**Backpack Committee Meeting 1-11-16**

*Janis, Johnmichael, Tracy, Maria*

●JM gave an overview of his meeting with Tracy and Sally at the district. Lots of “no’s” when asking questions and requests for help around technology choices and alternatives. It’s still possible we can get one/both of them to come to KiMS for discussions with families so they can better understand our tech challenges and passion around the backpack weight issue.

●Where do we stand on teachers helping with solutions?

-working on updating supply lists for next school year to include required items and their weights, similar to what Inglewood MS does

-Panthergram teachers have the kids clean outing their backpacks recently

-hoping we aren’t re-ordering the notebook style planner again. Checked with Kevin Hakes-Miller and he is working towards this but does not have confirmation

-certain teachers still require kids to carry large amounts of paper. Those cases should be addressed directly with the teacher.

●Many of the kids are watching a video that covers technology vs textbooks in schools and having to write a report on it. Tracy mentioned it is worth watching.

●Decided as a group that at this point we have done enough data collecting, research and work within our school to begin the process of ‘formally’ asking for help from the district. This will be in the form of a letter and is our first step in officially communicating on behalf of our backpack committee the seriousness of the issues we are facing and the widespread impact it is having on students’ safety and well-being. Traci and her husband Tony will work on the draft to be reviewed and edited by the committee.

●Briefly discussed the pros/cons of starting to collect cases of injury and hardship caused by the heavy backpacks. This info may be needed in upcoming months to be used as evidence to the district, however we recognized the delicacy of the subject : handling/sharing medical info, needing disclaimers, etc. Set this aside for now.

●Water Stations- this fits into wellness and the backpack weight conversations. It would allow kids to fill their water bottles quickly and with fresh water when they arrive at school instead of carrying it. JM did some initial research. Agreed we could pursue this option if someone is willing to take it on. Aside from the unit cost themselves , JM that the district then has to perform the work of installation. This is not impossible, just needs a champion to get it done and collect all of the facts.

●We compiled a list of accomplishments from 2015 and tips to lighten the backpacks for the upcoming Panthergram. Janis will put this together and submit to Rosalind before Weds.

Next Meeting**: Monday Feb 8th at 9am in the KiMS library conference room**.

Mr. Snyder and Karla Parker have been notified of us using the space (by Janis