

IBPA Minutes

November 5, 2020

Present via Zoom: Sara Richardson, principal; Michael Boykins, IB administrator; Tanya Flores, president; Jason Niblack, vice-president; Steven Smith, treasurer; Sean Killingsworth, freshman representative; Patricia Blessant, senior representative; Doreen Papadotus, representative at large; Deborah Smith, representative at large; Steve Whisenant, representative at large; IB parents Gung Nguyen, Anthony Au, Jodie Bann, Nicole Fox Phillips, Keesha Staley, LinLin Wang, Tamala Coccanouer, LaToya Parker, Jennifer Hallabi, Mini Saddiq, Elroy Christie, Mila McKinzie, Cathy Stuhr, Priscilla Phur, and four unnamed others

President Tanya Flores called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Boykins, supported by Mrs. Richardson, gave a detailed explanation about the proposed re-opening plan and entertained parent questions. Key points were as follows:

- Things are constantly evolving due to the every changing nature of the situation and decisions of the Board of Education. School administration must follow the directives of the Board.
- At the impromptu emergency Board meeting on October 30, the Board decided to move forward with the re-opening plan, delaying the date of implementation from November 9 to November 12. They will meet again on November 9 to reassess the situation.
- As things now stand, students fall into two categories based on the decisions their families made at the beginning of the year: My School Remote or Face to Face. There is no change for My School Remote Students, who will continue to learn online. Those who elected Face to Face instruction have now been divided into two groups. Group A, comprised of students with last names A-L, will learn onsite on Monday and Tuesday and remotely the rest of the week. Group B, comprised of students with the last names M-Z, will learn onsite Thursday and Friday and remotely the rest of the week. All students will have Remote Wednesday where they meet for abbreviated classes in the morning and staff and students alike have the chance to work collaboratively or independently in the afternoon. Remote Wednesdays were initiated in response to feedback from both staff and parents.
- If families who originally selected the Face to Face model are not comfortable with students coming to school in person, they should call Nancy Lozano at 973-7250 to let her know. She is maintaining a database so that teachers know which students to expect in their classrooms each week. Families can change their instructional mode at any point during the second nine weeks if their comfort level with the situation changes. *However, this option to change is not available to My School Remote students.*
- About 30% of East High families chose My School Remote in August. Since that time, around 300 additional Face to Face families have expressed their intention to remain online until further notice. Mr. Boykins guesses that about 300-400 students will be attending at East on any given day if the Board decides to go ahead with the hybrid model at their November 9 meeting. The advantages of attending in person or staying remote will vary from family to family.

- Mr. Boykins and Mrs. Richardson were uncertain what the Board will decide on November 9. Mrs. Richardson pointed out that some students need a safe and structured place to learn, and the district would like to provide that option. However, it is possible that everyone--or all secondary students--will be remote. Mrs. Richardson anticipates that decisions will be made on a weekly or biweekly basis at this point rather than attempting to make a blanket decision for the second quarter.
- Students will be counted present if they either attend in person *or* log in remotely on any given day. They should call the East High attendance clerk, Crystal Engram, to report a short term absence due to illness or other personal situations.
- The district is asking families to register their preferred learning model for second semester between November 13-30. Mrs. Richardson was unsure if the ability to change learning models once second semester begins would be offered. Blended classes will continue throughout the school year; it is not practical to change schedules now. This also allows for students to quarantine as necessary without missing instruction. Beyond that, there are no long-term definite plans; the focus is on second nine weeks, which begins November 9.
- Questions were asked about what in person learning would look like. Students who come to the East High building will log into their computers in their regular classrooms and receive the same instruction as their online peers. Some interactive conversations will naturally occur. Seating will be distanced and the school has exhaustively discussed safety protocols. The atmosphere will be very different than in a traditional school year. Upperclassmen will still be able to have open lunch.
- Students can get individual assistance from teachers either during work time allotted in class, or by scheduling a remote session outside of the school day. Tutoring is also available online or onsite. Teachers whose classes have a hands-on component will be trying to find strategies to implement things like labs safely, while also making things equitable for remote students. Free meals will continue to be offered to all students at least until the end of December.
- There was a discussion of why the district is encouraging students returning in person to check out a USD 259 device even if they have their own devices. Mr. Boykins relayed a number of reasons from Mr. Dunkelberger, East High's technology person. These include the difficulty of accessing district Wifi and the required USD 259 safety filter which must be installed on a private device in order to do so, the lack of tech support at school for private devices, and liability issues if a device is damaged or stolen.

As this question and answer period drew to an end, the meeting turned to normal business. The secretary's report from October was approved (S. Smith/P. Blessant). Steven Smith gave the treasurer's report. IBPA has received \$400 in contributions since the beginning of school, with \$150 pending through the bookkeeper. Expenses since the last meeting were \$50 for teacher treat bags, which Mr. Boykins said were greatly appreciated. The current balance on hand is \$4,450.06. The report was accepted (M. Siddique/J. Niblack).

Mr. Boykins has received one request for a testing scholarship of \$400. The board approved the entire amount (J. Niblack/P. Blessant).

Mr. Boykins next presented a teacher request for an annual license to access the online data bank of past IB exam questions for the biology and chemistry teachers. The request was for three sets (SL Biology, HL Biology, and Chemistry). The cost is \$199 each or all three for \$499. Once purchased, the question bank can be downloaded and retained for future use. Mr. Boykins was asked why a request was being made to purchase a new set of questions this year, since questions were purchased last year, and if this would be an annual request going forward. In response to these questions, Mr. Boykins stated that IB has a curriculum re-evaluation roughly every five years and that questions are likely to change significantly after a re-evaluation. In between the re-evaluations, the questions will change somewhat from year-to-year but will not normally change that much. After discussion, the board decided to ask Mr. Boykins to gather more information about exactly why all three sets needed to be purchased each year. He will report back to the board via email and a vote will be taken in the same manner once additional information is received.

Feedback from both parents and the administration was that in general, online conferences went very smoothly. It should go even better second semester with a few tweaks.

For some years, IBPA has maintained a PayPal account for credit card donations, even though PayPal charges a commission on each transaction. Due to the expanded capacities of Squareup, credit card donations can now be made that way without IBPA paying a service fee. It is also simpler and provides more accountability. Treasurer Smith recommended closing the PayPal account after removing all references to it from IB websites, brochures, etc., and waiting for a period of time to make sure that there are not links to it that we are not currently aware of. The motion passed (M. Siddique/T. Coccanaour).

IBPA has traditionally packed custom treat bags with a mix of holiday goodies from the Nifty Nuthouse for faculty Christmas gifts. Due to Covid, we do not want to pack them ourselves. Nifty Nuthouse will pack them for us for an additional charge. The board approved spending up to \$225 for pre-packaged treat bags from Nifty Nuthouse (J. Niblack/T. Coccanaour).

In light of the time, some housekeeping items and the IB senior t-shirts were deferred until the December meeting.

The topic for the December meeting will be an update on schooling options, plus an enrollment presentation from Mrs. Ewy.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

Submitted by Deborah Smith, acting secretary

ADDENDUM: On Nov. 12, Flores asked board members to vote on two items via email. The first was approving an expense of \$399.98 for Biology and Chemistry Questionbanks. It was approved without opposition, though later information changed the motion somewhat. It also passed without opposition.

A second motion was for an expense of \$100 to cover the cost of an annual fundraising letter. It passed without opposition.