

Kids Co. Parent Advisory Group Meeting
Wednesday, January 6th, 2010 6pm

Debe Thomas, Kids Co. Program Director Mercer Island
Jennifer Cooke, Kids Co. Director of Child Care Operations

Parents (#children in Kids Co., school):

John Pace (2, LR)	Barbara Dickhaus (1, LR)
Brett Morriss (1, IP)	Jary Krauser (2, WM)
Shandon Gierke (1, LR)	Jessie Wang (1, LR)
Ono Perzia and Leigh Perks (2, LR)	

Notes, Comments, and Ideas:

- Service provided to kids is outstanding, flagship best practices are in place
- Argument for committing to dedicated space in each school not based on enrollment
- Kids Co. pays rent for our space, receive support in terms of appliances
- Buses to other sites are a last resort, since they don't allow kids to participate in after-school activities, don't allow Kids Co. staff to be on-site and able to communicate directly with teachers
- Open enrollment plays a factor as many families from off-island need reliable before- and after-school care
- Every year there is a frustration of unpredictability
- On-site child care supports before- and after-school activities in that it allows flexibility in parent's schedules
- Kids don't really know the difference between Kids Co. and Mercer Island School district, it's so integrated
- Seattle schools all dedicate spaces built specifically for childcare, no rent is paid, providers and schools are required to be in alignment
- Look to the past: when we were at all three site regularly, enrollment followed – parents were assured of the service
- If district is so supportive of PEAK for older kids, let's get them on board for our programs for elementary students

Questions:

- What argument does the school board have for not supplying the dedicated space?
- Is there a finite number of programs that compete for space in each school? And is there a priority list for those programs?

Kids Co. Parent Survey Questions:

- Would you have participated in before- or after-school clubs if you didn't have Kids Co.?

Action Plan:

- Debe will find out about Boys and Girls Club plans for child care and the PEAK center
- Jenn will collect some Community Alignment Initiative data
- Debe can survey current and previous Kids Co. parents, and can look into having PTA send out survey to all parents
- Find out percentage of kids in before- and after-school clubs that are also in Kids Co.
- John will work on looking into some social networking possibilities for collecting information to present to the board.

Presentation Ideas for 3min Speech:

- stats for families with 2 working parents
- stats for benefits of after-school programs that are on-site in school districts

Debe will put a call to action in the weekly announcements:

What would you or other families you know do if onsite childcare was not offered at your school? Kids Co. provides a comprehensive out of school time experience for children onsite at schools that supports children's learning and family needs. The Mercer Island School District Board of Directors is considering parent input at the January 28th board meeting to add onsite child care to the MISD board policies as a priority when determining space assignments for programs. Many other districts, including Seattle, have very strong commitments to children's out of school time as a key component of their entire day of learning. If consistent, high-quality childcare in dedicated space is important to you - so that children in this community can continue to participate in before- and after-school clubs, receive homework support from trained, caring professionals who can coordinate with classroom teachers on a daily basis, and take part in a fun, safe, home-away-from-home environment - come to the School Board Meeting on Thurs 1/28 at 7pm to show your support!