

PTO meeting

Wed 11/9/22, Countryside library (and on zoom)

Called to order 7:05pm

In attendance:

Melissa Monokroussos, Chelsea Boughan, Rakshaa Dadlani, Punam Sharma,

Zina Gomes, Kristen Lepri, Janet Jackson, Terra Hickle, Barbara Mauger, Carolyn Virgilio, Shion Walsh, Julie Winsett

Principal Update – Principal Herlihy

Planning an art and music showcase, organized by Mr. Maxwell & Ms. Woodhead. Picture of artwork from each child, either 2D or 3D artwork. Parents can sign their kids up for musical instrument, to play in background. Might hold on March 30? Will have parents sign up to help hang artwork. Will have display platforms in cafetorium, hallways.

School building: architects had 2nd visioning session today with teachers, getting feedback and input from teachers. Next meeting, CS building session tmr at CS. Tours at 6:30, and meeting at 7p. Hope to get word out and boost attendance, as there are many challenges given deterioration of the school physical space, and hope to inform community.

Plan to bring back School Council – this is a guidance committee, with members serving 2-3 year term, meet a few times a year. Guidance committee, to work on school improvement plan, such as professional improvement, building project. Will run more info in the Update and encourage people to apply for Council position.

Annual fund

Met goal, plus a few hundred extra dollars. Thanks to Adam Bernstein, Steve Lee, Lori Zinner and others who helped. Thank you notes will go out next week. Magnets to early donors will go out. People had questions about PTO budget. Annual Fund is our biggest fundraiser; goal is to raise 30k. Total PTO budget is 50k. CAS is 19k, and biggest part of budget goes to this; allows 3 experiences for kids and their classrooms, plus musical event, which is about 18 presentations total plus the concert series. Also cover staff appreciation events, Springfest, Halloween party, MCF, Parent Party, teacher minigrants, etc.

Directory update – Julie Winsett

Directory publication has been on hold pending class list receipt from NPS; finally received lists and are in process of entering into MTK; Julie Garan helping with this. Once this is finalized, will send to printer at NNHS. Will order printed copies for those who ordered, as well as for Ms. Wallace/staff, and extras.

The NPS interim-Superintendent is aware of the issues around sharing of class lists with PTOs; she will make sure language for parent-permissions next year is appropriate, so that NPS can share class list info with PTOs by early October.

CAS – Rakshaa Dadlani

CAS preview presentation next week, will be attended by others from committee to review the presentation. This is from an artist who is not yet part of the official catalog, to review their presentation, and see if appropriate to go in the resource guide for next year. Presentation will be for 4th grade.

Still scheduling a few experiences, awaiting MCAS dates for 4th-5th grade before finalizing. Other grades are almost complete.

Newton has CAS Director, who works with CAS chairs at each school. Brings in presentations based on academics, science, authors, etc; work in partnership with teachers. This year brought back science program; did not have last year given covid.

Teacher holiday gifts – Zina Liss-Gomez/Janet Jackson

Planning for holiday gifts for staff. Will collect for a general staff fund, with donations of \$145 per classroom, plus funds raised for teacher. For teacher, can give \$150 per year, usually \$75 now, and \$75 later. Have to follow NPS guidelines with monetary limits, and make sure we recognize our teachers appropriately. People suggested supplemental personal gifts, that are in keeping with guidelines; someone something personal like a joke book. Room parents will collect then venmo Janet the donations for the staff gifts.

Mystery Dinner – Barbara Mauger

Mystery Dinner is this weekend, on Nov 11. Have 8 host houses for dinner, as well as an app host. Also have a dessert host house, which will be announced at the event. Hoping for a few more couples to sign up, maybe 8 more people - 26 people signed up so far.

Pet Calendar

People can submit photos of their pets for the calendar. Will print a calendar, featuring various pet photos. Charge \$20 per calendar. Printed at NNHS. Kids enjoy seeing their pets in the calendar. Deadline will be Nov 20 to submit photos, send to printer in early Dec. Will invite teachers to submit too, and make sure the classrooms can get a calendar for their teacher.

ELL celebration

ELL holiday celebration is scheduled for Nov 17. Is a potluck. People bring meals they enjoy as a family, does not have to be traditional Thanksgiving food. Will be in cafeteria.

PTO holiday shopping – Chelsea

Plan a holiday shopping event at Learning Express in Newton Centre. The toy store reached out to organize this. Learning Express will set aside 3 shopping days, and any CS family that comes in gets 10% off, and PTO gets 10% donation. Will be Nov 14 – 16.

Holiday gift drive – Terra, Chelsea

Blast will go out this week. Will support CS families as well as 5 families in the community. Will have a signup genius. Will first collect gift cards to support Thanksgiving, so that families in need can have a nice TG dinner. Then in Nov-Dec, will add additional items, including gift cards, holiday support etc.

Escape room – Chelsea

Partnered with Puzzle Break in Newton. Booked for March 5. Will be 10pp. Will offer two time slots for older and younger families. Hybrid between escape room and scavenger hunt.

Halloween party – Barbara

Went well. Had great team, decorating crew, many volunteers. DJ Stacey did a great job. Made small profit, will put this towards purchasing some new decorations. Very well-attended and well-organized.

Costume swap – Melissa

First year doing this. Was put together on short notice, but went well. Have some costumes leftover. Will plan again for next year. Plan for doing a little later next year, closer to Halloween.

Pumpkin decorating contest – Barbara

Went well. Very cute decorations. Had a lot of submissions. Next year, might have gallery walk where teachers walk past the pumpkins, and have card to vote.

Action plan – gallery walk for next year.

Cleaning supply drive – Chelsea/Melissa

Put supply drive on an Amazon wishlist, to streamline. Debated whether there would be more response if did by teacher/class, although this way, able to include specialists, ELL, BT services etc. Next year could give deficits to room parents, to fill any gaps. Fulfilled a lot of items, but still need purell, dry erase markers. Need playground balls, jump rope – teachers have asked for this. Also hope to have shed to store equipment in.

Big Green Grant – Julie

A CS parent/Green Team leader wrote grant during covid for outdoor learning and funds to support supplies and supports for outdoor, nature learning. Grant was awarded for \$2000. Given equity, is with green team. Reviewed items to order, including outdoor seating cushions, garden supplies (shovels, gloves, watering cans), and storage shed. Will plan for a locked storage shed, with teachers having code, to store items. Discussed other potential items of interest – insect habitats, magnifying glasses, digging supplies. Might be nice to have trash cans for playground, to help with trash - ?anchor to fence. Need to be mindful of curriculum. Also discussed supporting outdoor classroom – logs to sit on; 25 stumps needed. Working on local landscapers, and could put on social media.

Minigrants – Chelsea

Nov 10 is deadline for teachers to submit. Will email teachers with awards next week. Getting a lot of last minute entries.

CS town hall

Tours at 630, mtg at 7. Mayor Fuller and Josh Morse will be there.

Picture retake day

Is on 11/15. Fifth grade will have retake of whole-class class picture. Four classes had teacher or many kids absent, so will re-take. Parents can send back their proofs and have individual retake.

One parent requested if picture day can be later in the year next year, once kids are acclimated.

Fifth grade experience

Bake sale went well.

Have some suggestions for next year. Lunch rush – could have had more pizza, could add mini-sandwiches. Coffee wasn't drunk. Might add hot cocoa in future. Usually, individual items sold better than whole items. Some people were looking for homemade goods. Items that were plated and in individual wrappings, not storebought, sold better. Said no nuts, some people baked things with nuts and labeled; if labeled, probably ok. Want to make it easy for people to contribute, ie not making people

package individually, although can tell people that the packaging matters. Ordered about 15 pizzas, might want to divide into smaller amounts, so it's not too much \$\$ for 1 person. Need a collection system for pizza donations. Or could spend some money to buy pizza and sell for a profit. Maybe drinks, like seltzer, water, soda, Gatorade, juice boxes. Might send signout out sooner.

Spiritwear

Can order off pto website. Will be delivered to your home, might have to pay shipping.

Next meeting – Wednesday, December 14

Adjourned 8:13pm.