PTO meeting

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

Called to order – 7:03pm

In attendance – Principal Herlihy, Lori Zinner, Sue Johnston, Barbara Mauger, Jess Lourie, Nick Jathar, Sharan Morgenbesser, Joris Gjata

School updates – Principal Herlihy

Spirit Days – want to be sure to include Hybrid and DLA. DLA also has their own spirit days, and will continue to be mindful with any future spirit days. DLA parents should continue to reach out with concerns; Principal Herlihy and PTO leadership available and happy to answer questions or address concerns.

New schedules for K-2. Has been in place for a little while, going well. Now 3-5 extended hours. CS is utilizing specialists for the 2-3pm block. Staffing updates. Ms. Stroessner going on maternity leave soon, hiring longterm sub. Megan just had baby, have Sarah Cheslock subbing.

Community events

Next month, plan Community book night. As part of black history month, each teacher will pick a book, and kids will read with their family. In March, could have family book night to discuss these books; have breakout rooms, older kids to help facilitate conversation. Will explore older kids helping younger kids. Will purchase books, support local bookstores as well.

Planning a few community family events. Looking for volunteers to organize. Jess explored options; limiting factor is often size, as trivia night events work best if 20 people max. Will see what other schools are doing – North had trivia night. Could have breakout rooms to facilitate larger groups. PTO president mtg tmr, will see what other schools are doing. Some classrooms have been doing class game nights, could potentially scale this up and have room parent from each classroom run. Barbara & Sue will attend PTO mtg tmr for ideas, then decide from there and circle back.

It was asked if we can reopen library, and allow book checkouts, now that there is increasing data that fomites are low-risk, and we know safe ways to do this with COVID. Will look into whether parent volunteers can enter, to help shelve books/organize. Will follow up if this is an option.

Pet calendar

Joris Gjata updated. Sold over 30 calendars. Awaiting final numbers, but should have good profit; cost ~$3 to print. First year doing it so is a learning process. Maybe next year will try to have central location, like an email address, for people to send requests, pics, etc to have more centrally organized. Need to think about survey too, to assess interest/number to print. If we do this next year, should start in ~Nov, so people get it before break. We now understand the design process better. We have a few extras; could try to sell in the Update, maybe at a discount. Overall was cute and went well. Plan on short blurb for Update to try to sell extra calendars.

Community Puzzle

Gat Rauner sent an update to share. She now has all the pieces. She just has to put them together, and then deliver them to Newton North for printing. She will complete this week, and hope to get to printer next week.

Grab and Go lunch

Scheduled for Friday 2/5. Punam has orders for sandwiches. ~$500-550 for food, from Sandwich Works. Parents bringing in drinks, snacks, desserts, fruit, etc. Will set up in Upper Caf for Friday. Have giftcards for Starbucks, Dunkin, to distribute. Need additional Pressed cards, will get those.

Lost and Found

Less lost items this year, as kids transition less, but there are a few. Parents can’t get in to check for items. There are a few items; could run pictures of these in the Update.

Musical update

Rae is exploring different ideas. Maybe a virtual songfest with 5th graders. Need to make sure rehearsal time works for kids who ride bus. Tentative plan for rehearsals on Wednesdays 1:30-3 via zoom/virtual. Has a producer - Alex Germain (sp?). Will use songbooks, won’t need license. Will share final video with community - ?free vs charge. Should have it available for people to view, but not download, for safety; if kids are in it, will allow their families to have a copy. Should there be charge to participate – maybe $25 this year – will have costumes, and some technical purchases. The team will generate budget. Rae’s last year, and need to work on recruitment. PTO leadership working with Rae on details. Will invite Rae to next meeting to share details.

CAS update

Lori shared updates from Kerry Prasad. Both K-2 and 3-5 will use storytellers. Kip Harris for K-2 including DLA, date TBD. 3-5 Charlotte Blake Allston, also coordinating with DLA from 4 other schools; will try to coordinate with UOD, for March 17. If this does not work, will change to Art of Chinese writing program. Also need to coordinate with UOD programming. UOD is coming up – is zoom/webinar. We have UOD for 3rd grade next week on 2/10, 5th grade on 5/7, 4th grade 5/12. For DLA, CAS may be home school connection. DLA concerned about being paired with kids from same feeder schools although it is good for kids to make new friends and connections.

Fundraisers

Exploring other ideas especially as annual fund down.   
Charleston Wrap sells a variety of gift items, with 40% profit margin, 30% if personalized. Shipped directly to homes. Could try to run a fundraiser before Mother’s Day or other holiday. Some schools do holiday giftwrap and fundraising. May sell magazine subscriptions. They seem to offer wide arrange of options. No minimums. Could try to run over 2 months. Have to decide if want virtual or semi-virtual option, with paper catalog, all purchases can be done online; will plan to have flier/catalog, as not everyone goes online. Email DLA and put catalogs in their March pickup. After discussion of whether this would work and be a good fit for our community, decided we can try it, especially as won’t have raffle this year.   
Rafi Nova masks fundraiser. Rafi nova mask offer – personalized with CS name – reviewed some markups of sample texts. Different color options, gray might be nice and neutral, with the CS cub pawprint logo. Need to place as one order, child and adult sizes. For parents/families/staff. Have to order ~250 masks. Would promote school spirit, is a local company, and offers high-quality masks. Will connect Adam Lipson and Joris to work on this – will have Adam organize, and update Joris.

MCF

Usually in April. MCF team is internally reviewing options. Will discuss this at next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23pm

Next meeting - Wednesday March 3