

Burnley-Moran PTO Meeting

December 6, 2011

Minutes

Dr. LoCasale and PTO members discussed plans for helping families in need over the holidays. The school had 64 families in need, according to Dr. L. PTO outreach funds were dedicated to helping these families, and individual members also contributed money to go towards gift cards and other resources/gifts. Dr. L. updated members on the garden project – parent volunteer Geoff Morrell is moving forward on plans to create a garden and related curriculum for BME. Geoff hopes to form a Garden Committee to help him coordinate school-wide garden efforts. Dr. L let members know that the school would run a lock-down drill in mid-December.

The PTO co-chairs then discussed the PTO budget, following up on November PTO meeting discussion. Kristen Suokko reminded members that the PTO has a slight surplus and that PTO leadership was open to suggestions regarding how or if to spend the surplus, perhaps on the garden, outreach, or some kind of physical structure for the school. She emphasized that right now the amount raised by the PTO every year is less than the amount spent, so at some point the surplus will no longer exist.

A suggestion was made to eliminate the babysitting fee for child care provided during PTO meetings; the member making the suggestion said she might be able to find UVA students willing to provide care for free. Another suggestion was to eliminate Kid Pan Alley – for the money it really doesn't provide the kind of arts experience we might want to give BME students, was the rationale (more or less). We might consider another way to spend PTO money on the arts, was the suggestion. There was some discussion about creating a list of alternate arts activities that the PTO might support, and about perhaps making arts education and enrichment a topic for an upcoming PTO meeting.

Discussion turned to outreach spending and planning. Outreach spent \$\$ on holiday events at West Haven and Riverside (public housing facilities). Someone suggested that outreach efforts needed a better process – what are the needs, how are the needs met – perhaps it's planning and accountability, and/or ongoing assessment of how outreach is working, what it's doing. Perhaps more BME students could be involved in helping with Outreach.

Afterschool clubs were discussed. The desire for clubs exists, but the infrastructure for clubs needs work. A suggestion was made to form an afterschool club committee that could work with staff and parent volunteers, to make sure that all the details are clear and worked out before we start clubs. Spring semester might be dedicated to planning, and clubs might be ready to go in fall 2012. Dee Cogill and Mary Esselman Roberts discussed following up on this.

After a vote, the PTO budget was approved.

Kate Bennis spoke about the need for Fruit and Veggie Bar volunteers. There is an URGENT need for volunteers – the bar needs to be staffed by two people on T, W, and Th from 11:10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A suggestion was made that perhaps UVA students could volunteer to serve at the bar.

Cookie Dough Fundraiser details were discussed (picking up the dough that had been ordered). Topics for upcoming meetings were discussed; possible topics include arts education, and technology in schools. The suggestion was made to hold a meeting or two off-site (not at BME), to perhaps encourage bigger turnout by those who can't get to BME in the early evening. The March meeting may take place at Westhaven. Dr. L. wants to devote a meeting, perhaps in February, to explaining how she and staff go about placing students in their classes (homerooms, etc.). Another topic mentioned was "serving our immigrant community."

Kristen announced that she would be away from January through May. Stephanie Bolton will be taking Kristen's place as co-chair of the PTO. Kristen's efforts were noted and applauded, and appreciation was expressed to Stephanie for taking over for Kristen.

Thus ended the last PTO meeting for 2011.