

## **GPA Meeting December 16, 2008**

**Attendees:** Amy Joseph, President; Ginny Gjedsted, Vice-President; Terri Ahuruonye, Secretary; Sharon Olken, Principal; Hokhmah Allen; Jude Deckenbach; Helene Dorian; Lisa Elliott; Martha Fulmer; Gary Goldsborough; Mary Maya; Tina McGovern; Elia Pochron; Jackie Quella; Joanne Wells;

**Approval of November Minutes.** The November 11, 2008 minutes were approved.

### **Principal's Update- Sharon Olken**

*Finals Schedule.* The schedule for finals has changed and they are now in January. The SFUSD 1<sup>st</sup> semester used to be one month longer than Gateway's. Students who fell behind in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter didn't have time to catch up and it would influence the rest of their school year. Now the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semesters are the same length. Finals will be one week after winter break (week of January 12). Everyone takes subjects one the same day and time from 9-11AM, with afternoon review sessions. After finals week is Project Week.

Amy Joseph said she was not happy with the new finals schedule because it could take vacation time away from students if they have homework over vacation. In addition having exams after the break also takes away from family time.

*School Year.* The trend in the education is to start the school year in early August so it will end in May. Some of the reasons for the change are to allow for a longer winter break and to have more time before the STAR and AP testing.

*Charter Renewal.* Sharon was pleased with how the Gateway charter renewal turned out. We wrote as strong charter and the Board of Education spoke highly of Gateway at the meeting. It was good to see students, parents and alumni at the meeting and hear them speak on behalf of Gateway. Amy added that Sharon did a phenomenal job.

### **Project Week – Mary Maya, Project Week Coordinator**

Project Week is six days of instruction outside of the normal curriculum. At the end of the six days there is a gala. This year there are 24 courses to choose from, including backpacking, hoops, and boxing. The selection process is being done a little differently this year – preference is being given to seniors and juniors. The most popular class is Boxing. Other popular courses are Iron Chef, Backpacking, Sledding, Silk-screening, and Propagate the Propaganda. All of these courses are filled.

Sharon explained that during Project Week all regular classes stop. The idea is to allow students and teachers to engage in learning in a different way. It is hands-on and students can see that what they are learning in school is relevant. Central to Gateway's mission, students do

something they care about. They are more focused, but the atmosphere is more relaxed. Some of the challenges of Project week are that:

- It's a lot of work for teachers. It requires preparation and teaching and can be exhausting.
- Students love it but reeling them back in when the week is over is hard. January will not have consistency.

Students will find out on the first Wednesday in January what course they are in for Project Week. Students will get Project Week forms and must return them by Monday, January 12.

Amy said that one concern is what the schedule is for Project Week and communicating that to parents. Mary responded that classes start and 8:30 and end at 2:30. Start times have to be approved by Sharon and Mary.

The Project Week Gala will be from 5:30PM to 7:30PM. Some teachers will start later that day. Parents are encouraged to attend the Gala.

Mary said that students get a pass/fail and get 2.5 credits each year.

If someone wants to volunteer during Project Week they should contact the teacher in charge of the course. The Project Week pamphlet was posted online. It includes a description of each course, what is needed, and the teacher in charge.

### **Logowear/Treasurer Update - Elia Pochron**

Elia showed the new sweatpants and shorts. They come in sizes small to XXL. The sweatpants are \$40; no price has been set for the shorts. Amy said she liked the Gateway scarves people wore at the Board of Education meeting. Joanne Wells said she will look into getting more scarves. They could be sold during the Project Week Gala.

### **International Night**

International Night will be Wednesday, February 18. We need to ask KIPP if we can use the cafeteria early that night.

### **Garage Sale/Carwash**

Possible dates for the garage sale/carwash are April 18, 25, or May 1. Sharon needs to check with the Senior Coordinator. Sharon said prior to moving to the Geary Avenue location Gateway was able to make more money with the garage sale. Last year \$700 was raised. Gary Goldsborough said he has some ideas about making money on the garage sale.

Tina McGovern said the parents work hard to make sure all students can go to the prom. The prom committee is made of staff and students. The prom is a Junior/Senior prom. Ms. Pena is the teacher advisor. The same adults never organize the prom from year to year. Staff works hard to keep the costs down. Senior year is very expensive. Originally the garage sale was to raise money for grad night.

An item to put on January's agenda is what the various fundraising efforts are at Gateway. Tina McGovern said she could gather historical information on fundraising efforts for the February meeting.

The next GPA meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 13, 2009.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Terri Ahuruonye, Secretary