

Pittsburgh Colfax PTO Executive Board
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, August 13, 2008

Meeting began at 7:10 p.m.

In attendance:

Tom Juring, Co-President
Beth Tiffany, Co-President
Maggie Cham, Volunteer Coordinator
Katherine Cosentino, Treasurer
Mike Dickey, VP Fundraising
Paul Foster, VP Communications
Darcy Gordon, Secretary

Mr. David May-Stein, Principal
Diane Condie, Parent Engagement Specialist

Mr. May-Stein reported the following Colfax news

- There are two new hires for the middle level.
- Teachers and staff are very happy and positive going into the year.
- There is now parking available for teachers –another factor adding to the happiness.
- All buses will load and unload in back or on side; parents will be able to park and drop off in the front again.
- No more recess on the front lawn – only in the upper playground/lower playground.

Playground update

- The Supernova cannot be installed anywhere on campus without an additional vote from the Board of Education.
- There is liability in reselling the piece, eliminating that option.
- In early August there was an email vote by the EB that supported the installation of the Rock-It, a 4-child ride experience. The Rock-It's value is \$3,500 versus a \$5,000 value for the Supernova. The Rock-It has been ordered and is due to be installed on Aug. 26. It will be installed on the lower playground in place of the Supernova. Colfax PTO has been told that it needs to pay for the shipping and the labor for installation of the Rock-It and removal of the Supernova, a total cost of \$2,439.
 - This issue led to a significant discussion about the loss of the money for the Supernova and the added cost of replacing it with the Rock-It.
 - Several members of the EB questioned why the equipment representative failed to inform us about the specifications for installing the Supernova on loose fill. It is unclear whether there is any legal basis to compel the manufacturer or the representative to pay for the difference in value between new and old equipment, or to cover shipping or labor.
 - The question was raised to Mr. May-Stein if there would there be any room on the upper playground to reinstall the Supernova? Mr. May-Stein said possibly.
 - Motion by Paul Foster to authorize an expenditure of no more than \$2,500 for the above expenditure.
 - After extensive discussion, the EB did not vote to authorize the cost of the shipping, removal of the Supernova and installation of the Rock-It. Instead, Mr. May-Stein wants a

- meeting held with some EB members, Mr. May-Stein and the playground representative Mark Yacca to work out the final details.
- Because the original motion met strong opposition, Paul Foster withdrew it and proposed an alternative idea of authorizing a subset of parents/ reps from PTO to sit down with Mark Yacca for closed-door negotiations.
 - EB consensus: Tom Juring and Mr. May-Stein will meet with Yacca and attempt to get a better deal.

New teacher member of EB

- Ms. Donna McCartney has decided not to return as the Staff Liaison to the PTO. Mr. May-Stein has some potential candidates who he'll suggest join the EB.

Calendar

- PTO will meet 1st Wednesday of each month.
- EB meets last Thursday of the month.
- 1st EB meeting: Thursday, August 28 @ 6pm @ Maggie Cham's house.
- 1st PTO meeting: Wednesday, September 3 @ 7 p.m. @ Colfax.

Fundraisers:

- Bake sales:
 - Storywalk, Saturday, September 13. Volunteers needed to organize the effort. Names suggested to ask: Sara Segel, Joelle Krasik, Marcie Ritter.
 - Election Day, Tuesday, November 4. Tom Juring will coordinate.
- Artware was suggested for October with delivery in December. For Artware, kids draw pictures that can be put on t-shirts, mugs, pillowcases, etc.
- Kidstuff was suggested for mid-September. The EB agreed that families would prefer to have coupon books delivered to school and not sent home in backpacks as they were last year.
- Year end fund raising letter was suggested for December (text similar to the letter sent in 2007 but not related to fund raising for the playground).
- Party for Play was suggested for late February / early March to avoid the post holiday timeframe. The theme will be determined in consultation with the larger PTO membership.
- Plant sale was suggested for the end of April.
- Carnival was suggested for June 11, 2009. Tom Juring has good ideas for how to make Carnival profitable for the PTO.
- There will not be a bulb sale this year.

Other activities:

- Fiesta scheduled for Thursday, September 18 from 6-8 p.m.
- Many ideas were generated for family fun nights:
 - Read-A-thon ending with a family fun night: Shannon Ewing may be interested in helping to coordinate this.
 - Book Bingo (Bingo night for kids, with books and authors on cards instead of letters and numbers).
 - Dance nights.
 - Ice skating.
 - Swimming.
 - Mosaic night.

- Need to mark staff and teacher appreciation days. Staff appreciation will be a breakfast before the holidays in December; teacher appreciation is the first week of May.
- Back to school gathering is Wednesday, August 20 from 6 – 8 p.m. The PTO will have a table. Fund raising and volunteering for the PTO will be discussed. There will be volunteer sign-ups in the classrooms, at tables and with PTO EB members who will be walking around.

New idea

Beth Tiffany mentioned that the teachers appreciate the beginning of the year financial support from the PTO to help set up their classrooms, but some teachers have more extensive ideas that they might want to pursue. Darcy Gordon suggested creating a granting process for teachers with innovative ideas whereby the PTO might fund several \$500 grants to teachers with new ideas but without the funds to move forward with the idea. There is not a budgeted line item for this so it will need to be discussed at a future PTO meeting.

Additional information from Mr. May-Stein

- Mr. May-Stein gave an update on the status of Ready-to-Learn groups

Gifted pilot

- There is a resource person at district level for the gifted pilot.
- There has been 1.5 new staff members hired to provide gifted support.
- Many details are left to be worked out

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Notes taken by Mike Dickey, edited / formatted by Darcy Gordon.