

Submitted by: Carol Bird

Present: Library Staff: Bernadette Rivard, Amanda McClure, Diane Nelson, Cecily Christenson
Library Board: *Amy Bartelloni, Carol Bird*

Location: Bellingham Public Library

Meeting was called to order at 4:50 pm by Bernadette Rivard, Library Director.

Powerpoint Presentation Highlights & Library Staff Remarks

-Tonight's presentation slides are available on the library's Facebook page.

-Schools have changed configuration since original grant to fund after school programs. Middle School was previously 6 through 8th grade; it's now 5 through 7.

-Diane, who runs the ASK (After School Kids) room described typical activities: Wii, crafts on most days, has up to 25 kids, also has overflow responsibilities overseeing kids outside the ASK room. Children often come to Diane when they are having conflicts with other children. She is observing children eating outside designated ASK room. Children are also going to gas station across from the middle school, or going outside. In contrast, kids in the ASK room are behaving well. It's the children outside the room who are causing issues. Suggests parents let kids know what they are/aren't allowed to do.

-Bernadette: We don't have the same responsibility schools have to watch children. Dropping your kids off here is like dropping kids off at the mall. It is a public building.

-It's not that we're not going to allow to kids to come, it's that they'll be registered and we'll know what they're here to do.

-Will have a set of rules to follow and sign some time in August. Will be multiple signup sessions. A chance for library staff to meet the parents.

-Library will not let parents know if any problems or if they didn't show up, but will answer questions from parents if asked.

-Will notify police if any problems.

-If a student is quietly reading or doing homework, they will be left alone by staff. If they are not behaving and not registered for a program, a staff member will find out who they are to follow up with parents.

-Likely will have ASK take place in Community Room in the fall to accommodate all the children and activities.

-Diane will have grades 4 through 6 next year, Amanda 7 and up.

-If parents can't pick up students at end of ASK programs, they usually help Diane pick up the room and they are not usually an issue.

-Adults should not pick up students in front of the girl statue. Either park in a real parking space and come in to get child, or text child to let him/her know you're here. It may be a good idea to come in every week or two to see how things are going with your child.

- Kids tend to drop their personal belongings anywhere in the library and leave it unattended. Bernadette urges parents to remind their kids to keep an eye on their things.
- Next year ASK will be Monday through Friday, assuming there is a need on all those days.
- A parent asked if the programs are free. Bernadette answered that it's a free public library and the programs are free of cost. However, she said that patrons are welcome to make a donation to the library or join the Friends of the Library.
- Parent asked if programs take place on half days. Amanda answered that there are programs on half days, however they don't go as long. Typically ends at 1:30. Recommends children bring a snack on half days.

Change in Policy: Process

- Policy has to be changed by the Library Board of Trustees.
- The Trustee meeting is on June 13th. Will be a draft policy to change the age children can be unattended to grades 7 and up.
- Will then be a second reading of the policy to adopt it. It could be August before the policy is solidified.

Review of Behavior Expectations Handout

- The handout is available on the library's Facebook page.
- There will be a required form at the beginning of the school year which will ask for things like contact info, kid's name, a check box confirming you understand expectations, child will also sign.
- Teen room doesn't currently allow food, but we will try allowing food next year and gauge how it goes.
- Many are not aware there are picnic tables outside for kids to congregate at. It's visible from the teen room for monitoring.
- We ask students not to go outside to wait for a ride until 5 minutes before they're expecting to be picked up.