

## **PTO Meeting 3/23/21**

**Chair:** Tara Davis

**Meeting Participants:** Katie Wilson, John Atkinson, Tara Davis, Tim Maciel (School Board member and Leadership Council member), Chelsea Wiehl, Jessica Bashford, Mary Kaufmann, Evon Valentine

### **1. School Board Updates: (Tim Maciel)**

Encouraged joining the Leadership Council. School board focussed a lot right now on diversity training ... upcoming trainings (August?). There is an Equity Committee currently looking into equity in sports, a Communications Committee working on the WSESD website, etc. Also a lot of COVID recovery money - how to spend it, not for long-term positions, but there is a team forming and process planning going on to figure out how to distribute funds.

### **2. Principal Updates: (Mary Kaufman)**

Recent presentation to School Board on student engagement with math. Providing professional development by our staff to other staff. Teachers took leadership role (Mr. Tuma).

March - 5 Wednesdays.

2 open positions - First grade teacher Kylie has to leave, and Karen retiring in 5th grade after 23 years.

Leadership team at district level in planning stages to deal with COVID relief - have a lot of money to use up.

### **3. Leadership Council Updates:**

Leadership Council - had been focussed on the town vote and articles about potential dissolution of the merged district.

TM says OGS Leadership Council focussed mainly on getting more people on the Leadership Council.

MK says trying to figure out what days would work - Doodle poll

Discussion about what it means to be on the Leadership Council. Can't have a quorum of members of the council outnumber the staff members? Or some other rules? The meetings are open, so you don't need to be on the council in order to participate. There are formal rules, but the OGS meetings are less formal. There are some regulars.

MK's link in chat: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ffF4hnoTj9I7qujI5yI4cWdJYU98R97m/view>

SRO at the high-school, Tim brought up. Lessons learned, making an inclusive conversation.

#### **4. Farm to School Updates: (Tara Davis)**

Today was first sugaring event! Students tapped some neighbors' trees. Various grades got involved with collecting and storing sap, and today boiled it. Tom Y. had a portable sap boiler. Neighbors donated extra sap .. about 30 gallons of sap .. processed down to about 20 gallons ... maybe a sample/taste test.

Tara Gordon/Farm to School, Sheila Humphreys/Food Connects, and Brattleboro Food Coop collaboration is happening. Lots of community connections happening too. A "new" neighbor, Jessa Harger, volunteered her sugar maple for tapping and got involved from there. She also wants to get involved in Girls-on-the-Run. That, by the way, is happening, mid-April ... more info coming on that. Back to sugaring project - Tom Y. picked up a donation of wood from Dennis Hamilton, and ended up making a connection for some other project too.

Karen working with 5th graders on a grant, studying all year about a carbon footprint reduction. Planting trees is part of that - dovetails into Living Schoolyard plans (adding shade as part of the master plan). And Farm-to-School wants to get sugar maple trees. Additional collaboration with Edible Brattleboro and 350VT's initiative to give out and plant lots of trees (Rewild VT). MK says Karen's class is planning a planting day for those classes.

Also idea for green screen along fence for beautification and sound barrier (would be appreciated by neighbors!)

Grant for perimeter path and sensory elements came in. Just in time for spring!

Pennies for Playground - beginning of March is about half-way point. \$168.28 raised so far! Whatever is raised this month (March) will be matched by a mystery donor! Still collecting change...

## **5. New Business:**

Thanks to Katie for getting books in order ... will be passing this duty off to Saren (Mr. Tuma's partner). Digging into other opportunities with raising funds ... looking into potential 501C3 status for PTO.

Book Fair - Summer B. looking into making this happen this year. Nancy at Everyone's Books yet again interested in making this happen.

Spring time - vaccinations happening - hope in the air ... can't yet have gatherings. Although it's still premature to have conversations about getting together and events, could possibly do Pop-up Photo booth again? Volunteers?

Fall bulb plantings for spring surprise - sightings of flowers coming up!

Harris Hill - John will come back from PTO retirement next year to help with event if we're still doing it! And hopefully pass on plan to someone... Unless PTO 2021-2022 decides to not do event or scale it back to bake sale again.

Chelsea - Teachers still have a very hard job to do. As hope is in the air, staff are vaccinated, they still have to follow all guidelines, the kids are not getting vaccinated, and their families are not, so it's still very regimented and hard to integrate with things like the sugaring event because they still need to distance and limit/prevent sharing of items. Also have a lot of work to do beyond normal.

Lexi is coming back to teach library and STEAM next year.

Greg Frost has moved on - Chad Pacheco has stepped in. We were thinking about having a buddy bench or something dedicated to Mr. Frost to recognize his contribution to the school...

River Gallery Art School - looping them into Living Schoolyard also, to collaborate with art projects. Ben, the new art teacher, is excited to make connections with LSY as well. (ie. willow tree for basket weaving and rendering charcoal)

Back to COVID relief funds ... spend money on short-term, but also structural changes. How do you leverage residential school setting ... hub of community. Hopefully PODs not so strict next year - mix of grades, older and younger (intergenerational) mixing is a thing at OGS that is unique and great. Music - art - stuff we can spend money on w/ relief funds to fix what could be improved - what didn't work, reinforce what did.

