

## **MINUTES**

### **FEBRUARY 6, 2012 PTO-EB MEETING**

This meeting of the 2011-2012 Colfax A.L.A. PTO Executive Board was held at 6:45 pm at Abbie Campsie's house. Jenny led the meeting and distributed a written agenda, budget and 3 handouts on funding requests/rubrics. Present were:

President Jenny Ganger  
Co-VP Fundraising Tamara Dubowitz  
Co-VP Fundraising Sukanya Srinivasan  
Co-VP Communications Sarah Sirlin  
VP Special Events Abbie Campsie  
Volunteer Coordinator Mark Beck  
Treasurer Shannon Ewing  
Assistant Treasurer Ellie Monaco  
Secretary Margie Minkler  
Middle Level Teacher Representative Kipp Dawson  
Lower Level Teacher Representative Tony Woods  
Principal Adam Sikorski  
Parent Engagement Specialist Diane Condie  
Chair-Middle Level Parent Teacher Advisory Committee Cindy Pace

Jenny began the meeting by previewing the agenda. In addition to the listed items, Cindy Pace will discuss middle level events. No one had any old business to discuss.

1. General Meeting (Jenny) Jenny will confirm babysitting and gym availability for the general meeting. Sukanya will present on Party for Play, Abbie will present on Carnival and Ann Marie Kuchera may present on the "fun run." We will announce the Talent Show date. Shannon or Ellie will present a budget update. If anyone wants to add something, they should tell Jenny by tomorrow.

2. Middle Level (Cindy) Middle level events for the year will be decided at the next student council meeting. So far, Ms. Stewart's suggestions are for a line dance on February 24, a spring fling dance on May 19, and attendance at a 4:00 Allderdice High School game (date to be determined based on the game schedule.) The cost for the game would be \$2 and a bus would only be needed home. Middle level funds will be used for these events. The next fundraiser is Coach Purse Bingo. (We quickly discussed the option of middle level kids raising funds by selling flowers for St. Valentine's Day, but they are not going to do it.) The Middle Level may hold another sale of used items for \$1 each. This could be advertised at other local schools. Lisa Chotiner may want to help with this. Ninety two kids signed up for the Middle Level end

of the year trip so far. The Middle Level teachers took the \$200 they would have used to give each other gifts and donated it to kids needing money for the trip.

3. Budget (Shannon/Ellie) Ellie reviewed the up-to-date budget. Figures were reviewed for fundraising, specifically noting the amounts raised so far through the Ask letter and designated donations. Five hundred dollars designated for technology was spent on ELMO light bulbs. (They are expensive but the ELMOs are worth it per Adam and the teachers.) The Winter Fundraiser (P4P) total of \$4052.91 represents ticket and ad sales. The amount spent on P4P so far is only the \$1000 deposit. In all, it will probably cost \$5000.

Jenny noted that with our current bank balance and our funds raised to date, we are able to cover all projected expenses for the year with a few thousand dollars left over. Hopefully, P4P will raise the amount we want to carry over to next year. We may not need other fundraisers. We have glassmaking, plant sale and the fun run ahead. Both the glass making (which is full, but not a big money maker) and the fun run are valuable community builders, even if we don't need them financially. Tamara asked when we would decide whether to stop spending and move the rest of the money into next year. Per Shannon, the time for that is when we do next years' budget in April.

Abbie added that the Big Burrito Group was not willing to give us much for P4P, but will offer separately a special dinner at one of their venues to which we sell tickets. We would get to keep all the ticket sale proceeds. Restaurant options include Mad Mex (\$35 a ticket), Casbah, and Eleven (top at \$125 a ticket.) We would have a good portion of the restaurant for the event. Let's consider this for summer or fall, but not close to the Ask Letter drive.

Tony asked whether we should consider changing the "principal's discretionary" fund to a discretionary fund for the instructional cabinet (made up of teachers.) This would be a safeguard if Adam is ever gone from the school. The group thought this was a good point, and we will consider it for next year.

4. Party For Play (Sukanya) So far we have sold 110 tickets. Last year we sold 212. Sukanya wants to make sure there are enough people attending. The event is set, menu is set, and Sukanya squeezed all she could get out of the University Club. We do have to pay for the food and service. We will have a cash bar, but juice and soda are being donated. Sukanya feels low on donations, but more things are coming in. She is trying to get the program done early to send to Frank then Camille will send it to all ticket purchasers. Lee Rothman got a Burton Morris art print signed (the one with the popcorn and vintage car race) and it will be framed for free. We also have a Burton Morris poster and book from Marsha. All auction items will be packed up on the 12<sup>th</sup> at Sukanya's house. We are adding a photo booth this year donated by Howard Hanna. People can take home this souvenir. Sherry Mayer (a Colfax parent from Howard

Hanna) does not want us to charge for the photos. We are getting a free D.J. also through Sherry. Construction is going on next door to the University Club. Parking is easy, and it will be free at Sci-Tech. Sukanya will send out a parking information flyer to people who bought tickets. Should we sell the remaining Colfax T-shirts at check-out? First, let's fill up volunteer posts. Rika offered to sell them but she may be better used somewhere else. Shannon and Sukanya agreed that this sale should be kept separate from the P4P cashier functions. If all the other volunteer posts get covered, we could ask someone to separately sell the shirts.

## 5. Updates

- Communications (Sarah) The Communicator submission deadline is February 16. A new section of "shout outs" that can be purchased for \$2 has been added.
- Events (Abbie) Kudos from Jenny on the teacher/staff holiday lunch, and on the ice skating family fun night. The Talent Show for grades 3-8 is scheduled for Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, the day before spring break, at 6:00. Kids can stay after school, rather than being bused to the performance. The plan is to sell pizza for \$1 and popcorn but we need approval. We will need to pay one custodian fee. (We need two. Maybe Joe will work?) There is confusion regarding rehearsal times. There will be 2 try-out dates, but they are unknown. Maybe a rehearsal will be held during lunch. PSSA testing starts on March 12 and continues for the two weeks before spring break. So, the scheduling will have to be figured out. Paul, who photographs for Dynamo, is willing to photograph the performers at the Talent Show. People may buy the pictures he takes on the web.
- Volunteers (Mark) All volunteer information is in the data base and ready for use.

6. Funding Rubric (Jenny) Jenny distributed sample paperwork for discussion entitled, "Colfax PTO Funding Decision Rubric," "Colfax PTO Funding Request Form," and "PTO Rubric" (an example from another PTO.) First, the question arises: should we judge at all? Abbie does not want a rubric because of the judgment. Others expressed that we have to make judgments if we have limited money. In addition, debates have arisen around use of PTO funds for certain purposes, like the wave pool reward trip that was controversial last year. If we are judging, then a stated policy on how we are judging is best. If we are using a rubric, would it apply to all requests? And should everyone requesting funds fill out the request form? Use of the rubric and the forms would help with justifying our decisions, with streamlining, and equity. But, we would not use them for designated field trip money, ELMO light bulbs, or other already designated items; they would be mostly for activities.

If we are using a rubric, what should it look like? The "Colfax PTO Funding Decision Rubric" and the sample PTO Rubric were discussed. Adam would like the criteria to include "Community Building." Tony would add two points for requests with

an alternative funding source. The group agreed that the criteria should include “student access” (potential to impact every grade/every student) but not “academic core enrichment.” Is “best practice and/or research based” a good criterion? Sometimes this is built in and other times not. Mark asks if we should use a point system with the criteria. The EB would discuss the proposals, rate them and then tally the total points.

Should diversity be a criterion? Tony thinks diversity is essential in *development* of the rubric. Tony and Sukanya expressed concern because people, especially members of minority groups, feel disenfranchised and harmed when others, not in their group, make decisions governing everyone. African Americans may feel disenfranchised when an entirely Caucasian group is making decisions affecting them. Homosexuals are likely to feel disenfranchised when a group of all heterosexuals is making decisions that govern them. It is hard for those who are not minorities to understand the full impact of such a process.

We have a diverse school but not a diverse Executive Board. So should a separate, more diverse committee of some sort come up with the rubric? The whole focus of the group could be development of a rubric and a concerted effort could be made to arrive at diversity in that group. But, how would we get a different, more diverse group of people on this committee? Sukanya described how hard she tried to attract more diversity for P4P but with little impact. Also, people who are not now involved may be prevented from being involved by lack of time and availability. Would the rubric committee just end up being the same representation of people already on the EB?

Jenny liked the idea of a separate committee applying the rubric to submitted proposals and then making recommendations to the EB. The EB has a lot to do and this could help. Others said they enjoy considering the requests and find this part of the EB role interesting, not overwhelming. And if the EB still needs to vote, would it really save time?

Separate from the creation of the rubric, Tony will look for “culturally responsive” language that could be used as a rubric criterion.

Should we set deadlines for the submission of funding requests? The EB agreed that this would be a good idea and may solve a lot of our difficulties. How many deadlines? Tony suggests 3 or 4. We agreed teachers should decide. Tony will check with them and see what dates are best.

In sum, we all agreed that deadline dates should be set for the submission of requests. Tony will discuss the best number and time of these dates with the teachers. The other issues are left open for debate.

7. What's Coming Up At the April general meeting, next year's presidents will be elected. The other officers will be elected and the PTO will be asked to approve next year's budget at the May general meeting.

Secretary Margie Minkler