

**PETER HOBART PTAO – MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2007
7:00 – 8:30 PM**

7:00 pm meeting called to order by Rebecca Phelan.

Approval of the Minutes

Correct May 15, 2007 minutes – correct “Mar” to “May”

Motion to approve the minutes – Jill Riley

Second – Jane Steck

Minutes approved as corrected.

Overview

Julie Huber read the PTAO mission statement. These parts: Enrich the education and experience of students at the school, Offer funding for activities, and Offer volunteer help for activities, Serve as a forum to raise issues and share information. These activities: Enrichment and Education activities, Student and Family activities, Outreach and Fundraising.

Julie Huber introduced committee chairs:

Lisa Heitzinger (Treasurer)

When you have expenses that need to be reimbursed, there are green expense vouchers in PTAO box in the front office. Lisa passed out a spreadsheet with current budget and past years. Starting account balance is about \$9000. She reviewed projected expenses and income. Becky Phelan noted that this meeting is just forecast information. After the Read-a-Thon, then the final budget will be approved. Lisa reviewed the expenses projected for the year (for example, artist in residence, using \$5000 grant).

Lisa Pannell (Secretary)

Steph Lund and Julia Fredrickson (Artist in Residence)

Artist in residence grant was awarded this year. We will have Timothy Hasenstein, work with the kids to create different collages. That will happen later in the year, and there will be volunteers needed for that period of time to help with the artist. Grant is from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This will start the second week after the winter break.

Jill Riley and Kim Carden (Book Fair)

Scholastic Book Fair happens a couple of times a year. It allows kids to buy books for themselves or their classrooms. Book Fair is held on conference night. Sales of books allows the school to earn book vouchers for books.

Julie Yarosh and Renee Salzer (Breakfast for Families)

It's a chance for parents to come and eat breakfast with their kids and see the classrooms before the day starts. Afternoon kindergarteners come in for lunch. Siblings welcome.

Heather Hesteness and Leanne Vilano (Corporate Promotions)

Getting started for the year. They clip and sort collections about once a month. Each classroom has a collection bin for kids to put them into. There are a variety of corporate promotions that are collected (for example Kemp's milk caps, Campbell soup labels, General Mills Box Tops for Education).

Julia Fredrickson (Directories)

Three more weeks until the information can be verified. Then, it will be ready to format and get ready for printing. The directory might not be out until December

Jane Steck and Kelley Christianson (Family Fun Night)

Event will be fun - new DJ, who is also a P.E. teacher. This year we will incorporate and art project that Carole Humphrey (the art teacher) is planning. Jane asked for a volunteer to help work with Carol to design the project (other volunteers would help execute it). Prizes this year will be cups with the school logo. Julie Huber mentioned that Family Fun Night is a hugely popular event, and probably the best attending (because you can bring siblings). There is always a lot of chaos, because it is such a large event. We are trying to include all the siblings something to do by including and art activity if they are

overwhelmed by the dance scene in the gymnasium. It is the Wednesday before MEA weekend.

Amy Hayden (Imagination Inventor's Fair)

Amy has organized this for the three previous years. Last year we had 170 kids, and each year we have a few more. It's open to K-3. Kids can bring anything they create themselves (art project, book, science project, any creative endeavor). It will be April 24th this year (an early release day). Amy is looking for a volunteer to take over the chair and some other key positions in about two years. She is hoping to get people involved now, so that they can start to train.

Mary Campbell and Julie Salamzadeh (Welcome Committee/Info Night)

We are in charge of first day of school welcome, Kindergarten information night (Jan 29th, 7 pm), and giving tours throughout the year.

Susan McLachlan and Ann Kjaer (Read-a-thon)

Read-a-thon is the main fundraiser. Rather than selling things, the kids raise money for reading books. They fill out sheets with the books they read. By the end of two weeks, we hope they have read 10,000 books and raised about \$30,000. That's what provides most of the PTAO funding. We would like them collect and average of \$75 per family, but we also have little prizes for turning in their envelope (no matter what's in it). At the end of this, if they have read 10,000 books (which they always do), we have a reward of an acrobatic family come and perform their circus act for the whole school.

Susan Doss (Staff Appreciation)

We bring in food for staff during conference times and end of year

Lisa Heitzinger and Sue Basill (Sweats and Tees)

Form went out for school sweats and tees. Check out the website where there is a photo of kids modeling the shirt.

Jane Steck and Lisa Pannell (volunteer coordinator)

Instead of having constant notes going home asking for volunteers, just sign up once to be on the email list. Then, anytime there is a new need for volunteers, just an email blast comes out and anyone who can help will respond to that email.

Jennifer Donahue (Year End Picnic)

Happens at the end of the year, a picnic with fun games for kids

Fall Events

- Welcome Committee
- Read-a-Thon (Oct 1-12)
- Book Fair (Oct 9, Oct 15-16)
- Family Fun Night (Oct 17)
- Corporate Promotions

Financial Report

Was covered by Lisa (above)

Principal's Report

Thanks to the Welcome Committee (and the bubbles the first day) and the Sweats and Tees Committee. Kindergarten class size this year is 17-22. All day kindergarten is 22, by design. We had a last minute increase in kindergarteners, added an extra section which has 17. Total students is 537, about 50 kids more than last year. We added three more classrooms. This forced Kids Place onto the stage (out of a room). Currently they are working out of the lunchroom. One problem is the smell of the carpet on the stage (safe, but not pleasant, for the last three years). We don't have an art room. Art may share with a kindergarten room. We have one classroom with Spanish, Gifted and our Counselor, all of whom see classes of kids.

Our IB moves along. Sam Fredrickson is the coordinator. All classrooms will have four units taught this year. There will be a site visit in October. Spanish has started. We don't have an Amity aid, but will have one soon. Will need a home for the Amity when they start. If anyone here would be willing to do what amounts to about two days of

graphics works, putting pictures in the year book, Mr. Johnson could use the help. They have new paper towel dispensers and soap dispensers, and the shrub roses are blooming!

Peter Hobart Reading Program Speakers

Ila Saxena – third grade teacher

Judy Anderson – reading intervention program

Ila talked about reading in second grade (which she taught prior to this year). Reading is decoding, comprehension and fluency (smoothness of reading). In second grade is when comprehension really starts to come together. Often families are confused because they see their children reading all these great books, and teachers are saying slow down – we need them to understand every word they read. They need to read and explain what they have read. There is fiction and non fiction. In the second grade test, the passage is a non-fiction passage. It's very tricky. She took the test and didn't pass, because I added in a bunch of information that I knew. But, the test is about what the passage is really saying, not about what the reader knows about the subject. The teachers will talk about those three parts of reading to parents.

She talked about the decoding tools teachers introduce to students. We teach phonics as well, which helps with decoding. For comprehension, teachers have a list they created of strategies for second graders to increase comprehension (such as re-telling, visualizing, predicting, etc). Fluency can be increased by poetry, songs, reading aloud together and other tools. All the classrooms have collections of books. Books are sorted by levels, and children are reading books at their appropriate level. The leveling system may vary from class to class, but the teacher knows the system and makes the match. Most kids have a book bag and time to read appropriate level books during the day. In second grade there are earmarks, passages that teachers want kids to be able to read at certain points in the year. Books the teachers use include "On Solid Ground" and "Guided Reading".

Judy talked about Reading Intervention. The St. Louis Park district historically has provided supplemental reading teaching time, which focused on reading intervention. It happens in each elementary school. This service is to act as a safety net, especially for children who don't qualify for services otherwise (for example ESL or special education).

In the spring, the reading intervention teachers work with each student to assess their reading. During most of the year, they work with students who are reading below grade level. They usually meet in small groups with the children regularly, for 30-45 minutes. They focus on decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary development and ongoing assessment. In second grade, we try to get students focused on non fiction if they haven't been interested in it yet.

Question about testing in May. The district requires the testing. In each grade there is an assessment. In kindergarten, they assess letter sounds and phonic awareness. In other grades, reading is assessed at each grade level. For example, she will tell the class to figure out the words they are reading, try to figure out the hard words, read it out loud, make a change while reading aloud if it doesn't sound right, and also tell about what they read (plot and characters, or big idea and details). Kids have to remember the "clues" and put them together to understand the passage. Parents find out results via report cards and teacher assessments through the year. Parents of first graders and second graders will get a letter attached to June report card with the information about whether the child read "at or above", or "below" grade level. Question – why isn't it more specific? Answer – it's just one piece, so to give a specific grade level might not be accurate. You need the whole piece and parents will get that through the teacher conference and report card.

Frank passed out a one-page handout for how to work with your kids for reading.

Community Education Update

Shelly Beissel, Youth Enrichment Coordinator for SLP schools and Community Ed. She is new to this position, introduced herself. She is looking for feedback, looking to jazz up current programs. She wants to know what parents and kids want from these programs. She is also looking for people willing to teach classes.

Linda Ascher is the Adult Enrichment Coordinator, She is also new to the position and is looking to get feedback from the adults. She wants to know what sort of speakers would be interesting to

parents on child-rearing topics. She is looking for one adult to act as liaison to her from Peter Hobart School.