**Campbell PTA Meeting
March 12, 2019**

**6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Approximate # of Attendees: 30**

1. **Welcome: Barbara Martinez, President**
* Barbara welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that we had planned for Reid Goldstein to attend tonight, but he had a conflict; we will try to reschedule
1. **Fundations Literacy Program: Maureen Nesselrode, Principal, and Campbell’s Reading Team**
* Maureen introduced Campbell’s Reading Specialists:
	+ Virginia Montminy – works with students in Kindergarten and Grades 2 and 4
	+ Cathy Campbell – works with students in Grades 1, 3, and 5
	+ Erin Watson (not present at the meeting) – splits time between Campbell and Abington
* Fundations is a phonics and spelling program for use in K-2 general education classrooms – we just started using it this school year and this is the first presentation we have done for parents about the program, although Maureen talked about it at Back to School Night
	+ How did Campbell decide to adopt the Fundations program?
		- We previously used the Word Study program for phonics and spelling in K-5, with Orton-Gillingham as the intervention for students who needed it (this is the approach used across most of APS) – but Campbell parents and teachers had raised concerns about spelling carryover with this approach (e.g. students would pass a spelling test on Friday but misspell the same words a few weeks later), so we decided to explore other options
		- Fundations had been suggested by staff who had used the program in other school districts and APS schools (including other Title I schools) – it is based on the Orton-Gillingham program, which Campbell had piloted and still uses, so it made sense for us to adopt a program we had experience with; APS is amenable to the program since it is research based
		- Campbell’s Reading Specialists talked to teachers who used Fundations and we sought feedback from teachers who had experience with both Fundations and Word Study (preference for the former)
		- We decided to try Fundations for one year to see how we liked it; not a lot to lose since we weren’t happy with the Word Study program
		- Campbell used Title I funds to purchase the Fundations kits
	+ Since Fundations isn’t applicable for upper elementary we may use another Wilson program called ‘Just Words’ which is appropriate for general education in Grades 4-12; we will continue to use the Orton-Gillingham intervention in all grades as needed
	+ Campbell has typically had good scores on the PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) assessment, so we aren’t necessarily looking for an impact on phonics learning – we are more interested in the spelling carryover
* Fundations implementation in Kindergarten – Ginny Montminy gave an overview of the program
	+ Ginny does the program about 4 times/week, each session takes 30 minutes and the whole class participates
	+ The program is accessible to all students – each skill is taught in multiple ways, e.g. visually, using movement, tactile learning, magnet board
	+ Skills include rhyming, segmenting, letter name, spelling, punctuation, capitalization (unlike Word Study, which was only focused on spelling patterns)
	+ We also use Sounds in Motion program, which matches gross motor movements to sounds to help students learn (we watched a video of Ms. Hill’s class)
	+ Each lesson starts with a review of sounds, may also use skywriting, tapping sounds – writing the letters using movement
	+ Sentences and trick words (sight words, e.g. “the”) – using magnet words that are shaped to indicate capital letters (taller at start of word, vs all lowercase same size rectangle) and punctuation magnets
* Level 1 Fundations – Cathy gave an overview of Grade 1 lessons, which includes everything from Kindergarten and also includes adding suffixes, compound words, etc.
	+ Focus on handwriting and talk about forming letters, e.g. skyline, plane line, grass line, worm line – students learn how to form the letters using these 4 guidelines
	+ We watched videos showing key elements of the program in 1st Grade:
		- Sound Review: students practice making individual sounds and “welded sounds” e.g. say “ang” while putting three fingers together to show the sounds are stuck)
		- Handwriting Chunks: practicing writing the welded sounds
		- Base Word +S: includes writing a word they already know and automatically circling the suffix – this teaches what a suffix is, whether it’s “s” or “ed” or “ing”
		- Trick Words: also called “sight words” because they can’t phonetically spelled, so students have to memorize them (e.g. “the”) – students skywrite or use their fingers to write these words on their desks – these words can’t be tapped out because you don’t hear each individual sound
	+ Materials:
		- Puppets: Echo the Owl (teacher’s tool) faces the teacher when the teacher is talking and then turns to face students when the students are talking; students use Baby Echo when they go up to the board to talk about different letters – these were used more in the beginning of the year, less so now
		- Magnet board: letters are on the top half, and as students tap out a word they bring the letters down to the bottom half of the board
		- Sound cards: have picture cues (e.g. A, picture of an apple)
		- White board and markers: each student has one
		- Handwriting book: one letter per page, each student has one
* Discussion
	+ Question: Is this the direction Campbell is moving in regarding Word Study, or is Fundations the intervention? How is this being tied to meaningful reading experiences?
		- Maureen: We have decided to keep using Fundations in the K/1 classrooms for another year (2019-2020), but are still deciding whether to use the program in 2nd Grade. Then would then use the Just Words program in Grades 4 and 5. Still trying to decide which program to use in 3rd Grade. One concern about using the program in 2nd Grade is that it takes 30 minutes/day and they want to do more meaningful reading experiences at this level, so it’s a question of finding additional time for Language Arts instruction (and at the expense of what else).
		- Maureen: Regarding reading, phonics instruction is not meant to be meaningful reading instruction. Word Study wasn’t tied to reading either, as it is a spelling program. Fundations ties together spelling, decoding, and handwriting better than other APS programs – it is one part of the Language Arts program (and is more traditional, except for incorporating body movement elements) whereas Readers’ Workshop is the nontraditional component that focuses on reading.
		- Ginny: There is a portion of the program where teachers read a story out loud and there is a bit of a comprehension element.
		- Kathy: In 1st Grade when students read books and get to a word they don’t know we tap it out, so it is carrying over into reading and spelling.
		- Other teachers noted that their experience with Fundations has been very good, and they are seeing improvements in students’ handwriting as well as phonics
		- Maureen: Our hope is that if we beef up phonics learning in early grades we won’t have to spend as much time on it by 2nd Grade (and for students who need additional time there is still the O-G intervention for phonics in upper grades, or reading intervention).
	+ Maureen: This is a credit to our teachers, who are usually willing to try new things which is often the first/biggest barrier to bringing new programs to the classroom – all the teachers are on board, did trainings, Kathy and Ginny modeled lessons – it’s been a smooth onboarding process.
	+ Maureen: We want parents’ feedback, especially from parents who have students doing Word Study and Fundations so we can compare the experiences. All the teachers have done Word Study before so they have a good basis for comparison.
* Barbara thanked everyone for the presentation.
1. **Principal’s Updates – EL credentialing, APS budget, etc.: Maureen Nesselrode, Principal**
* Campbell is undergoing credentialing process for EL Education
	+ Clarification – as an APS school Campbell is accredited by the Commonwealth – credentialing for EL Education is different. Out of approx. 300 EL schools, only about 18 are credentialed – this would make us a model school
	+ Very thorough process with checkpoints along the way
		- Initial checkpoint to make sure we were eligible to go through the process
		- Submit “claims” using student work (can’t use teacher lesson plans) to show progression over time – e.g. if we want to claim that handwriting is better now than it was 5 years ago, we have to submit an example of student work from 5 years ago and another one from now
		- Create a website of our credentialing materials which will become public at the end of the process (for an example of what a credentialing website is, google “Fox Creek Credentialing portfolio”)
		- Visits from EL Education have been happening throughout the year
		- Process culminates with Maureen giving a presentation (like a dissertation defense) to demonstrate that Campbell is ready to be credentialed – will likely happen this summer, with credentialing awarded to new schools in October at EL Education conference
* Thinking ahead to 2019-2020 school year
	+ There will be 3 Kindergarten classes at Campbell
	+ We may be adding 1 or 2 new trailers
	+ We may also be adding an Interlude class, which would allow teachers to focus on two grades (K/1, 2/3, 4/5) instead of the way it is structured now (K-2 and 3-5) – Interlude is currently full (lots of staff in two rooms), we are looking to grow the program as there is a lot of interest across the county
	+ Parent Vue will become more important for elementary school families than it has been (e.g. report cards will be accessible via Parent Vue) – Campbell is doing some trainings for parents in Spanish with the Thursday group and will do additional trainings
	+ Calendar for next school year is set and online
	+ Budget processes are underway at the County level and APS – some cuts will impact Campbell (e.g. library assistants, gifted teachers, field trips, summer school) but it remains to be seen how it will all work out
* Music education at Campbell
	+ Ms. Bridges is new full-time music teacher
	+ Ms. Peterson (half-time at Campbell) has taken the lead in the musical since she had worked with Mrs. Brown before she retired and knows the students, etc.
	+ Hopefully communication has improved around band, chorus, and the musical
* Transportation – ongoing debate about bussing at 8th Rd./Florida St. and 7th Rd./Greenbrier St. intersections in Arlington Mill / Forest Glen neighborhoods
	+ A bit of history: in 2012 they cut the bus stop without explanation right before the start of the year – there were about 150 Campbell students at that bus stop, most of them were 3 and 4 years old in Montessori and Pre-K – after having 100+ cars in the parking lot Maureen and staff fought APS to get the bus back and succeeded – however now we no longer have Montessori so we don’t have 3yo students, and there are only about 70 students who would be at that bus stop, and APS is trying to take it away again
	+ It is 0.2 miles so it’s technically walking distance – we might have to concede the point that APS won’t provide bussing. However, the Director of Transportation is resigning so this may shift things in our favor.
	+ Maureen is trying to get more information because it’s not okay to tell people in August they aren’t getting a bus – we want to encourage people to not drive 0.2 miles or transfer out of Campbell because they don’t want to walk.
	+ Discussion:
		- Could Campbell implement a “walking school bus” to encourage students to walk to school if we lose the bus stop again? Maureen noted that this would require a lot of coordination from Campbell staff (primarily she and Karen) as it is almost exclusively Spanish-speaking families – it typically works better for upper elementary grades
		- Has there been more discussion about widening the sidewalks on this side of Carlin Springs? Yes, this is in discussion.
		- Are there crossing guards? Yes, there is one at 7th Rd. and Carlin Springs.
	+ Bottom line – we need to encourage people to walk to school and think of ways to help support families, as we are probably going to lose the bus stop.
1. **Treasurer’s Report and Funding Requests: Amanda Lowenberger, Treasurer**
* Amanda gave a quick overview of the budget – there were no questions
* In addition to our regular ongoing expenses, we spent approx. $425 for Odyssey of the Mind
* Barbara noted that we have started getting some significant funding requests (as typically happens in the latter half of the year) – we will see these on next month’s budget
* Funding requests:
	+ $990 for 60 blue polo shirts with green Campbell logo for students in chorus and band
		- Students only wear the shirts for events, they don’t keep them – these shirts would last for multiple years
		- All 4th Grade students are in chorus – we have more students in chorus this year and more 5th Graders, so we need to replenish the shirts we bought 2-3 years ago and get different sizes
		- The price makes sense since they are polo shirts (not t shirts) – but if we can get the price down, we will
		- Motion to approve multi-year music shirts passes unanimously
	+ $2300 to increase budget for Outdoor Classroom coordinator
		- Ms. Christy has been working very hard for Campbell this year – if she continues at this pace (which she expects to!) we will run out of funds for her time in April
		- There is enough room in the Outdoor Classroom budget to increase her budget
		- Motion to approve budget increase to fund Ms. Christy’s position through June passes unanimously
	+ $500 to purchase additional books for the Diverse Book Swap to be held at the Wetlands Festival
		- We watched a video about why we need diverse books: children need to see reflections of themselves (mirrors), also need to see new worlds that aren’t like their own (windows), and enter those worlds (sliding glass doors)
		- We are grateful for Ms. Decker’s work to make Campbell’s library home to diverse books, this will enable kids to make a diverse book their own
		- We are asking everyone to search their bookshelves for donations and working with APS library staff to make sure we have a good selection – we want to ensure we have enough books for the 150-200 families who come to the festival to be able to take one home
		- Motion to approve funds to purchase additional books passes unanimously
1. **Nominating Committee Update: Nathan Zee**
* So far we have 4 out of 6 Executive Board positions tentatively filled – we still need candidates for VP for Programming and VP for Fundraising – please let us know if you’re interested, we can answer questions – would love to get a K or 1st grade parent involved
* Fundraising will be an easy handover, Julia has been keeping great records, there is a great team of volunteers who do different parts of the work
* Programs is the fun stuff! You can put on game night, dances!
* Thank you to the Nominating Committee
1. **New Business**
* No new business.
1. **Closing: Barbara Martinez, President**
* Saturday, March 16: Garden Work Day, 9 AM to Noon – come for as long as you can, be prepared to get muddy!
* Wednesday, March 20: school musical! All 4th Graders are in it, and some 5th Graders. All students will see the musical during the school day and it will be reprised that night at 6:30 PM
* Project Discovery starts next week – check Thursday folders
* Thursday, March 21: Restaurant Night at Silver Diner
* Wednesday, April 10: Multicultural Night (note change of date!)