

Tuesday, December 6th

Public PTO Meeting Notes

In attendance:

Board: Julie Soule, Tim Willoughby, Molly Anderson, Nancy Vachon, Scott McCauliffe, Victoria Parker, Ben Grant, Aviva Shaw, Chris Dingwell

OA staff: Ann Hanna, Beverly Coursey, Patty Sprauge, Meghan Taylor, Hannah G. Chimenti, Joc Caldwell

Parents: Cricket King, Nanette Dyer Blake, Andrew Gelman, Jeanette Wycoff, Erica Sabatino, Scott Patterson, Kiersten Ellis, Circe MacDonald, Shaughnessy Butler, Alison Gorman

Last minutes were approved. Board members introduced themselves.

Auction Update from Victoria:

\$21,979 has come in so far, more is coming in. \$535 raised in drinks. The auction seemed well received – will keep same model next year. Saturday date increased #s – in the past we've had between 75-85 people attend, attendance was in the high 90s. People stayed longer than in the past. Not too many parents of younger grades kids came. We spent \$750 this year, a lot less than last year. Work will start on next auction this coming spring.

IB Discussion/Demonstration:

Patty talked about model of inquiry cycle – tune in, find out, make meaning, take action with reflection throughout. Teachers are finding kids are very engaged when using this model. Patty asked us to write one fact we know about homework. Then we were split into 3 group and the 4th Grade team modeled how they might teach a lesson about homework, using the inquiry model.

Community Building Update from Molly:

We have 117 families with English as a second language. 55 of the 60 newOA families last year were recent immigrants. In our new efforts, we're building on past success; feedback from Multilingual office and community outreach has been helpful. We're going to have a multicultural potluck in January or February. There would be an effort to make connections while cooking; for example if the event was a dinner at 6, people who would come and teach/learn how to cook a certain dish at 4pm. We already have 3 parents from different countries willing to help.

Molly also described the ambassador family idea. She asked if parents want to share a cultural dish, or would be interested in being an ambassador family, or if you have a second language that you could

share, let Molly know. Beverly is meeting with someone from Americorp this Thursday to see if we could obtain help with this work. Others expressed their excitement about it...

Update from Dr. Coursey:

She's working on teacher working conditions and how it feels to work at OA, with some support from outside organizations; she is providing some customized professional development and has created a shared wish list with staff. She just completed school budget. Student-led conferences were very successful. Thanked parents for letting that happen – helps students take ownership of their work. Translated conferences are being held this week. She is sending special teachers to special IB conferences. This fall OAS staff has spoken at 3 conferences. Chronic absenteeism is down 33%. Thanks to Molly for teaching coding last year and this year for 4th and 5th grade. Teachers College did Reading professional development. Teachers got about 90 min each day for 6 days – teachers got to learn in a lab setting with our kids. OA recently had a community meeting that was all student led. Parents are welcome to attend these; they are typically the first Thursday of the month at 8:45. At the assembly they celebrated Ann Hanna, who was selected as the Assistant Principal of the year; the assembly also focused on caring and empathy; outside visitors were impressed with how engaged kids were.

Update from Ann Hanna:

The Superintendent sent a good message of inclusivity in the fall. There were some incidents at OA after the election. Ann has had to help sort out disagreements. Chris asked are there ways of sharing these conversations with other kids, instead of only having discussions when an issue arises between two students since staff might not be aware of every conflict; Ann said it might be hard for kids to talk about their own experiences in a group setting. Civil rights team is working on something. Also Second Step teaches conflict resolution.

Enrichment:

Next Enrichment session info will go home December 19th. Aviva – Rock Chorus has started, with 10 3rd graders meeting at recess on Wednesday; and 20 students in 4th and 5th. There might be some individual performances and on large one with everyone. Also taking place at Presumpscot School. Next session's enrichment choices include: West African drumming, Mad Science, and Rock Chorus.

MLK event – we will have a presence there but we are not sure what form that will take.

Parent Suggestion:

Cerce MacDonald said that at her daughter's old school they had a magic marker recycling program – old markers can be collected and sent back into Crayloa. She suggested that the board consider starting this at OA.