

Burns Park PTO – April Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 29, 2010

Meeting called to order by Lynda Norton, President, at 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Lynda Norton, Wendy Burke, Kathy Morhous, Jenny Freisthler, Courtney McCreadie, Kathy Cramer, Mike Cramer, Rachel Erdstein, Elizabeth DeRose

- I. Kathy Morhous, Principal, Update – SIT Plan
 - a. Today, there were Equity Team walk through's. They are having experts from a civic education group to get first impressions of things schools can do to be more inclusive. Burns Park is doing a good job, but need to build community.
 - b. Three goals in SIT: 1) writing, 2) reading, 3) math. It will be a couple of years before we can really measure, but we are doing things to help improve these three areas. Co-Writer is a computer program to help struggling writers. Read 180 and System 44 are programs that help 4th & 5th graders to assess reading levels. There is also a new emphasis on matching classroom instruction to outside support, such as parents, tutors, etc. For math, FAST math and Times Attack are two computer programs that help kids to memorize facts and know strategies for solving problems. K – 2 focus on strategies, and 3 -5 focus on helping strugglers
 - c. Besides these three goals, the SIT plan also includes enhancing the Community Circles. Currently, students meet in cross-grade level groups every Wednesday. In the future, they will meet three days per week in their classrooms, and once per week in cross-grade level groups...and there will be more emphasis on inclusiveness and celebrating cultural differences.
- II. Jenny Freisthler, Co-Treasurer – Budget Update
 - a. Overall, we are a little down on projected income, but there are still several big income earners that have not come in yet. We have helped to offset some deficits from Burns Park Bucks and Gift Wrap with increased income from the Movie Nights and T-shirt Sale.
- III. Lynda Norton, President – PTO By-Laws
 - a. Lynda put a note about proposed changes to the By Laws in the Burns Park Press. The main change is adding Fundraising Coordinator to the PTO Executive Committee, and taking out the role of SIT Liaison. Also, changing the name of Vice President to President Elect, and changing the wording of how often we hold PTO meetings. We will vote on the changes at the next meeting along with the slate of Executive Committee members.
- IV. Kathy Cramer, Co-Volunteer Coordinator – 2010-2011 Committee Chair Update:
 - a. 15 positions still need to be filled. Priorities are Burns Park Bucks, Burns Park Press Production, Hospitality and Teacher Appreciation, Lunchtime Choices, New Family, Readathon, and Friends of Music. We may not need to have a Food Drive Chair as we may change the way we do that committee. Also may not need Multicultural Chair as no one has come forward to propose any big ideas that they would like to do next year. Rachel Erdstein proposed possibly moving the food drive to the Spring, around the time of Ice Cream Social. We

could tie-in to the ICS and have Food Gatherers drop off and pick up collection boxes. Kathy explained about a fundraiser value card that could become part of the fundraising program that will replace Sally Foster gift wrap in the Fall...it has 10 stores that offer buyers a discount and would be a one-time purchase by parents. It was also mentioned that we could try to increase participation in BP Bucks by advertising what it pays for (field trips, classroom items, etc.) and saying that it would make a great end-of-year teacher gift.

V. Lynda Norton, School Garden Update

- a. We received a grant for \$1,000 from the AAPSEF, and we have raised almost \$1,000 from families. In addition, we have received donations from Lowe's and Downtown Home & Garden. Students are doing a lot...all grades will come out to plant. 2nd and 5th graders will harvest in the Spring before school gets out, and all other grades will harvest in the Fall. There will be a dedication during the Ice Cream Social, and 5th graders will give tours. For the summer, families will sign up to care for the garden for a week at a time. Beans, tomatoes and cucumbers will be harvested over the summer.

VI. Linda Matton, Ann Arbor Public Schools Enrichment Coordinator

- a. Linda spoke about her job and goals of bringing more enrichment in to the classrooms. She tries to help get more resources for teachers, and share ideas between schools. One great program is the Math Pentathlon, which has been done very successfully at Angell. Joan Singer at Angell developed the program, and starts teaching it in January then has a tournament in the Spring. The district bought enough games to use in a couple of schools. It could possibly be used during our Lunchtime Choices program in the Winter. There are also many ideas for field trips, many of which will come to our school, such as the Society of Women Engineers which taught 3rd graders at Bryant how to build paper towers and candy bridges. At Angell they have also been doing a sheep's eye dissection. For the Math Pentathlon, Linda could train parent volunteers in the Fall, and then parents could come in to the classrooms when it would be helpful for the teachers to play the game with students. There is a website that has ideas and is a great resource: <http://a2schools.org/ins.academics/elementary-enrichment> (scroll down to pdf file).

VII. Announcements:

- a. The Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast is May 6th at 8:20 a.m., with free child care provided.
- b. The next PTO meeting will be Thursday May 20, 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Elizabeth DeRose, Secretary