

Ocean Avenue PTO

Engaging People. Building Community.

OAPTO Meeting Minutes

Date: Nov. 20, 2014

Time: 6pm-7:30pm

Called by: Nanette Dyer Blake, OAPTO President

Number in Attendance: 25 OAES community members

Location: OAES Library

I. Welcome/Overview (Nanette Dyer Blake, President)

- Nanette reviewed the Principles of PTO Meetings which is a code of conduct for community members to use at PTO meetings; she also reminded everyone that invited speakers are our guests and that these principles apply to them as well
- The next PTO meeting will be on Dec. 18th from 7:30am-8:15am in order to allow more teachers to participate; coffee and refreshments will be available and there will be a raffle
- The PTO sends out a weekly email blast every Wed. – contact communication@oapto.org to join our mailing list

II. Staff of the Month Recognition (Julie Lannon, Nominating Director)

- The PTO honored first grader teacher Mary Beth Hodgkins this month
- Students and parents alike expressed high praise for Mrs. Hodgkins – her patient and kind manner, the respect she has for others, her positive and warm teaching style – all of these attributes make her a wonderful teacher and an inspiration to students, staff and parents

III. Guest Speaker (Dr. Paul McGovern, Music Director)

- Dr. McGovern led a fun, educational and hands-on workshop showing parents and community members how he approaches teaching music to kids
- Community members participated in a number of musical exercises that included warming up our voices, singing together, dancing with partners and movement exercises
- He demonstrated a vocal warm-up activity that helps students find their singing voice and learn vocal control and melodic direction
- Dr. McGovern attended a five-day workshop with John Feierabend that included a daily sing-a-round, New England folkdance and movement exercise, all of which he has incorporated into his classes
- Dr. McGovern strives to help students achieve three things:
 - To become tuneful – students that are tuneful have songs in their heads and learn to control their voices
 - To become beatful – students that are beatful feel the pulse of the music
 - To become artful – students that are artful are moved by music in the many ways music can elicit an emotional response
- The first steps in music include:
 - Pitch exploration (vocal warm-up):

- Slide whistle to warm up voices, telling stories and kids respond in different pitches, bean bag toss, sing in a rainbow
 - Song fragments:
 - Echo songs help check kids' ability to see if they can sing back accurately; opportunity for kids to sing solo; call and response songs
 - Simple songs like John the Rabbit
 - Arioso (child-created tunes) – sing a musical question and kids sing a musical response back that they make up
 - Movement exploration helps create body awareness and a sense of space
 - Movement with form and expression
 - Movement with the beat
 - Song tales
- Older students learn the Twelve Steps of Conversational Solfege:
 - Students learn to read and write musical notation
 - They copy musical notes when first starting to write music – you start with the mechanics just like you would when teaching the alphabet
 - To learn more visit <http://www.feierabendmusic.org/conversational-solfege/>
- Students are eligible to learn a string instrument in the 4th grade and band instrument in the 5th grade

IV. Report from Principal (Dr. Coursey)

- The PTO has added a new element to our monthly meetings that we are very excited about – each month Dr. Coursey will share what is happening at school! Tonight's topics included:
- NWEA is a test for kids in grades 3-5; students receive a one-page report on how they scored and are currently writing their own goals for improvement; they will take the test again in January and again in the spring
- CPAA (Children's Progress Academic Assessment) is an assessment for students in grades K-2; teachers are currently learning how to implement this assessment
- There is a new teacher evaluation system in place – administrators visit classrooms three times per year in order to provide teachers with feedback
- Monthly assemblies happen the 1st Wed. of every month – each assembly focuses on an IB Learner Attribute; in Dec. the focus will be on "thinker" and "responsibility"
- Special education staffing – OAES has been understaffed in this area due to a higher number of students needing support than the school was aware of at the beginning of the year – OAES now has an additional 6 hours of special education staff support
- OAES is looking to hire a half-time ELL teacher
- Dr. Coursey is trying to get the school's budget unfrozen in order to fund the following:
 - Transportation for the 5th grade field trip to Portland Stage
 - A world drumming set to be used by students during music class
 - A 4th grade science kit
- Dr. Coursey is exploring ways to provide International Baccalaureate training for new staff members
- Dr. Coursey received lots of great feedback from parents at the last PTO meeting regarding the OAES mission/vision statement which she then shared at the PAC (Parent Advisory Council) meeting
- The entire staff is getting ready to be trained in HOT! Science (the first phase of the curriculum was called Talk Science which Ms. Crowley presented on at the Oct. PTO meeting); the training will happen during early release time

- Parent volunteer/PAC member Emily Bruce is helping to re-vamp and re-introduce Coffee Talks with Dr. Coursey:
 - Coffee Talk will be a monthly event held in the cafeteria where parents can socialize for a half hour and then hear from Dr. Coursey on a specific theme or topic with time for discussion afterward

V. Approval of the Minutes (Erica Sabatino, Recording Secretary)

- Hard copies of the Oct. 2014 minutes were not available at the meeting so members will vote to approve the minutes at the Dec. PTO meeting

VI. Fundraising Update (Cricket King, Auction Co-Chair)

- The 2014 Bids 4 Kids Auction was our most successful auction to date!
- The event grossed 20K and our goal was to raise 18K
- Net revenue to date is 17K with sponsorships still coming in – half of the PTO budget was raised just through the Auction!
- Thank you to last year's Co-chairs Gilda Bryand, Alison Gorman & Jennifer Rent who laid the foundation for this event and a BIG thank you to this year's Co-Chairs Cricket King and Kerri Nicholas for all of their incredible hard work!
- The PTO is hosting the Designing Women Craft Fair on Dec. 13th from 9am-4pm
 - We charge a modest registration fee and last year we raised \$1350
 - Goal for this year is to raise \$2,000
 - Volunteers are needed to provide soups, quiches, ready-made sandwiches and cookies
 - Volunteers are needed to man the food table and registration table
 - We will be distributing Original Artwork items at the Designing Women event
- The PTO's grant writing efforts are underway thanks to support from parent volunteers Brenda Zollitsch and Gibson Fay-Leblanc

VII. Budget Update (Chip Gavin, Treasurer)

- Operating account stood at \$5,200 at the end of Oct.
- We have \$23,000 in our account right now as a result of the revenue brought in from the Auction
- We have a small reserve held in a separate account, giving us a total of \$31,000
- Finance Committee is open to all OAES community members:
 - Next meeting date is Dec. 5th at 12pm at Borealis; email Chip at chip@oapto.org if interested in attending
 - Last year's Treasurer, Aviva Shaw, is serving on the Finance Committee this year

VIII. Shout Out for Stand Outs (Tobin Scipione, Volunteer Director)

- Thank you to all of the wonderful parents, staff and friends of OAES who volunteered their time over the past month to support our community, help with afterschool activities and make our fundraising efforts a tremendous success!
- A HUGE thank you to all of our 2014 Auction volunteers:
- For their amazing creativity and work in planning and implementing the Auction, including procuring incredible auction items, securing sponsorships and managing an army of volunteers: **Cricket King and Kerri Nicholas!!!**

- For helping to raise sponsorship dollars and procure donations: **Gilda Bryand, Alison Gorman, Molly Collin, Gibson Fay-Leblanc, Jim and Jill Meek, Jennifer Hutchins, Caitlin Kirby, Margaret Carignan, Beth O'Malley, Nanette Dyer Blake, Chip Gavin, Tobin Scipione, Julie Lannon, Sarah and Nate Kimble, Emily Bruce, and Katharine O'Neill**
- For helping with set-up, clean-up and everything in-between: **Linda Braley, Emily Bruce, Gilda Bryand, Margaret Carignan, Kiersten Ellis, Alison Frothingham, Marc and Sandra Goff, Alison Gorman, Rita Heimes, Jen Hutchins, Ellen Jankowski, Kristian Jones, Sarah Kimble, Angus King, Caitlin Kirby, Erica Knox, Andrea Krasker, Jim & Julie Lannon, Molly Litz, Jim and Jill Meek, Beth O'Malley, Victoria Parker, Chris Rickett, Sonya Rickett, Terri Serappa, Jason Simpson, Janna Vesey, Sharon Zelonish and each member of the PTO Board**
- For donating their personal time to raise funds with Teacher Features: **Dr. Coursey, Ms. Hanna, Mrs. Brenner, Mrs. Rawlings, Mrs. Hodgkins, Mrs. McGhie, Ms. Partridge, Mrs. Brewer, Mrs. DeWitt, Mrs. Gurney, Mrs. Nogar, Mrs. Serio, Mrs. Tryzelaar, Ms. Lapin, Mr. Studwell, Ms. Falla and Nurse Laurie Hesselink**
- For designing and overseeing one-of-a-kind student art pieces: **Jeannette Wycoff, Alison Gorman and Mrs. Mitchell**
- For helping students with the Classroom Creations: **Erica Sabatino, Elizabeth Miles, Nancy Vachon and Gilda Bryand**
- For designing the Bids4Kids logo, invitations and posters: **Emily Brackett**
- For assembling the Class Baskets: **Deb Breiting, Molly Collin, Kiersten Ellis, Hilary Hayner, Julie Leland and Sharon Zelonish**
- For baking delicious cupcakes for the evening of the event: **Gilda Bryand**
- For process definition and endless data entry: **Emily Bruce and Sandra Goff**
- For technical support: **Kristian Jones**
- For rallying and coordinating volunteers: **Tobin Scipione**
- For guiding the sponsorship team, securing our printing donation and pricing: **Anne Washburne**
- For donating items: **Ted Arcand, Gilda Bryand, Alison Gorman, Jeannette Wycoff, Mike Collin, Lisa Hicks, Kristian Jones, Beth O'Malley, TR Parker, Lucia Rico, Terri Serrapa, Hanna Tarkinson, Cammie Weeks and Eddie Zelonish**
- But that's not all. Thank you to the following individuals for supporting our school in other meaningful ways:
- For coordinating the Original Artworks fundraiser: **Margaret Carignan, Kiersten Ellis and Mrs. Mitchell**
- For introducing Girl Scouts to OAES in the form of a four-week sampler and for attending the all-day 5210 Symposium: **Molly Collin**
- For making the Girls on the Run program possible this fall: **Mrs. DeCarlo** (Head Coach), **Ann Theriault** (Manager/Assistant Coach), **Cricket King** and **Cathy Harrigan** (Assistant Coaches)
- For serving as Girls on the Run practice run volunteers: **Deb Breiting, Sara and Allen Ewing-Merrill, Jill Meek, Jennifer Tuttle, Mr. DeCarlo, Emma Harrigan, Cindi Berg and Eric Theriault**

IX. Enrichment Update (Lisa Hicks, Enrichment Director)

- PTO has a new registration process and form for signing up for enrichment classes which is based off of Reiche's process
- Kids Making Art just finished a three-week session
- 44 students signed-up for three afterschool enrichment classes: hip hop, art and yoga
- 15 students requested scholarships

- PTO is charging very little – about \$5 per class for a 7-week session
- Looking at ways we could provide transportation for kids who need it
- Looking at performing arts – bringing in guest artists to provide a variety of offerings
- K and 1st grade are going to The Nutcracker on Dec. 2nd
- Green Club for 4th and 5th graders will meet on Mondays twice a month after school; goal is to launch before January

X. Community Building Update (Jeannette Wycoff, Community Building Director)

- Next Walk and Roll is scheduled for Dec. 4th and hot cocoa will be provided
- The PTO is providing bagels and cream cheese on Dec. 5th for the staff for teacher/parent conferences
- Share ideas with Jeannette on how we can do a better job on building community at community@oapto.org

XI. Adjourn