

Colfax ALA - PTO Meeting Minutes September 6, 2007

Meeting began at 7:02 p.m.

Barb Griffin - President

Questions and Suggestions Bank sheet will be passed around at PTO meeting.

Meetings will alternate between first Wednesday and first Thursday of each month (through January) in order to accommodate those who cannot make it on Thursdays.

Ida Simpson – VP Special Events

Fiesta will be held on Monday, September 24, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at Vietnam Veterans Pavilion in Schenley Park. Volunteers needed. Signup sheet passed around.

Teacher Appreciation Breakfast will be held on Wed., Dec. 19 @ 7:00 a.m. Pot Luck.

Family Nights will take place once per month, starting in October. No specific dates are scheduled yet. An idea sheet was passed around.

Shannon Ewing – VP Fundraising and Co-Chair of Playground Committee (with Beth Tiffany).

No-cost fundraisers were listed in the first PTO newsletter: Office Depot, Target, Carnegie, Cartridge World, Boxtops, Giant Eagle, Direct TV and Upromise. Please support.

First playground meeting will be Tuesday, September 18, at Make Your Mark Cafe in Point Breeze at 7:30. If you would like to be a part of the playground, please sign up and Shannon will contact you.

Flower Bulb sale started on Tuesday and runs through the 17th. Send orders to your homeroom teacher.

Colfax Community Cookbook benefiting the Bob O'Connor Community Playground. Flyer will be coming home this week. It is very easy to submit your favorite family recipes.

Bake Sale/ Lemonade Sale this Saturday from 9-1 in front of the school. If you are interested in donating bottled water or baked goods please sign up on the sheet being passed around.

Playground update:

Going to be two parts: One on the Phillips side and a surface area near new building.

Engineer, architect, contractor approved change for drainage pipe.

Fundraising campaign is underway.

Possibly order equipment early to lock in prices.

School board does not fund playgrounds with general fund money.

PTO will cover insurance (approximately \$400 per year) and maintenance in the future.

Jane Opgaard – Treasurer

Passed out the preliminary budget, which will be worked on and posted before the next PTO meeting. The budget will need to be approved at the next meeting.

Rhonda Rothman – Volunteer Coordinator

Homeroom reps are in place, but six classrooms are still in need. A signup sheet was sent around the meeting.

Currently, we especially need volunteers for recess and lunch for younger kids.

You must have criminal and child abuse clearances. Pick up in office or do online. Cost is \$10 (if you do it yourself on line). These clearances will expire if you don't volunteer for two years.

If you are coming to help more than once, call Diane Condie to let her know when you are coming.

David May Stein – Principal - Six-Day Schedule

Six-day schedule breakdown will be available in PTO newsletter and on Yahoo Group.

As it stands today, if there is a school cancellation, the next school day would be the same day number as the canceled day in the rotation. This will be discussed, though, and could change.

Mike and Darcy Gordon – Co-Secretaries

Abbreviated PTO meeting minutes will be printed in the PTO newsletter.

Full PTO meeting minutes will be posted on the Yahoo Group.

Jennifer Ganger – VP Communications

To join the Yahoo group, sign in tonight with your e-mail address clearly and you will receive an invitation.

Cannot go to Yahoo to join the group (trying to avoid spamming). You must send Jenny an e-mail at

gangathome@stargate.net

There are currently 167 members.

The student directory is being put together and is slated to arrive by late September.

Monthly Newsletter will be changing to Colfax Communicator in October.

An update of the PTO website is in progress.

Diane Condie – Parent Engagement Specialist

Diane's role is to be a liaison between school, parents and community.

Monday – "Oh the Places You'll Go" will be principal's book of the month in September.

Two more lunch aides needed. These are paid positions requiring 3-4 hours per day. See Dianne if you are interested or know someone.

Conference day is Monday, October 8. No school that day.

An America's Choice overview workshop will be scheduled for early October.

Each Friday from October 12 – November 16 will be a "Redd Up" coalition for clean-up day around the school. Teachers have signed up for specific dates.

Shannon Ewing - Construction update on the addition

1. The overall project (new building) is at 65% completion and is on schedule for the planned opening at the end of December 07.
2. The exterior block work is at 80% and the exterior brick work is moving at a very fast pace.
3. The roof for the new building (excluding the gymnasium area) will be complete by the start of next week.
4. The windows for the area that the roof is currently being installed are also being installed at this time. Once the roof is on and the windows are installed the interior finish work will begin. This finish work should begin by the last week of September 07.
5. The Contractor trailers will be off site by the end of September.
6. The steel for the Gymnasium roof is scheduled for delivery the week of September 17. At this time the exterior block work will be complete (except for one small area that will allow the movement of equipment into the building). Also at this time the existing crane will be removed and a 50 ton crane will be brought on site to set the roof steel for the Gymnasium. After the Gymnasium roof steel is set, the roof itself will be installed.
7. The overall Mechanical progress is at 70%.
8. The Fans that need to be installed in the existing building adjacent to the existing gymnasium are scheduled to be on site by the end of next week. The concrete pads and vibration isolators have already been installed in these areas.
9. The overall Plumbing progress is at 60%. The nature of the design of the building does not allow for any contractor to move ahead of the masonry. Everything in this building was designed to be installed inside the masonry walls.
10. The overall Electrical progress is at 60%.

At this time the project is running smoothly, with no problems that haven't been addressed or solved.

Additional comments regarding the addition from David May-Stein – Barring emergency, the addition will be ready for use when we return from winter vacation. On site work will begin on existing building once new building is open. Classrooms will be moved around to accommodate. Projected end date on existing building is 4/30/08.

David May-Stein – Principal

Apologize for not returning e-mail over last four days. He has been out sick. Will get back to you soon.

PSCC meeting TBA last week of September. Will meet each month. The PSCC is the Parent School Community Council. It serves as an advisory group to the school administration, instructional cabinet and leadership team. Focus on academic issues.

Teachers and staff did a great job on the day when the heat index reached 100. Thank you!

Biggest focus this year will be improving academic achievement for every student. Every grade level made benchmarks for AYP (adequate yearly progress under NCLB) and exceeded district average. Some sub-groups (40 or more students) did not make AYP benchmarks in some grades. As a school overall, Colfax ALA made AYP. We are on the warning list, though, because all sub-groups must also make the AYP benchmark.

Q&A Notes

PTO notepad to hand back and forth with teachers?

Diane Condie is working on Home-School notebook to serve this function.

Will parents receive PSSA and Terra Nova testing results from last week?

Yes, just received and will be sent out in coming weeks.

Lunch/Recess times. Can there be a snack?

Yes, that can be created for kids who don't eat until later (David May-Stein)

Carry agenda notebook to the bathroom? Where do they put it? (Middle level students)

Set notebook on table outside bathroom. Helps administrators monitor.

Kids buying school lunch eat first?

Yes, all kids sit first rather than standing in line. They have 23 minutes to eat. There are six sit-downs.

Is there a student newspaper?

Diane/Jenny – Student content will be included in PTO newsletter and student paper may develop as part of Cobra time, but that is at the discretion of teachers and students.

Kindergartners not finding place to sit during lunch?

David May-Stein – Classes need to be split up because of space issues and adults DO tell them where to go. Barb – Takes a little time to work out lunch issues every year.

Addition, how many levels?

Two floors and boiler room in basement.

Directory, when?

Last week in September – Shannon Ewing

Maren Cooke - Frick Environmental Center partnership is being developed. Nature walks, etc.

Healthy School Bus campaign in Pittsburgh to diesel retro-fit buses. Will submit information to PTO newsletter.

How many kids at Colfax ALA this year?

Last year – finished with 611. The Projection for this year was 605. There are currently at 642 (approx.)

Class size concerns for K–

DMS - Limited resources in school to hire teachers, aides, etc.

If there are more than 27 kids, an aide must be added in Kindergarten.

Got only one intern instead of three that were requested.

What is Cobra time?

David May-Stein: "Creating Outstanding Bright Robust Achievers"

7th Period is being used (three days out of six) for enrichment and remediation.

Differentiate instruction for kids and offer clubs. Structured program is being developed.

Currently grades 2-8, go to homeroom teacher. Equivalent of after school program being folded into school day. Not for K-1 grades.

There were no motions made and no votes taken.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.