

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 8, 2012 PTO MEETING

This meeting of the Colfax A.L.A. PTO was held in the school cafeteria at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was led by PTO President Jenny Ganger.

Introductions Jenny introduced the Executive Board. Everyone was then asked to speak briefly with their neighbor and introduced them to the larger group.

1. Party for Play: Sat. February 18 (Jenny) Jenny reviewed the origins of Party for Play and described the event.

- Buy tickets today! Today is the last day for the early bird ticket discount. Tickets may be purchased on the PTO website or from Shannon tonight. Regular tickets cost \$50, \$30 for staff and prospective parents, and \$100 if you would like to be a patron. So far, 120 tickets have been sold. Some teachers are coming.
- Donations are due now! And don't forget to bring in contributions for your grade level baskets.
- Volunteers are needed for the night of the event. Typically, volunteers are assigned a 1 hour shift. Contact Sukanya at dr.sukanya@gmail.com if you are willing to be a volunteer.
- Plan to bring a few dozen cookies to share for the cookie table.
- The JCC is offering "kids night out" babysitting, which is usually from 7-10. JCC membership is required.

2. Other Upcoming Fundraising (Tamara) Tamara thanked everyone for their contributions to the Ask Drive. We raised over \$18,000! Our goal was only \$5,000.

- The annual Plant Sale will be happening in the spring.
- Fun Run: Anne Marie Kuchera spoke about hopefully having a Fun Run in Frick Park, details to be announced. The event would be for fun and exercise, fundraising being only a small part. We could model it after the Gust Buster. Let Anne Marie know if you want to help.
- Memory Tiles: Look for the tile display on the wall as you enter Colfax. Shannon encouraged everyone to purchase tiles to add to the display. We will continue to add tiles, and Shannon will have them produced when we have twenty together. To create and order, contact Shannon or go to the PTO website.
- A parent asked whether we will have the Read-a-thon, hoping we would because the grandparents in her family like to donate to the school this way. The EB agrees that the read-a-thon is great. But, no one has volunteered to take it on and it involves a lot of work. So we plan to have it only if it is needed financially. Jenny suggests maybe alternating each year between a fun run and a read-a-thon, both of which involve donations through sponsorship of the students.

3. Budget/Treasury report (Ellie) Ellie reviewed the up-to-date budget figures as set forth on the back of the meeting agenda, specifically noting the amounts in our general checking account and the money market account (reserved.) She reviewed actual year-to-date figures for Donations - General (\$16,425.92) and Donations – Designated (\$1110.00), as well as the current area of most activity, the Winter Fundraising Event (Party for Play), with projected net revenue of \$14,000 and year-to-date net revenue of \$4052.91. Jenny noted that if Party for Play makes between \$10,000 and \$14,000, we will be in good shape for the year. Ellie reviewed program expenses, noting the new expense total under Family Fun Nights because bus costs were paid. She explained that it looks like we still have a lot of money in our account, but most of the fund requests come later in the year. Kipp thanked the PTO from all her colleagues for the contributions to the day to day expenses and enrichment of the school.

4. Events Update (Abbie) Ice Skating Night took place at the end of January. It was on a Monday night, so not everyone could come. We provided a bus for transportation and all who attended had a lot of fun. To come:

- Talent Show: Sara Stock Mayo is the chair for this event. It will be held March 29, the Thursday before spring break, at 6:00. Pizza will be sold before the event, and a bus will be provided. In the meantime, a rehearsal will be organized.
- Carnaval: This annual end of the year celebration for the whole community will be held in June. Abbie described the planned activities. Darcy Gordon mentioned that the bouncy house person has already been calling to know our date, which Adam will check on. It cannot be June 7th or 8th because of the middle level (trip?)

5. Yinzercation Announcement: Rally this Saturday (Jessie Ramsey) Jessie described Colfax as the incubator for the regional movement against the state education budget cuts. She reviewed the history of the state budget cuts and described their most severe impact on the poor. This year's budget proposal includes an unprecedented 100 million more in cuts. Jessie's blog, Yinzercation, covers the movement in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The PTO has supported the efforts by acting as a sponsor for a \$700 grant from the Women and Girls Association. The Yinzercation movement employs a 10 point strategy including letters and calls to the legislature. (The House of Representative caucus is now putting the educational cuts at the top of their agenda.)

The next big push is the rally planned for this Saturday from 11:00-12:00 a.m. at Schenley Plaza. Please come! Bodies are needed! Twenty other schools are joining in and helping with the rally. The Allderdice marching band and a Dilworth rock band will play. Lots of local politicians are coming. A few parents asked about local university involvement. Jessie responded that although the budget cuts impact higher education, the impact is different. This event will focus on K-12 cuts and she welcomes all support from parents, the community and the universities. Kipp knows that someone is recruiting college students and people from the universities to support the cause. (A parent asked whether school staff is prohibited from becoming too political, with an answer that political activity is possible through the PFT.) Jessie encouraged everyone to come to the rally and to bring their kids. Have them make signs. She wants a person

with a good camera to take pictures. Tamara volunteered her family to take photos. Darcy Gordon also thought her family could most likely do it too.

Jenny mentioned that she felt uncomfortable about using the PTO to get the rally information out because some parents might support the budget cuts. Please let Jenny know if this is the case. Otherwise, this role/cause seems to relate to the PTO. (The PTO's role is not to promote a political party or individual.)

6. Executive Board News: Dates for Funding Requests The Executive Board has not yet agreed on whether we should have guidelines governing decisions on fund requests, but we all agree that deadlines for the requests are needed. Teacher Tony Woods is going to the faculty to investigate the best possible three deadline dates to be placed throughout the school year. The Executive Board is working toward accountability.

7. Middle Level Update Cindy Pace gave the Executive Board an update on middle level plans, which include a dance February 24th and a Spring Fling dance on May 19th. Plans are being made for students to attend an Alderdice high school game after school. The middle level trip will be in June. So far a record 90 students are signed up. Coach Bingo will be held to raise money for the trip. Thanks to the middle level teachers who donated \$200 they would have spent on each other for holiday gifts.

8. After P4P: 2012-13: Elections in April, May. Budget in May We will be electing the new PTO president(s) in April and all of the other board members in May. Jenny reviewed briefly the job descriptions for the Executive Board and let everyone know that there should be co-presidents rather than one. She asked everyone to consider taking on a position or thinking of those who might want to do so. The presidency is the only position requiring past leadership experience.

Secretary Marjorie Minkler