

**PTO Meeting: October 20, 2020****Meeting Notes****Chair: Tara Davis****Meeting Participants: Tara, John A, Jess B, Jess W, Katie W, Abbie M, Karla, Lisa, Evon, and Mary Kaufmann**

- 1) Welcome 2 new members: Abbie & Jess. Introductions: old members each named 1 success, and new members shared reason for getting involved
- 2) **Review Roles** (how we've been organized)
- 3) **Year at a Glance:** many things on hold
  - a) **Sept: BrattRock** -- status unsure, possibly Boys&Girls Club taking over in the future.
  - b) **Oct:** Possibilities for a book fair: outside, online? Title I funds not yet available; any event would need to abide by health and safety guidelines; limited / curated selection to offer kids (as a way to make it more doable); on hold until we know about Title I funds; wait until spring? [Mary to let us know when Title 1 budget is approved/available]
  - c) **Nov:** Thanksgiving baskets: school has met but not yet decided what this initiative will look like this year; Mary is anticipating higher need, but also says OG couldn't hold the food and distribute from school(?) [Mary to ask Katherine to find out what are specific needs - how many families, etc. Tara to check in with Groundworks in effort to coordinate and streamline community services per Evon's recommendation]; we would need to contact Albert's (Steve H) about Turkeys soon [John A to reach out to Steve just in case].  
Mary mentioned high need for donations of warm gear and boots; gear could stay at school. Forty pairs of insulated gloves coming. (*Discussion of Kids in Coats program*); in general, we should look to the community at large for resources - rather than duplicate efforts - that goes for toys for kids over holidays (is there a local Toys-for-Tots program w/ VFW, or Am.Legion? People's Bank not running this program this year like in years past - Green St. has created Adopt a Snowflake in lieu of Secret Santa), Thanksgiving food and food in general (GroundWorks has a program); PTO could help by consolidating information and creating a list of Local Resources for Assistance to be distributed to kids in the new letter? [Jess W and Evon to work on this. Tara to check in with Groundworks as the community resource hub for families in need]
  - d) **Dec:** events like Wlnter Carnival, Movie Night are up in the air ... Winter Sports which would start in January is unlikely to happen (not official yet).  
\*We will continue
  - e)
- 4) **Update from Principal** - Mary said kids are happy, gave a shout out to the teachers for working hard in different ways; mentioned the cool BEEC outdoor learning kits that K-1 are using!



Next 3 Agenda items correlate to the 3 Main Functions of PTO: Family Engagement, Fundraising, Staff Appreciation. We also have a Mission Statement somewhere, and we might want to re-look at all of that as we continue to evolve as a PTO.

5) Family Engagement:

- a) Fall Photo Booth - lots of positive feedback and generous contributions from community
- b) Book Fair & Harvest Dinner - both on hold, possibility of exploring alternatives
- c) Family Directory - Some asked for the directory to be electronic only, others preferred paper copies, but either way we would like to get one out soon because parents are needing/wanting to connect with other parents; Mary says directory will be electronic by default, but parents can request paper copies  
[Mary to ask Tricia to get this out to parents soon]
- d) General communications discussion: some prefer electronic only (email, because it can be saved as a reference), others like paper but agree that it doesn't always come home - many say the paper stuff goes directly into the recycling; but all agree that a website that is updated more regularly would be great (esp. for calendar - apparently OG website had some inaccuracies); it was mentioned that the website has lots of broken links or very outdated content (ex. After School Programs page not updated since 2018-2019 school year, which was an issue all last year; PTO website should be taken down until we can update it, ex. Evon and Kim still listed as PTO chairs, etc.); the website has already lost validity for many, so even updating might not get people to use it (unless there is a big update and a splash about it?); it was suggested that maintaining the website be a budget item - have it not be Tricia some times, Greg M other times, or librarian ... should be someone's job to maintain it, and there should be a budget for this role. [Mary to look into updating the website] Mary also shared that OGS will be adding Remind notifications to its communication channels.

6) Fundraising:

- a) In Feb, Harris Hill is definitely canceled. [John is bummed out but also relieved because running this event in COVID atmosphere would be really stressful]
- b) OG sweatshirts/t-shirts, etc. - can we raise the price by \$1 or more and use as a fundraiser? [Mary/Tricia to look into this?]
- c) it was noted that it's often unclear what we are fundraising for exactly - are the teachers all aware that PTO has money for field trips - Mary says they are hesitant to ask? Don't know to ask? Or know that those funds are available?; but also, what is the process for distributing funds? Who decides? If we have a PTO meeting and 4 people are there when the question of where to spend money, do those 4 people decide? Should it just be that the chair decides, and as long as the request meets the mission statement, we're good?; more process and cemented roles for PTO would be good to set, but also, we're still just an ad hoc group of parents with no real status as an entity, so there's only



so much we can do unless we form a non-profit or a trust (but that seems crazy overwhelming to me in this last year as an OG parent). [PTO to take this topic on later? Throughout the year?]

- 7) **Staff Appreciation:** Gift cards were given in lieu of Welcome Back Breakfast this year. Mary said the staff really appreciated it.
- 8) **Special Projects:** Living School Yard is coming along wonderfully - Tara, Greg F have done a ton of work already according to a master plan; the next thing happening will be the outer perimeter path (there is possibly a grant coming for this); the mud kitchen is coming together; also the surprise project behind the tennis ball collection was revealed and will be ready to roll out very soon... [Tara is still leading this - THANKS!]

#### 9) **Action Steps & Timeline**

##### **\*Meeting Adjourned**

**\*Parent Perspective:** Time for parents to share their experiences, specific concerns to be taken up directly with teacher and/or principal. It was so nice to connect after these many months! We shared a bit about our home/school, work/learning situations, and the challenges and opportunities of this time.

