

## ACA SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

### Meeting # 2 (School Year 2016-2017)

Friday, September 30, 2016

**Attendance:** Irfan Choudhery, Veneranda Sanchez , Noha Ibrahim, Dr. Tomeh, Samah Bkhaitan, Hana Khorchid, Basheer Harb, Christine Choudhery, Zaytun Hamdan, Sumaya Abdul Quadir, Dalal Jawad, Badiah Lababidi, Asma Hussain, Robert Lyon.

Meeting started at 3:45pm

- Opening Duaa conducted by Br. Basheer.
- Reviewed minutes & Approved.
- Br. Irfan welcomed 2 new members 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Teacher Representatives (Dalal Jawad and Badiah Lababidi).

### **Student Nomination Process**

- In order to fill the 2 vacant student positions, 5 different students competed. The following students expressed their interests regarding these positions:
  - 1) Noor Basharat/Grade 12
  - 2) Madeeha Sadaat/Grade 12
  - 3) Labiba Syed/Grade 12
  - 4) Nancy Elsharawy/Grade 11
  - 5) Sara Aboul-Nasr/Grade 9

The Council Members asked a consistent set of questions from each student. This was followed by the voting process. The following 2 students were elected based on the total # of votes.

- 1) Noor Basharat
- 2) Nancy Elsharawy

### **\*\*ACTION ITEM\*\***

Irfan Choudhery to share the final results with the students. Invite the elected members to the Council Session in October.

### **PTA/Sports Committee Update**

- Sr. Veneranda indicated that their 1<sup>st</sup> PTA event in reference to the “Matinee and a Meal” was very successful! More than 200 people attended!
- In reference to Sports, ACA is getting ready for Basketball Season! Uniforms have been ordered. The season will start from October through the end of January next year.

## **Parking Lot/School Traffic Issues**

- Sr. Noha brought up complaints on behalf of the parents in reference to extended waiting time due to blocked express lanes as some parents are not moving as they are busy talking on the phone. According to her, this causes unnecessary delays picking up their children.
- Sr. Samah responded although anything can be improved further, currently the average wait time is around 20 minutes for dismissal which is much lower than it has been in the past. Dr. Tomeh commented there is always further room for improvement of the process. Another concern expressed during this discussion, to save time, some parents are picking up their children on 42<sup>nd</sup> street causing the children to climb the partition wall between the school and the neighborhood. This poses a safety concern.

### **\*\* ACTION ITEM\*\***

- *To facilitate traffic, painting should be done in the Montessori Express lane of the parking lot.*
- *Br. Basheer: To post a sign on the west side of the parking lot cautioning students not to climb the wall.*
- *Br. Robert suggested creating 3 lanes of moving traffic by eliminating certain parking spaces.*
- *To accumulate all students at the end of school in the front corridor across from the office. This will improve in the movement and wait times of students being picked up from parents.*

## **New School Lunch Challenges/Views**

- Sr. Noha expressed concerns regarding the new menu implemented since the beginning of the school year. According to her many children are not liking the food and a lot of food end up in the garbage.
- Sr. Samah and Br. Robert responded stating that things are slowly getting better that students are gradually getting used to the new healthy menu. The menu will change every 3-4 months depending on the feedback provided by the students.
- Ms. Samah mentioned that the Catering Company is very eager to work with us.
- To effectively utilize wasted food Sr. Sumaya suggested the use of composting.

## Senior Committee Updates

- Sr. Samah expressed concern about the current graduation arrangements for the senior class.
- According to her, prior years we have had too many fundraisers scheduled by seniors although the involvement of the seniors towards the fundraising activities is limited.
- Many seniors do not show up to support the events while many others use the fundraiser schedule for other social activities. At the same time, managing these regular fundraisers is costing money to ACA as the school ends up providing staff after hours to support the fundraising activity.
- She proposed the following recommendation:
  - ✚ Like in other High schools to offer a package for graduation which should cover items like: Cap&Gown, Senior Portraits, Diploma Cover, and Yearbook, etc. The proposed package will cost approximately around \$200.00.
  - ✚ To minimize staff costs, there will only be 1 fundraiser offered per year instead of monthly fundraisers.
- There was a vibrant discussion on this topic as this change will be effective for the 2017 Graduation and could potentially impact the highschool students and parents.
- Sr. Asma expressed concern that the school is continually changing expectations and requirements in reference to senior graduation on a yearly basis.
- Sr. Badiah (an ACA Alumni) was very supportive of the recommendations as she felt that by making this change we will be more aligned with other schools in reference to senior graduation.
- The decision to offer the package was unanimously agreed and approved by the Council as there was no significant resistance or opposition to this move.

### **\*\*ACTION ITEM\*\***

In order to move forward, the Principal was requested to provide this information to the Seniors through the Graduation Committee.

### **Bonus Hour & Homework-Elementary Students**

- Sr. Noha expressed concern on behalf of some parents of excessive homework especially in the lower grades.

- In response, Sr. Samah commented that the topic of excessive homework has been brought up for discussion many times in the Council.
- There are strict guidelines provided in the handbook in reference to homework. These guidelines should be followed by the teachers.
- In cases where these guidelines have not been followed, parents should contact school administration.

### **Initiation of Morning Assembly**

- As discussed in previous Council meetings, Sr. Samah updated the Council that the morning assembly will be effective starting October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016. The morning assembly will consist of the following items:
  - Morning Dua'
  - Pledge of Allegiance
  - Preamble/National Anthem
  - Hadith of the Week (Islamic Reminder)
  - Recognition of Students
  - Merits Program Winners
  - Other School Contests
  - Updates/Announcements

There was a discussion regarding which day of the week the assembly should start. The admin proposed Monday although many members suggested Friday. It was decided that Friday will be the day for the Assembly.

### **\*\*ACTION ITEM\*\***

ACA Admin to inform the parents of the initiation of the morning assembly on Friday through email.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL SHURA MEETING, SATURDAY, NOV. 5<sup>TH</sup>**

We have our very important School Council Shura Meeting coming up on SATURDAY, November 5<sup>th</sup>! We all need to work together!! This is a very important Date for us!! It is from 11am to 2pm! Please plan to attend!!

- Closing Duaa conducted by Br. Basheer.
- Meeting adjourned @ 5:45pm
- Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> @ 3:45pm