughn:

Food committee now includes 5 active parent members and 2 backups.

According to official standards, a meat choice is supposed to be offered only 8 days per month, and a fish choice on 2 days per month. The caterer has created a three-week trial food plan for December that follows these guidelines. Please ask your children about the new food in the trial period.

A survey for parents, students and teachers is in the works. During December, kids will no longer serve themselves from the salad bar. The lunch ladies will put one of two main choices on a plate and someone from the caterer will be serving side dishes from the salad bar. Please send any concerns regarding food to the food committee at food@jfsberlin.org.

Bilingual Working Group:

The working group will host a parent info evening on February 13th at 7 pm, open to all parents. Teachers will explain the school's bilingual program and answer questions about both the ES and HS programs.

DigitalPakt:

The school is working on an application for the DigitalPakt, aiming to improve connectivity at the school as well as media competency. Jörg Nowak will join the administration team to support them with their application.

The parent council wants to organize a parent group to brainstorm different ideas on how to get our kids more tech savvy. Information will be sent out to all parents to form a working group.

Thanks to the Verein for the Spooktacular and to the parents for the delicious buffet donations.

Next Parent Council Meetings (Tuesdays):

January 14th at 7:00 pm

March 24 at 7:00 pm

June 9 at 7:00 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 21:05.