

# **Volunteering Committee Annual Report**

*August 2015 – April 2016  
Submitted by Isabel Pipolo*

## ***Committee's Stated Goals:***

- ◆ Recruit parent and teacher volunteers for all aspects of the PTO
- ◆ Develop a class parent program, in coordination with faculty and administrators, based on the needs of each school
- ◆ Implement the district's process for interviewing and fingerprinting in-class volunteers to maintain the security of students and staff
- ◆ Enlist & mobilize volunteers for committee work, fundraisers, special events and other projects

## ***Members and Meetings:***

Committee meetings were held on October 7<sup>th</sup> and February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The October meeting was attended by five parents and the February meeting was attended by six parents (plus the chair).

## ***Accomplishments:***

### **Volunteer Recruitment**

- ◆ Volunteers were successfully recruited throughout the year, using a combination of email, Facebook, online sign-up sheets, and in-person requests at meetings and events
- ◆ Volunteers were assigned to fall book fairs, fall and spring picture days, PKMS Halloween dance, the concert program fundraiser project, candygram sales, the district-wide concert, staff appreciation day, and the upcoming Harlem Wizards game
- ◆ In addition, at least two new parents have expressed an interest in taking on more responsibility next year as committee chairs

## **Security Process**

- ◆ The new district screening and security process was conveyed to all interested volunteers
- ◆ Applications and protocol packets were copied and distributed at meetings, events, via email, and through the main offices of the school buildings
- ◆ Implementation of the RAPTOR system in all buildings has been helpful for consistency

## **Class Parent Program**

- ◆ After some discussion and research, the committee has agreed to initiate a class parent program at Woodside for Fall 2016
- ◆ Details and logistics are still being developed with Colleen Hardiman and other Woodside staff
- ◆ Recruitment for class parents will take place during kindergarten orientation and during the summer of 2016

## *Volunteering Committee Evaluation/Notes*

- ◆ After a year of actively recruiting volunteers across the district, it has become clear that the vast majority of parents are not available to volunteer regularly during business hours
- ◆ This has been an impediment in staffing events such as the book fair, which takes place entirely during the day
- ◆ Parents are also much more willing to volunteer for a specific task with a defined timeframe, rather than participate in general committee work or attend meetings
- ◆ We need to make a more concerted effort to reach out to Spanish-speaking families and bring them into the fold of the PTO, including volunteering
  - Based on conversations with parents in the Spanish community, I believe there are significant concerns among that population about immigration issues and the need for state ID cards
  - It was also explained to me that when we approach those parents, we should offer an explicit description of the role and value of the PTO and why they should participate, as a way of bridging the cultural divide
- ◆ Based on feedback received this spring, we also need to be more consistent in following up with volunteers to thank them by email after each event

### ***In progress for Spring 2016:***

- ◆ Developing recruitment materials for class parent program
- ◆ Creating a detailed list of district-wide volunteer needs, for use as a planning and recruiting tool for next year

### ***Goals for 2016/2017:***

- ◆ Implement class parent program at Woodside
- ◆ Continue recruiting volunteers for individual events as needed
- ◆ Create detailed online sign-up sheets for each volunteer activity; this will give us the opportunity to track volunteers and offer more incentives for participation; this year we used SignUpGenius.com for some events
- ◆ Improve outreach to the Spanish-speaking community
- ◆ Encourage/develop more volunteering by our older students, either at events in the elementary schools or in community service projects

### ***Conclusions:***

I think we should consider restructuring Volunteering into two separate committees:

- (1) “Class Parent Committee” – responsible for developing the class parent program at Woodside and possibly expanding it up to the older grades, depending on staff and parent interest; I believe that creating a strong class parent program will enable us to expand our volunteer pool for all events and activities
- (2) “Community Relations” or “Community Outreach” or “Community Partnerships Committee” – this committee could work on developing more effective outreach to the Spanish-speaking community; could also focus on developing/supporting community service projects for our older students, and creating connections and mentoring opportunities between students in different grades; could possibly partner with local church, community, and arts organizations to build relationships between students, parents, and the larger community

Under this structure, each committee chair or event coordinator would be responsible for creating volunteer sign-up sheets for individual events and projects. All sign-up sheets and volunteer requests could then be sent out in the email newsletter and Facebook posts once a month, as well as being sent out directly by the class parent in each room.