

PTA General Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, September 6, 2011

The first general meeting for the 2010-2011 school year was held in the APR Room. A Welcome Coffee was held prior to the start of the business meeting. PTA President Wendy Kuhn called the meeting to order at 9:55am.

Wendy welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. She introduced Principal Rock Palmisano and new counselor Emily Klotzman.

Principal's Report

Mr. Palmisano announced that the school year started with 368 enrolled students, up from 308 students just two years ago. He noted that there are now 3 classrooms for Kindergarten and 3rd grade as well as 2nd grade. He also added that there is still available space (e.g. extra classroom on 3rd floor and the science lab) in the building for future growth. He commented that there were no involuntary transfers to CSES and he was able to increase staffing.

He thanked the group for the level of support that the PTA provides saying, "All that you do for the staff and students makes a difference and is appreciated."

Mr. Palmisano talked about Mrs. Wardell's resignation just a short time before the school year started. There were 30 applicants for the position and HR sent the top 5 candidates for interviews. He and other staff members interviewed the 5 candidates and conducted second round interviews with 3 of the candidates. Everyone agreed that Ms. Klotzman would be a good match.

Emily Klotzman told everyone that she was excited to be at CSES and was in the process of meeting all the students. She was hosting "lunch bunch" sessions with all students new to grades 1-5 that week. Classroom guidance will start Monday, September 12 and she is scheduled to be in each classroom twice a month.

Welcome Committee

Wendy thanked the members of the Welcome Committee (Michelle Murphy, Suzanne Crump, Flora Cross, Holly Hoscheit, and Betsy Megary) who organized the coffee held before the start of the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Wendy introduced new PTA Treasurer, Laura Gwyn, and asked everyone to review the budget for the new fiscal year. Some of the areas related to the budget that were discussed included:

- Reduction in money allocated to the principal's fund; the PTA is partnering with the Carderock Springs ES Educational Foundation to support teacher training and education. The PTA will pay for in school needs and the Foundation will pay for training outside of school. As part of this discussion, Wendy briefly highlighted the differences between the PTA and the Foundation and referred everyone to the website for the Foundation (<http://www.csesef.org>)
- Fundraising has been cut back this year vs. last year. Sally Foster will be the main program this year.
- Dues structure was changed this year. Membership dues have increased and now include a yearbook. Sara Bhatia commented that most families order at least one yearbook and this will make the yearbook ordering process much easier. Last Spring they ran out of yearbooks and yearbooks were still being delivered over the summer. If families don't want a yearbook, it was suggested that they could donate their copy to a staff member.
- Printing costs for the Carderock Chronicle are funded by the PTA. Money raised during Potomac Pizza Eat Out fundraisers pay for the Chronicle. We did consider going online, but feedback was that parents liked the paper copy.

Sara Love made a motion to approve budget. The budget was unanimously approved.

Committees

Community Service Committee

Wendy introduced Lynn deBettencourt, VP Community Service. She talked about the Martha's Table sandwich collection. This year, in addition to sandwiches, families can also donate fruit (eg apples, oranges), goldfish, granola bars if that is easier than making sandwiches. Student Council will run the collection again. A start date for the year hasn't been identified as we are part of a route with other schools. Lynn explained to new parents that we collect sandwiches (eg pb&j, ham & cheese) without condiments each Friday for Martha's Table, a local soup kitchen. Mr. Palmisano added that Ms. Klotzman would be the staff liaison to the committee and that Ms. Monica Ross would also join the committee.

Lynn also said that the kick-off even would be classroom readings of The Lemonade Ripple, a book written by a Carderock parent. Goal is to show that one random act of kindness grows others.

Lynn also talked about the Holiday gift program with A Wider Circle. Each grade adopts a family and fulfills their holiday wish list.

The Community Service Committee is looking for additional volunteers. Anyone interested should contact Lynn (lynn@prceducator.com)

Events

Back to School Night is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept 13 at 7pm. One change from last year is that there will be a 10 min transition time (vs 5 min last year) between opening remarks and classroom visits. Also, parents will no longer be rushing to sign up for Conferences as sign ups have moved online this year through VolunteerSpot.

Back to School Picnic will be held on Friday, September 16 from 5-7pm. There is no fee for entry. They will be selling pizza, sandwiches, and salads from Ledos and Italian ice from Rita's. Parents should bring their checkbook to Back to School night if they want to pre-order to minimize waiting times for their food. The rain date is September 23rd. New this year is that there will be an all school picture taken in the amphitheater at 5:30pm. Photo is for the yearbook. Students should wear spiritwear or school colors for the photo.

Fundraising

Wendy mentioned that the main fundraiser is the membership drive. Amy Moore is membership chair and you can pay by check or via a pay pal link on the PTA homepage (www.csespta.org).

Another easy way to support the school is the Giant Gift Card program. Jody Aucamp, co-chair of the Giant Gift Card program, highlighted how easy the program is – for every \$100 of gift cards purchased, the PTA gets \$5. And if you shop at Giant, you aren't buying anything that you wouldn't normally be buying.

Sally Foster is back this year and it is all being done online – no catalogs will be sent home. The school gets 50% of all sales. There is a link to the Sally Foster website on the homepage of PTA website. While this is a year round program, we are focusing on it in September. All purchases will be shipped directly to your house. Chocolates will not ship until November – so recommend separating out the chocolate order from the rest of your order so you don't hold up the shipment on your other items.

Programs

Cindy Share talked about after school activities. All registration forms or links to outside provider's online registrations are on the PTA website in the "Forms" section. Ceramics class is already closed. Most classes start September 15 and there are programs for every

grade. Additionally, Liz Burdick is working on an after school program for students in the autism program.

Sara Bhatia encouraged everyone to sign up for Carderocknet. She outlined that you need to go to the PTA website, fill in your email address and then click on a link to confirm. –

Wendy updated everyone on the cultural arts plan for Val Smith, chair of cultural arts. The tentative schedule is for a “Pop Quiz” assembly in October, “So this is Opera” at the end of November and then 3 other assemblies before the end of the school year. The Opera Lady will also serve as our artist in residence for this school year. There is a second artist in residence this year that is carried over from the 2010-11 school year. The PTA and CSES finally received approval for Kristina Valencia to coordinate an art project incorporating science studies from each grade and helping the students design tile for the cement risers in the front of the school. In January, there will be an assembly on making friends – how to make friends/anti-bullying, s. The speaker will come to PTA meeting in February as a parent education speaker. All parents are welcome to attend the student assemblies.

MCPS approved the mosaic project to decorate the ramp at the front of the school. Every student will decorate a tile. The project has a science them and will be lead by Kristina Valencia.

Ilene Miller touched on the parent education program for this year’s PTA meetings. Some of the ideas for topics are organization/time management tips for parents and healthy living.

Communications

The weekly newsletters are: the PTA newsletter sent on Wednesdays and Principal’s newsletter sent on Fridays. Both go out over Carderocknet. Theresa Goldsholle sends out community related announcements once a week as well.

VolunteerSpot

Karen Roman quickly outlined the main terms that you need to know:

- CarderockNet is the PTA yahoogroup which is the main WHOLE school communication tool,
- Carderock Corps is the name of the NEW parent volunteer program which includes any parent who helps in any way!
- Volunteerspot is the new volunteer management website.

Teachers and parents are in the process of getting trained on VolunteerSpot. Mr. Obstgarten is the staff liaison.

Miscellaneous Items Highlighted

Spiritwear – Can be purchased at BTS night/picnic and online. Same inventory/design as last year.

Grade Level Socials – a parent’s night out. Oct 6th is the date for the parents in the autism program. Other grades are still organizing.

Register Safeway/Giant cards – This money goes right to the school and is not reflected in the PTA budget.

Boxtops – Save and send into school. They are collected in the plastic container in the main office near sign in sheets.

Teacher Wish List (formerly Giving Tree) – now online in VolunteerSpot for parents who want to make donations of classroom supplies.

Yearbook – Please take pictures throughout the year, especially at class parties/events.

Directory – Send in updates if you haven’t already. Directories are distributed in early October

Kids Classifieds – Deadline is Sept 19th and form is on the PTA website.

Trash Free Lunches – Page Dekker is chair of the Green Committee. Ann Kisslinger passed out samples of green lunch containers and said she had small water bottles and sandwich wraps for sale.

National Walk to School day is Wed Oct 5th.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, Oct 4 at 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10am.