

Chinatown Working Group (CWG): Education Group

NEXT MEETING: our may meeting is set for Friday May 29 from 10am to 11:30am at PS 124 (Confucius Plaza)

Minutes from April 29, 2009

Present:

K Webster, Parents Association, PS 130

AP Alice Hernandez, 131

Soo Baek, Immigrant Social Services

Elisa Espiritu, CYI

Jennifer Chang, CYI

Principal Alice Hom from PS 124

Principal Amy Hom from PS1

Principle Lily Woo, PS 130

Lisa Donlan, President CEC District 1

Principal Brett Gustafson, PS 2

Guiding Principles (continued from last meetings)

-We were asked to come up with GP in order to insure the CWG has our perspective clearly before them when they are addressing any issues relevant to education and schools.

-Looking through the other CWG Guiding Principles, many of their issues are interrelated with schools and education. What does this mean for our group's work?

Presentation of draft Guiding Principles proposed and presented by Kathleen Webster to jump start our discussion:

Draft Guiding Principles for Education/Schools Working Team:

- Protect and preserve the Chinatown schools. (Protection of schools physical integrity, input into how many schools are housed in the buildings, control of programming in the schools, traffic and park safety, over-testing, smaller classroom size, etc.)

- Insure cohesive approach to issues in Chinatown schools.

- Provide resources for parents to successfully improve their capacity as parents in languages they can understand. (Workshops on parenting, computer skills, voting, etc.)

- Preserve cultural integrity and uniqueness of Chinatown through relevant programming.

- Provide a central clearinghouse on After-Schools, tutoring, cultural activities and other information for parents, young people and schools.

- Provide parents, schools and young people's organizations with tools to empower themselves in the community on issues like: housing, ELL and ESL, gentrification, evictions, and translation.

- Round table: What's the one issue you want to see happen for CWG?
- Nonprofit support to schools: how can non-profs help connect schools to community resources?
 - CBO support to schools essential. Schools are central
 - Schools and Community based organizations--- need to be explicit about the collaboration
 - Networking and communication needs to be consistent and constant
 - Schools: How do we communicate with different services? Most principles know where to go for help. Problem because schools only access these services and/or hear from when there is a "need."
 - What is the best way to communicate to the public about events coordinated through schools? (i.e. health fairs, etc.)
 - What is the best way to provide outreach programming and/or communication to parents (to educate parents about parenting issues, schools issues, etc)? How do we keep them informed about repercussions?
 - Schools need relevant, consistent, updated list of resources for the LES. How can this group help develop such a list and keep it up to date for schools and CBOs to use? (schools, day care, social services, resources for parents). Can we make this into a pamphlet?
 - Geographically Located, Web resources: AAFNY, DOE, CWG, Soo Baek will compile a list, (non-profs asked to brainstorm about this list)
 - What does it mean to pull in competing groups?
 - How central of a role do we want this CWG group to play between schools and CBOs?

Report Back post-split up (Principals group / CBO and Parent Association group):

Principals Group:

- 1) Develop and sustain an on-going support system for schools to address common issues of concern:
 - outreach to community based organization and parent groups
 - network with each other to communicate about problems and come up with possible solutions
 - create a clearinghouse for all constituents to help with social, education and other needs

What did we get out of this meeting?

- getting close to clarity
- positive opportunity /chance for principals to network and communicate (for the first time in years!). takes this work out of isolation
- ability to see people come together around common goals and common values

Presentation by The Parent Commission, CDEC around Mayoral Control

For more information, please contact: info@parentcommission.org

Community Events:

Sunday May 3rd, Asian American Heritage Festival (look up information in my email)

MS 131 upcoming events (email AP Hernandez to get details)

Dance Concert: June 2nd, 3rd and 5th at 1pm

Music Concert: May

Post the meeting:

Thomas Yu and Jim Solomon drafted a set of guiding principals based on our minutes. I wanted you to have these too for our next meeting.

- 1- Need for principals to reestablish lines of communication and cooperation between schools despite artificial barriers created by new district system.
- 2-Reform district structure that is detrimental to local youth who want to attend schools in the community.
- 3- Improve language access and provide a level playing field for students and parents.
- 4- Stop over -testing of students, difficult with ELL students, as it is unfair to use those tests as a comparison to other areas with proficient language speakers.
- 5- Deal with social issues that school staffs cannot handle alone. Promote partnerships with CDS's to address gentrification, housing and job loss that have major impacts on student success. Need for political clout and outside partners to provide much needed social service to help families.
- 6- Improve access to schools for Youth-focused organizations to provide programs.