

Final Agenda
For the School Conference Meeting on
Wednesday, February 20, 2019 at 15:15, in room W125

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes from December 6, 2018
3. Review of *Action Items* List
4. Drug Use, Sexual Harassment and a Safe School Environment
5. Sub-Committee Reports:
 - a. Finance Sub-Committee Report
 - b. Security Plan Update
 - c. Entrance to the School Grounds for the Students Update
 - d. Anti-Bullying Update
 - e. Food Committee Update
6. Conflict Resolution Procedure/Formal Grievance Policy
7. Hort and Entrance Class Situation Update
8. High School Cell Phone Policy
9. Building Project – Water Fountains

In attendance:

Administration: Brian Salzer, Jenny Hoenicke

Teacher Representatives: Timm Jones, Anne de Tarr
Alternates: Malte Schroeder, Christian Neumann (voting rights)

Parent Representatives: Lars Bespolka, Kristen Winkler, Stefan Berger (from 16:00), Marion
Patt
Alternates: Nelly Heidbrink, Kristina Pedersen, Anja Hollmann
(voting rights), Katrin Völkner

Student Representatives: Lars Brown-Heidenreich, Johannes von Kleist, Christine Cook (16:00-
17:00)

Voting members: 11 (shortly 12) voting members present

1 Agenda Approval

The Agenda was approved unanimously (11, 0, 0)

2 Approval of the minutes:

Change requests:

1) ES Teacher wanted to change that Timm Jones is not the contact person for food committee. Beate Neumann is the contact person for the water fountain project.

2) Part 4 Frau Orgis title should read Bildung, Jugend und Familie.

3) Discussion of what Frau Orgis meant about allowance of the school to hire outside assistance. Also discussed that Sente is comfortable with the current level of security, but if it is the school's desire for additional security, they will support it but the school needs to make the plan.

Vote for approval with first two edits (11,0,0)

3 Action Item List:

Items discussed

1) Feedback from the teachers regarding the ES room use by Hort

-Heather Rising talked to all teachers for feedback but feedback is not available as Ms. Rising left the school. Timm Jones will try to get info from Ms. Rising.

Parent suggested to go through action item list and discuss status.

2) Need clarification of ED and SK responsibilities. Mr. Salzer asked how do we go about finding out who is responsible for what.

-perhaps a joint meeting with Herr Schmidt(mentioned by Frau Orgis).

-Mr. Salzer will take to ED and ask about joint meeting and then organize with Herr Schmidt to find a date(new action item)

3) Has the combining of food committees been accomplished? Frau Hoenicke answered that it is in process

--find a common meeting time is a problem

--ES Teacher stated the company not holding up its end of the bargain, what are the consequences?

Opening statement Administration:

Beginning of year, we went over all the laws and regulations. Would like that we go over decorum. All members of SK are volunteers who want what is best for the school. Ask questions, make suggestions, proposals for the future and move forward. Treat people with respect and honesty. We all want to improve the school, want to question and make things better. End result is protecting the integrity of the institution. We need to have that in mind when we do our work.

4 Drug Use, Sexual Harassment and a Safe School Environment

Parent raised the issue of drug use and sexual harassment having heard of accounts of multiple incidents of sexual harassment, sexual favors being requested in exchange for drugs, and an alleged report of a date rape.

Question: What is the school doing about this? Even if it is occurring off campus, it could affect the impacted students' well-being, increasing stress level of students, make it uncomfortable for students and could impact the effected students' right to a safe school environment. The school receives federal funding through the embassy, so, while Title IX may not apply by law as the school is not in the US, it should apply in spirit

Parent: 10th grade kids talking about who came to school stoned. Teachers ask but don't do anything about it, parents proud of kids partying wildly!

Administration: Partying at home/off campus

Parent: known drug dealers from school standing at S-bahn Zehlendorf

Students: has heard a lot of this, has shifted to younger grades. Especially 8th graders lots of alcohol and Marijuana. It was not this way when he started

HS Teacher: old problem

Parent asked the students what they recommend

Students: we can't speak for everyone. Not on campus and not our place but it impacts school. Maybe soft measures like Police info day similar to smart phone info

Administration: perhaps with closed campus and security they may not be able to leave campus in the middle of school day

Parent: In the past teachers were walking around

Administration: training coming for sexual behavior and violence. When we have general rumors, we can not respond to them. I could invite councilors to talk to SK about what programs we have.

Parent: parent council has had a parent info night about drug awareness. Perhaps putting up signs around campus for drug abuse awareness could help.

Administration: Dare program and programs like it were completely ineffective.

Parent: Perhaps councilors could write info letter about drug abuse (similar to one sent out about the inappropriate Netflix show) and signs to look for.

Parent: This goes to a positive school climate

ES Teacher: he knows a group who presents info on all these different topics

Parent: It would be good to hear what the school does for sexual harassment. Are there firm guidelines and a procedure in place if sexual harassment occurs or a student is on drugs or drunk on campus? Do all teachers know the policy? Are they trained on seeing the signs of sexual harassment and alcohol and drug abuse?

Administration: opened school year with police training. Teachers have a lot on their plates, they may not notice and don't want to falsely accuse. They err on the side of students and trust.

HS Teachers: responded once to a student who laughed an excessive amount. Thought something was wrong. Talked to 1 on 1. Stated if continued will call parents. Kids have media telling them this is a good thing.

Student: most of the problem lies with other problems at home. Teachers should acknowledge they see what students are doing. So the student knows someone is watching them. Home environment and friend group

HS Teacher: every teacher responsible for incorporating drug use lessons into their teaching.

Parent: Be careful just dismissing rumors there can be truth in them but people are afraid to come forward.

Administration: We should end discussion on this topic until councilors come and show everyone what they do. The school has the trusted teacher program now to help.

5 Subcommittee reports:

- A. Finance committee update:** Anja presented report: the finance committee started looking into inconsistencies in funding and questions that had been raised. They started with books and Lernmittel.
- Books need to be picked and available 4 weeks ahead of the school year and approved by gesamtconference.
 - Parents have to buy books but school can have a book fund and buy the books for parents
 - SK needs to ask teachers is it possible to make lists 4 weeks ahead of school year if JFK can not do that perhaps there needs to be an exception to the law put into the JFK law.
 - School sends out letter saying all parents MUST pay, warning mahnung when not paid(although this is voluntary)
 - Verein holds the money in a trust account
 - Money for books was spent on items for lighting in the Aula and computers...environment of asking questions seems to be discouraged.
 - Is this legal or illegal?
 - Thinks it is a sad thing for the school that teachers who asked questions about why there was not enough money for books where made to feel uncomfortable.
 - If everything was ok why could that not have been explained to the teachers.
 - School conference needs to decide whether the book fund should be used each year and if it is ok to use to use the money for books and also other things, such as for IT, school support etc.
 - Needs to be evaluated what the book fund money was spent on.
- Future: needs to be looked at how we go forward with the book fund in the future and have the proper controls and procedures in place to manage it.
- Discussion:
- Question from teacher: is ED responsible for the money?
- Parent: law says SK is responsible, ED has never overseen budget, needs to be solved who is responsible.
- ES teacher: at German meeting told would get certain books. Teachers turned in their orders fast and then 1 week before school heard they would not get their book orders. Teachers asked why they have no books. These questions where directed to Heather Rising (teacher responsible for

submitting orders). This teacher who asked questions for the other teachers was told to stop asking questions and given an order not to ask any more questions.

Administration: in Feb they look through priorities of books and decide what needs to be ordered first. Different money from different sources comes in at different times. No shortage of money. No books were not ordered, they just came later.

ES Teacher: wants to know why teacher (Heather Rising) whose task it was to work on book orders was lost to the school because she asked questions.

Parent: the reason book fund couldn't be used for books is because the money was used on other things for the school (IT/Lighting) Suggest we involve Frau Orgis to look into what happened with book fund and Heather Rising in order to see if everything was done properly and to help the teachers understand if OK.

Administration: clear procedures are needed for how ordering works so it is clear for everyone. How much money we expect, etc.

Parent/ES Teacher: These procedures already existed in 2018 and something went wrong!

-- Transparency is important

--Parents and faculty have lost trust in school Administration

--Wants SK support to try and reconcile loss of trust through help of the Finance committee

--A yearly presentation to the SK of what money was used and how should be required

--Then could use this yearly presentation to adjust how money would be spent

--Money was spent on school but books need to come first.

ES Teacher: We lost Heather Rising and see a pattern of losing all the teachers who are looking into the money process. Who among the faculty will take this job next?

Parent: We have the feeling that since we asked the question about how the money was spent. That we (the parents) have been accused of attacking the school. Teachers feel they are afraid and that the Administration does not take them seriously. This is really a problem. Need to take this case and see it as a starting point.

Administration: glad that we are doing this research. This is how we will recognize things that need to be improved. In the last meeting when I brought the budget info and gave a quick overview what it involves (German budget, book fund, trust fund, activity fund and also Verein but that is independent). JFKS is a unique school with booklists of books that may be difficult and expensive for parents to order, especially as it requires ordering books from US, UK and Germany. Maybe should let the parent know. Money released at different times. When we have a need for the school we try to buy what's needed for the school with the funds that are available. Always following the rules in the best interest of the school. If not lets learn from that and change. Maybe people will have to wait but we will do it correctly.

HS Teacher: in HS very flexible and everything (with books) works well.

Administration: It's not that we start school without books, but sometimes things are delayed.

ES Teacher: Thinks there was a case last year when teaching D-4 had no books for 4-5 weeks and that was a problem.

Administration: The book order should have been turned in and then the admin can decide how the books can be ordered.

Parent: but that's what caused the finances to be looked into

Parent: Letter to parents if it says it is voluntary to pay, less people will pay. The fund will be reduced and the teachers will have to run after their students for months for book money. When I was on the Parent Council many people did not pay the money. We made this letter and created the reminder to fix this problem. Teachers will not be happy if they have to chase after students. Parent: depends on how the letter is written. Experiences of other schools worked but ES not important(change of funding)

--Teachers can make book list which will make it easier to plan, what makes JFKS so different we need to change the law?

Parent: high fluctuation in teachers, big turnover of students, so many parents who do not know how to find their school supplies.

Parent: that helps the new teachers by knowing what books they will have and the parents would prefer the school to buy the books anyway.

Parent: Don't think it's good for practical reasons to lie to the parents

Kristen: 3 action items:

1) Schedule Finance subcommittee meeting

2) Vote to set Lernmittelfond for next year

3) Revoke/revote 2015 SK decision

Teacher meeting on the topic of developing a book list for High school

HS Teacher: Never has been better with books, likes the current process. Doesn't want to have to chase after students/parents for book money like before.

Parent: Need to tell parents it is voluntary.

Administration: need to have subcommittee make a suggested draft of the lernmittel fund parent letter

Parent: have a HS teacher/s on subcommittee since it effects the HS

Parent: wants an independent investigation to look into past, why highly respected teachers have to leave. We need to look into this. Change to procedures was done in order to go around rules designed to prevent corruption. As long as this is still out there, there will be doubts as to what really happened in SK.

Parent: SK needs a copy of Letter Dr. Jurgens sent to Frau Orgis. Plus Frau Orgis should know the facts from the SK.

Parent: Transparency is very important

ES Teacher; mentioned Rechnungshof which is a private organization that looks into anything to do with money and spending and helps find solutions. [Note: Lars' understanding is that the Rechnungshof is an independent Berlin government agency (does not report to anyone) that can audit and review public organizations (but cannot impose sanctions or penalties)]

HS Teacher: I thought we know where the money went?

Parent: we are not sure why this was done in this way and circumvented normal procedures. An outside source coming in to say what and how what was done is a good idea. The parents need this and it will prevent rumors.

Parent: note of appreciation to Kristen and Anja for looking into this and all their hard work.

B Security Update:

Lars presents report: meeting today. Department of state has granted a \$78,000 grant to provide cameras etc. However they are waiting on the Senat to do their part of the agreement.
--Will be discussed in an ED meeting on 20th of March. Locks that have been
--Locks have been promised but not delivered (no date for when installed)
--Write a letter to ED to try and put pressure on Senat. That this grant is issued but can't be used until Senat does their part.

Student: do we need an electronic vote of approval after the draft is made.
Administration: it is approved that we vote electronically on the draft letter

C Entrance to School Grounds:

Mr Salzer: Held first meeting, but it is a complex issue as JFKS has many entrances to the school that need to be used by a large number of students, faculty, etc that enter the school. Traffic issues idea and work with police and city to perhaps reroute traffic.
Parent: Parents wanted to do a count (1 in winter, 1 in spring) to measure the usage of all gates at the school. The parents would need help.
Administration: suggested perhaps teachers on duty could help
Parent: action items to add

- 1) Do counting of entrance to gates (twice)
- 2) To make a new date for entrance committee to meet

D. Anti-Bullying:

Stefan Berger update: there will be a school climate survey.
Mr. Salzer: Contract signed between Senat and University of Potsdam for survey.
Parent: SK discussed they could go forward with the survey but the SK needs to approve the survey before given.
Parent: Thinks they can only approve in its entirety not single questions
Parent: is there good communication right now?
Parent: No, didn't know the contract had been signed.
Administration: will talk to Frau Hendrikson to keep parents updated
Parent: Please make sure U of Potsdam knows that the SK needs to approve the survey.
Administration: surveys only need to be approved by SK if collecting data from students. The survey before winter break did not need to go to the SK because it was only given to the parents.

E. Food Committee:

Frau Hoenicke: (slideshow presentation) what can we expect from the caterer. Do we get everything we are supposed to. Frau Spencer came up with the form on slideshow to evaluate these questions. They have seen some things already not there. High School is also on board with dealing with Bistro area. Asking students their impressions. Lunch bags for field trips.
--They have had 1 meeting so far

--Next meeting before end of Feb. Will discuss what steps need to be taken.

HS Teacher: Who defined the criteria on this chart?

Frau: Hoenicke: it was taken directly from the contract and the people in the food committee will be filling it in.

6. Conflict Resolution Process:

Parent: What is the process for students and parents when they have a conflict with a teacher or in a class. Both in HS and ES.

Administration: 1st step talk to teacher themselves and/or councilor, can also talk to other teachers if feel more comfortable. Will bring copy of contract with parents and teachers that outlines this process.

HS Teacher: We take each problem and find the best person to talk to.

Parent: whats the student perspective

Students: several students who were not happy with a teacher's grading of them approached the teacher, went to parents. The parents talked with the parent rep and they talked with the teacher. The students did not feel it was resolved. Students were happy when didn't get the same teacher the next year.

Parent: What happens if the Administration doesn't solve the problem?

Administration: it goes to the superintendent

Parent: is this in the formal procedures? It might help to stop parents going to the press.

ES Teacher: for grading a teacher needs to show proof. The students/parents can call the complaint line.

Administration: Will send out paper with procedure and see if want to add to it.

End of discussion (ran out of time for other items)

Parent: May 22nd is the next mtg do we need another one in between?

Hort: can't present the room usage info because have not gotten the teacher feedback.

HS Teacher: We could put it at the top of the list.

Parent: its too close to the end of the year if a decision needs to be changed/made if wait till May.

Parent: Can do a meeting before spring break?

Jones: will contact Heather Rising to see her list from the survey she did of ES school teachers about double usage. If she doesn't will make the survey of teachers.

Administration: 3 teachers were ok with it, 1 teacher and erzieher were having problems but it is resolved and 1 teacher still has problems as far as she knows.

Administration: Will find a date for a new meeting before the May meeting.

Meeting ended at 1800.

Minutes submitted by Kristina Pedersen