DPN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2014

Subject to Approval

Members Present:
Parents: Marc Johnson, Karen Wood, Penny Ashford, Betsy Swindell, Louise York, Lesley Koeppel, Amy Bowllan, Mark Bowllan, Serena Bowman, Lauren Driscoll, John Allen, Meredith Lytle. By conference call: Missy DeCamp

Administration: Kevin Kelly, John Knight, David Thiel, Peter Warsaw

Members Absent:
Scott Vallar, David DeCamp, Louisa Cohlan, John Cohlan, Deborah Norville, Hilary McInerny, Susan Murray, Brad Murray, Jennifer Andrews, Bob Swindell

Opening Remarks

Marc Johnson, President, opened the meeting. Minutes were approved from October 19, 2013, and Marc introduced Kevin Kelly, 9th & 10th Grade Dean and Assistant Dean of Students.

DA Update

Kevin Kelly updated the committee on recent issues of interest and concern on campus including some thefts of cash and clothing. There was discussion on the Dean of Students Office response. Amnesty Night, a central reporting of missing items and posting of missing items in the Daily Bulletin were among the items discussed. The Dean also commented on games of dare, primarily among freshmen and sophomores. The feeling is that students understand the potential seriousness and implications of these activities. The games do appear to be dying down.

A guest speaker from UMass will address senior girls about the transition of dating and relationships as they move on to college. Beginning 1/14/14 on a trial basis, senior day students will be permitted to drive other seniors off campus. Parents must sign a release and will be able to impose restrictions. There will be a limit on hours and distance traveled. Proctors will begin receiving Boundary Training. A new, more intrinsic model of discipline is being explored on campus. The hope is to remove “punishment” from the equation and to make consequences more meaningful. Discipline issues are highest during the month of February and the last three weeks of school. Generally, there are very few repeat actions and a very small percentage of students need to be disciplined.
The issue of AP’s (Accountability Points), raised by Amie Creagh in the fall meeting, was discussed. The suspension of AP’s is an ongoing dialogue with students and administration.

There has been some concern voiced by parents about how much food students are purchasing at the Greer and whether there is ample opportunity for them to eat in the dining hall. There are now five different timeframes during which the dining hall offers food each day. Additionally, students have evening feeds at least once per week, and the dining hall is open later after practices and during exams.

A discussion was held about how best to communicate relevant issues to parents. Ideas included Link articles, Scroll articles, and letters from the Dean of Students to parents.

**Nominating**

Karen Wood, VP Nominating, stressed the importance of balancing the committee with parents of day students, international students, geographic representation and all forms of diversity. All grades must be represented and we are currently seeking parents of freshman and sophomores in particular. Several new candidates have been proposed and there is an ongoing vetting process. Voting on new members will occur in the spring and members are encouraged to email Karen or Marc with new suggestions.

**First Link**

Penny Ashford, VP First Link, reported on another successful year for the First Link program. An email will be sent this spring to all parents inviting them to serve next year. Missy DeCamp, who worked with Penny this year, will be joined by Jennifer Andrews, Lesley Koeppel, and Hilary McInerney. A panel for new parents is scheduled again this year for move in day.

Penny also reported on the Graduation Dinner, new this year for seniors and their parents. This event was born from an interest in inclusivity and will be held the Friday evening before graduation off campus at the Log Cabin. Much planning has gone into this with a focus on keeping cost down and providing assistance to those on financial aid. There is interest in establishing a model that can be used in subsequent years.

**Communications**

Betsy Swindell, VP Communications, reported on the Link, which now has a new format. There was a tech glitch in the system that tracks hits with this last issue. April is the next publication date and volunteers are needed to write articles. Betsy is also seeking ideas for articles and asked the committee to recommend potential
volunteers. An idea was raised to circulate a list of topics to the DPN asking members to sign up.

**Campus Events**

Louise York, VP Campus Events, reported on a successful fall farmers’ market. A survey was sent to vendors, all of whom expressed interest in returning next year. Suggestions including changing time and location will be taken into account, and a similar market will return for fall parents’ weekend 2014.

For spring, we hope to feature a forum on student advising with Mark Spencer and Peter Warsaw that incorporates Peter’s research on the “Six Essential Qualities of the Ideal DA Graduate”. John Knight conducted research and compiled information on eight other schools’ parent/family weekends.

**Discussion Topic**

Peter Warsaw, Academic Dean, presented on “Six Essential Qualities of the Ideal DA Graduate.” He provided context of how the six qualities came to be and how a radar chart was eventually developed highlighting the six qualities. Once the six qualities were identified, the question became “How do we get our students there?” The faculty have discussed the use of “capstones” during a student’s senior year. Curriculum is being examined to determine what would have to happen in order to get students to this point. Peter and the Department Heads have put a great deal of time into the research and planning of this topic.

Peter plans to present more information on this topic to parents during Spring Parents Weekend.

The next meeting of the DPN will be held Saturday, May 3, 2014. Time and location TBD.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Louise York, Recording Secretary