

November 21st, 2016

MLS PTO Board Meeting Minutes

Sarah Kelsey, Carleen Kupcis, Beth McCarthy, Amanda Beresford, Stacey Carden, Melissa Hoover, Christina Keller, Peggy Williams, Beth Wertheim, and Mike Irani

**I. Welcome**

**II. PTO Member-at-Large Comments**

**III. Secretary's Report: Beth Wertheim**

- Beth McCarthy motioned to approve the October minutes, Melissa seconded, and the minutes were approved without any nays (with the correction that Peggy Williams was not in attendance at the October meeting).

**IV. Principal's Report: Mike Irani**

- Thank you to the PTO and families in general for being so involved with the Bond Referendum.
- Some locations have been dealing with tumultuous situations post election, we are grateful that is not the case at MLS. All in all, our children have been in a good place.
- Chad will be giving a lesson to teachers about how to use the Active Panels. November 30, 11:30-3:30. Parents are welcome to attend as well.

**V. Faculty Representative Report: Cheryl Wetmore Simpson (absent)**

- Thank you to the hospitality committee for the work day breakfast.
- There is some concern that children are reaching into the box containing the box tops.
  - Is it possible to monitor the box tops being turned it?
  - Should the box be more secure?
  - Carleen and Sarah will reach out to the box top coordinator, Holly Roach. Let's wait and see how big of a problem this actually is.

**VI. Co-President's Report: Sarah Kelsey and Carleen Kupcis**

- **Should the PTO purchase an Amazon Prime Membership?**

- Melissa suggested purchasing an Amazon Prime membership to save on shipping costs. At this point, Melissa has had to spend \$50 for shipping on Amazon (Kelly Oehler's project based learning order).
- Shipping costs are taken out of each teacher's total allotment. If the PTO purchases an Amazon Prime membership it will save the teachers money.
- Melissa motioned for the PTO to purchase an Amazon Prime membership, Sarah seconded, and the vote passed with no opposition.

- **Yearbook Committee Expenses**

- There has been a request for \$150 to purchase memory cards. (the yearbook committee will use cameras that school already owns).
- Peggy informed us that in the past the yearbook collected photos that were already taken by parents and teachers, they did not take their own pictures. Primarily they focused on the art and design of the yearbook.
- After a discussion the board is in favor of the students on the Yearbook Committee having the opportunity to take their own photos because it makes being on the committee even more of a learning project.
- Melissa motioned to approve an allowance for memory cards up to \$150, Amanda seconded, the vote passed with no opposition.

- **Bluebirds Care**

- *Background information about Bluebirds Care:*  
*Peggy and Mindy Goodall formed the program last year because a lot of teachers and room parents wanted to do a service based project during classroom parties to promote student involvement and awareness of people in our community. Bluebirds Care was intended to unify the effort of separate service projects, for example an entire grade made cards to mail to our troops.*
- This year there has been a lot of discussion about who is responsible for facilitating the projects and what the purpose of the program is. For example, some classrooms collected canned goods to donate to a local shelter. Some people are concerned that while this is a very positive approach, it is less hands on for the students. Instead of the students physically working on a project, a parent purchased canned goods and put them in the student's backpack.
- After a discussion, the board decided that most important lesson of Bluebirds Care is Empathy. Students can learn to be empathetic by doing an art project for a nursing home or donating canned goods to a homeless shelter. The key is having a discussion about the reason for the project and specifically about how what they are giving back.

- Moving forward, the PTO needs to form a mission statement for Bluebirds Care so teachers, students, and parents all understand the goal of the program.
- Could the PTO plan a unified project for every classroom to do for the Valentines Day parties this year? A specific plan and guidelines need to be provided for room parents and teachers, including the background information so students can fully understand the impact of the project.
- For other future projects, a list should be created to outline the criteria necessary to qualify to be a Bluebirds Care project.
- We will ask Cheryl to talk to the teachers and see how they feel about this plan moving forward.

*Side bar:* Mike asked what is the perception of how many parties each class is having? The consensus was 3 parties per year but it depends on the the teacher and classroom.

Mike asked if there should be a list of what is required to be a room parent? The consensus was that every teacher has different requirements of their room parents, could this be something discussed in each classroom on Back to School Night?

- **French E-Zone (Spring)**

- Madame Brand asked Mrs. Cary if it is possible to hire an instructor to teach French as a Spring E-Zone class. She said there is a benefit for her students to speak French with more than one instructor.
- This is not possible, because MLS can not have a non-employee on school grounds teaching our children (if the teacher goes through payroll the school assumes liability).

- **Annual Fund**

- Currently just North of \$10,000 has been donated (about 20% participation).
- Should we give a magnet to everyone that has participated, to promote giving? Meriwether Matters could then advertise, "Get your MLS magnet, donate to the Annual Fund".
- The magnets are \$1.40ea when 100 are ordered.
- It seems like there was more excitement and energy behind the Annual Fund in the past. Is it different this year b/c we don't have the allure of the new playground?
- Can we tie in the Annual Fund with MLS Spirit Week? (Mike approved this idea)
- We could have someone dressed up in the Bluebird Costume at drop off in the morning encouraging people to donate (perhaps Grant Goodall).
- A thermometer could be posted outside showing participation to get people excited.
- We could do a drawing out of all participants for a free pass to the next KNO.
- Peggy motioned to authorize \$200 to purchase new MLS magnets as a gift for each family that donates, Melissa seconded, and the vote passed without any opposition. Peggy will discuss how to move forward with Helen.

## VII. Co-VP's Report: Stacey Carden and Beth McCarthy

- **Hospitality Committee**

- We had a wonderful meeting with the committee, we regret not meeting with them sooner. They may have been overwhelmed.
- The teacher workday breakfast went well, but the January faculty breakfast will be more of a "grab and go" format (granola bars, fruit, etc).
- This will be much easier for parent volunteers because the food won't be as perishable so they can bring in their contributions when it is convenient (instead of a small window the morning of).

- **Pies**

- Pie donations were behind this year because the Hospitality Committee was using an incomplete list of room parents. Amanda will send the newest list to the committees (just in case).

- **Silent Auction**

- Not enough time to discuss at this meeting, but should this become an every other year event?

- **KNO**

- Again, we did not have great attendance.
- Is the low attendance a result of lack of promotion?
- Are older children not attending anymore? If so, can some new activities be added to keep it fresh? The curriculum is up to the teachers, but maybe we could give some suggestions?
- One idea is for a special Meriwether Movers to be taught to the students in attendance.

- **Bingo Night**

- Tennile is willing to help on the committee but does not want to be the chair. Could Tennile recruit a friend and they could share the responsibility?
- Mrs. Parmalee has been the caller in the past, maybe she knows of a 5<sup>th</sup> grade parent that would be interested in chairing? (as long as it isn't the same Friday as the dance).
- Sarah-if we don't have a chair by the end of the year we will have to cut the event.

- **Kid's Market**

- We need a big push because the flyer is going out in backpack mail tomorrow (which may not be opened until next Sunday evening or Monday morning because of the Thanksgiving holiday).

- Can Kid's Market be mentioned on the morning announcements tomorrow? Yes, Mike will take care of it.
- The gym has been reserved (the reservation must be taken care of through the county).
- In the future the VP's should go through the calendar of events and make all of the reservations at once.

#### **VIII. Treasurer's Report: Melissa Hoover**

- **Fall Fair**
  - The profit was double than what was projected, but keep in mind that the goal was set very low because of the possibility of rain.

Please let Melissa know if anyone is curious about something in particular and she will make a detailed chart.

#### **IX. Volunteer Coordinator's Report: Amanda Beresford**

- Amanda will resend the room parent volunteer list.
- **Silent Auction**
  - There is some concern about the volunteers on the silent auction committee. Are there enough?
  - Melissa—when I was on the committee everyone did not attend the meetings.
  - A Signup Genius is going to be sent out via room parents detailing specific tasks (to counterbalance the "I don't know what I am signing up for anxiety").

#### **X. Communication Coordinators' Report: Christina Keller and Peggy Williams**

- **Meriwether Matters**
  - We aren't reaching all of the parents.  
Typically MM is sent out Wednesday mornings at 6am, and we have 200-220 opens.
  - Tonight we tried something new and sent it out at 6pm. By 7:52pm we have 120 opens already.
  - Should we do a printed Holiday Edition of Meriwether Matters?

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm  
(the December meeting will be held at Carleen's house.)

ATTACHED:

\*Please review written reports prior to the meeting. Copies of the agenda will be provided but please bring a laptop or copies of the additional materials for your reference.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

November 23 through November 25 - Thanksgiving Break

December 2 - Kid's Market

December 8 - Coffee Chat with Dr. Irani

December 9 - Kid's Night Out

December 12 - Board Meeting (alternate location)

December 19 through January 2 - Winter Break