

PTO General Meeting Notes

Wednesday, June 8, 2016

In Attendance:

Denise Lopez
Margery Rossi
Ha Wallace
Marisa O'Leary
Isabel Pipolo

Rich Sullivan
David Fine
Bob Brownell
Randi Alberino
Mia Shervington

Victoria Malanson
Barbie Altorfer
Marlene Valenzuela

Denise: Thanks to all who helped this year with fundraising and other volunteering tasks. Do members have suggestions for changes/improvements or questions?

Suggestions from the Membership:

- **Expand Art-To-Remember fundraiser throughout the other elementary schools.** This was a popular fundraiser and was not as labor-intensive as some other art fundraisers. Possibly expand to pre-K as well, depending on parent and teacher support at Uriah Hill.
- **Add a Penny Social Fundraiser.** Maybe ask parents or classrooms to donate baskets for raffling off. Could include a game night, movie night, or food sales.
- **Bingo Night.**
- **Silent Auction.** Would it be a good fit for the community?
- At the beginning of the year, can we **send parents a list of PTO events and tasks for the whole year in advance?** PTO Calendar?
- **Can we post PTO info to the parent or student portals** to help reach families of older kids?
- **Need better communication** – can we add the details of fundraiser deadlines and a search function to the website?
- One parent had a problem with the **candle fundraiser** because candles can be carcinogenic. Can we do something more healthful?
- **Add a theme of literacy** to tie in to a fundraiser.
- **Father/Daughter Dance.** Note: Marlene agreed to organize this next year.
- **Recruit more volunteers:** Can we add a class parent program? Sign-up parents for specific events during Back to School Nights?
- **Parents Night Out.**

- **Repeat same events every year** to streamline the planning process and leave a legacy for the parents that succeed us. Building a system beyond our tenure.
- Can we schedule a **speaker about anxiety** in young children?
- **SignUpGenius.com** was a success.
- Victoria said we can get **special field trip grants** because we are a Title I district.

Book Fairs (Rich):

- Book fairs were a big success this year. We held two at Oakside and one at Woodside. We will add a fair next year at Uriah Hill.
- There was a miscommunication this year with Hillcrest – the librarian organized a fair without the PTO being involved. Rich would like to absorb the Hillcrest book fairs back into the PTO.
- We will also hold a summer book fair this year for K-8. It will be linked to the Oakside account and will be a BOGO fair. Note: Scholastic does not give us a choice of which books to order and sell. They will automatically send a selection for the target age range.
- What hours should we hold the fair? Days/nights? Evening activities?
- The summer fair will be open to the public. We will advertise at local stores. It was suggested that we advertise with parks & rec to reach camp kids. It was suggested that we advertise on Mommy Poppins or other regional sites to cast a wider net to bring in people from out of town. Rich is concerned about having enough books to keep the shelves stocked, although there is no financial penalty for over-ordering.
- The book fair will be held the week of July 11th in the Gym of the Admin Building. Tentative hours: 9am-3pm. Possibly add evening hours, depending on volunteer support. Can also do a raffle of books/supplies.

Other Questions & Discussions:

- There were concerns expressed about having our meetings at the Admin Building. Should we continue to do this or should we vary the locations? If we vary the locations, there is a concern about people not knowing the location every month and getting confused.
- Should we continue to have monthly meetings or reduce to every six weeks? Should we change the timing? How can we encourage more participation?

Suggestions/responses:

- Downside of fewer meetings is less connection and less voice in the district. What if something comes up and we need to call an extra meeting?
 - Incorporate more family activities and allow/encourage people to bring their kids to meetings.
 - Do a monthly movie night during every meeting, to keep kids occupied in an adjacent space.
 - Get staff members or other volunteers to watch kids during meetings.
 - Get juniors or seniors to volunteer as part of a community service initiative.
 - Move meetings to Saturdays (mornings or evenings).
 - Make meetings a destination event for families, with seasonal arts & crafts, literacy or math night.
- Question: How did we do with Amazon? Ha: Total for the year was only \$37 because the percentage they donate is so small.
 - Question about reading assessments. Dr. Fine will follow up with Barbie directly.
 - Question about school performance: do we have data to track trends?
Dr. Fine: Yes, data will be collected, organized, and published on the district's web site, and should be online by July. Data is based on Fountas & Pinnell assessments, which are a more reliable measurement tool than the state exams.
 - Other specific questions were posed to Dr. Fine about curriculum issues.
 - Applied Science Research Program will be expanding next year at the high school
 - The district is focusing on hiring quality teachers to teach advanced level courses
 - Discussion of report cards and enrichment program at Woodside

Announcements:

- There will be a bake sale on the last day of school in the Admin Building (evening of June 24th). Isabel will create a sign-up sheet for donations.
- Next Executive Committee Meeting will be Monday, June 20th.

Respectfully submitted by Isabel Pipolo, Communications Committee Chair