

## PTO Meeting 11/17/20

Chair: Tara Davis

Present: Lisa T, John A, Mallory, Katie W, Mary Kaufmann, Jen S, Karla

### Principal updates:

- **Website.** PTO webpage updated; other content changes throughout the site underway.
- We should have gotten a text message to opt into School Messenger. Mary will resend as some folks may not have received it.
- **New position at Oak Grove this year:** Family and Engagement Coordinator held by Traci Bartlett; helping families engage more deeply with school to boost student participation in school. Helping with the food program and meeting kids' needs with winter clothing. Position was created earlier this fall.
- **Health and safety.** COVID teacher and staff testing happening this Friday (voluntary). New health and safety guidelines went into effect 11/16. Planning for the second semester underway. Emphasized adhering to state travel guidelines. The plan is that our schools will remain open. Other precautions going into place in part to keep schools open. Mary just learned today that 71% of transmission has been linked to small gatherings of adults. It's being transmitted through schools. Halloween gatherings, COVID fatigue are among other factors for uptick. No plan to close schools but schools want to remain remote ready.
  - Katie asked about schools' level of responsibility when it comes to contact tracing. Mary said a generalized message would go out to the school community if someone in school tested positive. The school is keeping track of attendance in the building, who goes in and out of particular classrooms. Contact tracing would happen just for the pod of kids in a particular class. Unless it's a staff member that went in between classrooms.
  - Tara asked if there was a formula or policy that would trigger a shutdown. Mary doesn't know if there is a "magic number" but would try and find out.
  - Mary stressed the concern around the scenario of having a shortage of adults in the building.
- **Next Semester** - Starting January 27th(?), the plan as of now is to go to 4 days/week in-person for those continuing in-person.
- **Leadership Council, family/parent survey.** Some parents have been working on a family outreach survey around communication and engagement. The Leadership Council meetings are open to the public. Everyone is welcome to these meetings. Tara can forward draft of survey to any interested PTO parents.
- **SEL update.** Schoolwide interactive bulletin showcasing kindness and gratitude led by Jamie Scanlon (see Gratitude Board: <https://padlet.com/jaimiescanlon/ltb6611o3gep0y4k>). It's a really hard time right now for lots of families. It's also important to recognize ways positives are happening.
- **School board meeting tomorrow night (11/18).** They are looking at parent/teacher conference data; outdoor learning; Food Connects presentation at last school board meeting resulted in OG getting kudos for work! Thank you to Tara and others who have supported that work.

- **Social Justice update.** OG staff is reading *Stamped*. Librarian has created a diverse books collection. We have hung the Philadelphia pride flag.
- **ESOL update.** Jen Course has been helping with English-Spanish translations including of newsletters to support our Spanish-speaking families.
- **Winter sports.** John wondered about status? Mary was unsure. Mary said staff wouldn't be available on Wednesdays. Jen S wondered if transportation would be a huge challenge to making it happen. Mallory wondered about possibility of turning playground into a cross country track. Or possibility of working with Outing Club. John mentioned Tom Yanner being on board of Memorial Park Ski Hill. Could parents help secure equipment. Mary wondered about alternating weeks whereby all grades could have one opportunity. Concerns about equity if we said you can come if you have your own equipment and transportation. Katie was concerned about cohort mixing. Tara wondered if we could think about Winter Sports in a totally different way using "living schoolyard" -- had a variety of suggestions. Jen S then wondered if we could combine Winter Carnival with Winter Sports as Winter Carnival wouldn't be happening this year. Mary thought waiting until kids are four days, in person, might be preferable especially from a teacher's perspective (right now teachers only get two days of instruction time). Another point: if we offer something for hybrid students we would need to offer something for all-remote learners. Let's continue this conversation...

**Thanksgiving baskets.** It was too challenging to put together baskets this year by staff. School got 10 baskets donated from a church, and families for those 10 baskets have been identified. Otherwise, families will be directed to pick up Thanksgiving meals, including dessert, at Everyone Eats this year. Mary confirmed with Stephanie Bonin, and school will arrange for delivery if needed. Tara was in touch with Tracey (former OGS parent) at VT Country Deli who is able to make a pie donation if needed. Wondering if church-donated baskets would include desserts. Mary will look into it ASAP and let Tara know, so she can follow up with VT Country Deli. Baskets are to be picked up morning of Fri Nov 20.

**Winter gear** \$1,100 from Kids in Coats. Tricia and Traci were able to purchase all the winter coats, etc needed from Love it Twice and Label Shopper using only half the funds! Only remaining need is boots - Tara suggested looking into Sam's for a possible discount. There's also the outlet center.

**Adopt a snowy owl initiative.** Idea is to support identified families for the holidays. Adults that want to participate (staff, PTO parents, etc). Gifts are anonymous. Might involve high school staff as well. This is the first year the school is taking it on. Timeline is that letters to families will likely go out this Friday (or very soon). Staff will be asked first.

#### **Communication:**

We still need the Parent Directory (from Tricia via Mark?). Had a small discussion about the Parent Liaison for each class ... could we start that up again? But what is the role exactly?

**Harvest Dinner / On-line concert?**

An idea was floated about having some kind of evening concert, like an All-School-Sing, but in the evening. Someone also mentioned an on-line get together to celebrate harvest time that could be incorporated. Mary was going to reach out to the music teacher to coordinate? It was mentioned that people might not be excited for yet another zoom thing. John mentioned that due to internet lag, any kind of group music thing would sound pretty off (not synced) - someone hilariously mentioned that it would be no different from every All-School-Sing in person!

### **Sunshine Committee**

This is a go. Kristina Weeks will be first recipient. Everyone seems supportive of mentioning this on the website.

### **Living SchoolYard update from Tara:**

Rise VT Grant money coming through will be used for a perimeter path that was part of the master plan. The path will incorporate the bridge and have lots of cool sensory stuff. There is also an idea (or a plan even) for building a pavilion near the Wagari Tree. Thanks to all who showed up for the Planting Party or who otherwise contributed to the Spring Surprise!

**\*Parent Perspective:** Reconsidering the possibility of channeling our parents' precious time and energy in the direction of grants in lieu of more traditional fundraisers... Exploring ideas for virtual Friday Family Fun nights... Suggestions for improving newsletter format to be more user friendly/accessible, ie. mobile friendly...