

January 23rd, 2017

MLS PTO Board Meeting Minutes

Board members in attendance: Sarah Kelsey, Carleen Kupcis, Amanda Beresford, Beth McCarthy, Melissa Hoover, Christina Keller, Peggy Williams, Beth Wertheim, Jennifer Underwood, and Mike Irani

I. Welcome

II. PTO Member-at-Large Comments

III. Secretary's Report: Beth Wertheim

- Motion was made and seconded to approve the December meeting minutes.

IV. Principal's Report: Mike Irani

- Thank you for the *Grab and Go* breakfast on the teacher work day. The flexibility aspect was appreciated by the faculty.
- Thank you to everyone that helped clean out the book room. It looks wonderful and it will be a huge help to the teachers to have an organized space.
- The topic for the Feb 3 Coffee and Conversation is *change*. Pat McLaughlin will be coming to talk about the high school of the future.
- As members of the PTO it is important to be aware of the budget. The superintendent's budget request will be the smallest than ever in the past.
- The money from the Bond Referendum will be available in a 2 year roll out plan.

V. Faculty Representative Report: Cheryl Wetmore Simpson

- Teachers were happy with the *grab and go* breakfast format. Our Vegan teachers were pleased with the variety. Some suggestions for future events would be to include more fresh fruit and veggies options. The Kind Bars went very quickly.
- The Fifth Grade Promotion will be June 8 at 9am. The planning is starting now for the end of the year programs (slideshow). Any necessary funds should flow through the PTO.
- Who are the fifth grade coordinators? Some people came forward in the beginning of the year saying that they are the coordinators, does anyone remember who they are?

- The 5th grade coordinators need to get in touch with the 4th grade room parents to let them know that they are in charge of putting on the on the graduation reception (watermelon, lemonade, and cookies).
- The teacher workday in Feb is now a snow day make up.
- Since the timing was difficult when the “special volunteer” topic was brought up to the teachers (during the Holidays), it will be addressed again.
- (Carleen) The Book Fair Committee would like some input from the PTO Board about the Book Fair Family Night.
- Should it be held at an earlier time? Should they serve food even though it didn’t sell last year? Should we bring in a children’s author for a separate event since so much is going on during the Book Fair Family Night.
- The Board decided that the Book Fair committee has the trust of the Board to make these decisions.

VI. Budget Session (Including a specific discussion of the Pre-Zone Fund)

- **Professional Development Fund**
- The first round of teachers have until the 2017-2018 school year to use their money.
- The second round of teachers have until the 2018-2019 school year to use their money.
- The third round of teachers have until the 2019-2020 school year to use their money.
- The funding for the three rounds mentioned above is accounted for.
- The PTO is that excited to support the PD Fund as long as it is actually used. The current PTO board does not want to place a burden on future PTO boards.

Discussion about the PD Fund:

(Amanda) Why three years?

(Mike) It needed to be divided for raising money, and three years allowed teachers to go to conferences with a fellow teacher if they desired.

(Carleen) The teachers that were eligible last year to used it—almost everyone in the first round has used their money.

(Sarah) A new way to format the fund could be to draw from one pot that is available to all teachers for a one time use with an application process. This system brings up the question about the amount of times each teacher will be allowed to apply.

Another format could be based upon the amount of money raised by the Annual Fund each year. For example, “The annual fund raised x this year, therefore x can be divided up between each teacher that makes a request for money for that year.

Currently, a teacher can’t request more than \$1,200 in the three year plan.

(Mike) Moving forward, we should type up plans and go through the pros and cons of each format that is being considered.

(Peggy) Could we open up the option to use the PD Fund to take classes instead of only attending conferences? We could get a group of teachers together and bring in a speaker/class to directly to MLS.

(Mike) At one time the teachers wanted to learn from people that they wouldn't otherwise have direct access to, that is where the conferences came into play. However, the teachers will be open to all new opportunities to learn.

(Beth) Will an application process make the teachers feel like they are in competition with each other (racing to get their applications in first, etc)? If that is the case, it could be kept alphabetical but with the stipulation that each teacher has one year to use their money. If they decide not to use their money it will go back into the pot.

(Melissa). What if teachers have only partially used their funds? The money needs to be saved *before* we agree to spend it.

When parents make donations to the school, they want their money spent while their children are students.

(Melissa) If the consensus is that the PD fund is our priority above all other items, should we stop buying Active Panels, etc and focus solely on the PD Fund?

(Peggy) We need to spruce up the Annual Fund. We need to spin the focus so we can inspire more families to donate and raise more money.

(Mike) At the end of the day, nothing will have a greater effect than *real learning* (not technology, etc). The PD Fund makes the largest impact on the teachers (therefore the students).

(Sarah) I don't think we should make changes to the original format. It isn't fair to change the rules in the middle of the cycle. Moving forward we (Mike/Jennifer/Carleen/Sarah) will meet and come up with some models of how to move forward and restructure the fund to present at the next PTO meeting. We will gather feedback from the teachers to find out if they truly intend to use their money.

- **Budget Voting and Approval Process**

- (Sarah) Currently there is a lack of clarity in the budget approval process. Should the board consider changing the PTO bylaws to say that the parents trust the PTO board to vote on the budget?.

OR

Or is it possible to make the process more transparent to the parents by releasing copies of the budget and having an open meeting/discussion?

- The vote should be removed from Back to School Night because it puts parents on the spot to make a decision.
- We could hold an electronic vote—the budget can be released and if parents choose to vote they can. If they choose not to vote that is fine, but this provides the opportunity to participate.

- **Any other Budget questions or comments?**

- Fruit
 - (Cheryl) Save PTO money and stop buying the citrus for the teachers as a holiday gift.

 - Water
 - We are spending \$1000 on water (large jugs for the water coolers)
 - (Peggy) Would it be more economical to purchase another filtered water fountain? Although we need to keep in mind that filters can be expensive.

 - KNO
 - By the end of this year KNO is going to lose \$2K.
 - Essentially it will end up breaking even because Movie Night brought in more money than originally projected.
 - KNO does not need to raise funds but it should not lose money either.

 - Silent Auction
 - (Melissa) We need to lower the projected amount of money that needs to be raised.
 - (Sarah) In the future we may have a problem sustaining our current budget because we seem to be on a down trend. We need to mix things up.
 - The date of the silent auction is later this year, therefore the fee for renting the space at King Family is more expensive (the rates go up for wedding season).

 - Other ideas to raise funds?
 - For example, Crozet elementary does a Fun Run that raises \$14K.
 - We can brainstorm some new ideas.
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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:

January 27 - Bingo Night

February 3 - Coffee Chat with Dr. Irani

February 17 - Talent Show

February 20 - PTO Board Meeting

February 24 through March 2 - Book Fair (February 28 - Family Night)

March 3 - Coffee Chat with Dr. Irani

March 10 - Kids Night Out