

Peirce School
Strive to shine: as a student, as a friend

PTO Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 1, 2014

1. Co-Presidents' Greeting – Cris Martin and Angela Snyder

a. Introductions.

The PTO board, teacher representative, committee chairs, and all other attendees were introduced.

b. Recap of last month and thank yous to...

- i. Patti Conti for running Town Day.
- ii. Krissie Delaney for organizing the Room Parents.
- iii. Emily Almas as Volunteer Coordinator.
- iv. The Enrichment Committee – Jocelyn Willett and Sherri Bulmer.
- v. Erin Whalen and the Hospitality Committee for Movie Night and the Kindergarten Parent Coffee.

2. Principal's Remarks – Karen Hartley

Thank you for coming. She will try to help everyone stick to the meeting agenda.

3. Special Guest – Lynda LaFratta, Community Relations Coordinator, Arlington Boys & Girls Club

The Boys & Girls Club wants to collaborate with the schools and hopes parents will realize all the resources they have at the club. What are other ways to share information about what the club has to offer?

In addition to their afterschool program, the Boys & Girls Club provides kids with activities during vacation weeks. Coaches and other staff are willing to help out as volunteers when needed. The club has a computer room, offers homework help, and a Saturday morning drop-in science program. On early release days, doors open at 1:00 and the pool opens at 2:00. The club also hosts special events, such as the upcoming Grade School Days, which will offer activities for specific grades. Child membership at the club is just \$25 for the entire year.

Lynda will leave fliers. More information can be found on the Boys & Girls Club website (<http://www.abgclub.org/>), or contact her directly:

Lynda LaFratta
(781) 648-1617 ext. 29
llafratta@abgclub.org

4. Committee Updates

a. Teacher Representative – Alicia Coletti

The Teacher Representative acts as the voice of the teachers. She brings the teachers' questions and requests to the PTO, and reports back about PTO activities.

The teachers are excited about the new Apple TVs – one at each grade level. Colleen Lloyd installed them on the iPad carts. Alicia recently used the Apple TV to present a read-aloud of

Click Clack Moo as part of a reading comprehension exercise for her class – something the kids enjoyed.

b. Fundraising – Molly Gillis

The Annual Fund Drive has already made \$3400 – half way to the yearly goal.

c. Community Outreach – Jessica Callaghan

Not much is going on with Community Outreach right now. Jessica is currently working on the fall Book Fair. The Book Fair opens the evening of October 17 in coordination with the Family Dance. It will also be open Monday through Thursday of the following week: one morning before school, one or two days after school, and during library classes. This year the fair occurs during the same week as Open House, so it will be open then too.

Jessica says it is hard to get the teachers to come down to the fair to pick out books for their classroom wish baskets, and asks Karen and Alicia to remind them to find time. Jessica has a SignUpGenius page for volunteers to help with set-up and take-down, and to help sell books during the dance, after school, during library classes, and at Open House. Parents are always welcome to come in during their child's library class, whether or not they've signed up to do so.

d. Hospitality – Erin Whalen

The Kindergarten Coffee was a success. Thanks to Cate Oranchak for organizing Movie Night. Cate says that Movie Night is outgrowing its space and suggests we consider some other options. Perhaps there could be a double feature, with one movie selected for the older kids and another for the younger kids – one of the two could be shown in the music room. Or we might try an outdoor movie. The gym is another option, however a screen would be needed – perhaps this is something the PTO could help out with. Also, the gym floor was just refinished, and Mr. Frank wants no food other than water and popcorn in the gym.

e. Enrichment – Jocelyn Willett and Sherri Bulmer

A list of programs already booked for 2014-2015 was distributed. The Enrichment Committee is still trying to establish what programs the teachers at different grade levels are looking for. They try to find programs that meet the teachers' needs and complement the curricula. Science topics seem to be especially in demand. The committee also tries to balance the number of programs provided for each of the different grades. Scheduling is surprisingly difficult. All-school programs in particular have become harder to fit in with the new Block Scheduling. Inevitably, some grade winds up missing a Special. Smaller, in-class workshops may be more effective.

The current enrichment budget is set at \$6000 for the year, however the PTO can vote to cover additional costs as necessary, or raise the amount earmarked for enrichment. Sharing the cost of programs with other schools is another option, though that may require the kids be bussed to another location, which takes up more time.

Bottle Rockets is still scheduled for Saturday, October 25, but the parents who originally volunteered are not available. The committee is looking for volunteers who can organize and run it with confidence.

f. Volunteer Coordinator – Emily Almas

Emily is looking into creating a single, master list of all Peirce volunteer opportunities that occur throughout the school year. Ideally, the master list would link to sign-up lists for each of the

individual events. This might help parents see everything that's going on at Peirce in the coming year and plan ahead which events they would like to volunteer for.

Emily has been comparing VolunteerSpot and SignUpGenius. It looks like SignUpGenius may not allow the creation on of such a master list, whereas VolunteerSpot does. But some of our events (the Book Fair and Spring Fair) already have very long and complicated sign-up lists formatted on SignUpGenius. Both sites allow potential volunteers to see who else has signed up and who they will be working with. VolunteerSpot allows you to sign up just using your email address, without a login.

The solution for now may be to leave the sign up lists for the big events on SignUpGenius, but set up the master list and the sign-ups for the smaller events on VolunteerSpot to see how it goes. Another option would be to put the master list on the website and use Google Forms.

5. Budget Update – Lori Pescatore, Treasurer

A copy of the budget was distributed. Lori notes that the listed ending balance was incorrect. Also, we are purchasing two iPads for Christina Perkoski, which is not shown in the budget yet. The highlights:

- The Annual Fund Drive has brought in over \$3400.
- Town Day grossed \$935. Patty still needs to submit her receipts.
- Miscellaneous Spending went over because we purchased new rugs for the kindergarten teachers.
- The Outside Groups category covers our donation to the Arlington Public School's Parent Forum program.
- We have \$24,000 in our Citizens Bank money market and \$9000 in our checking account.

6. New Business/Proposals.

a. APS Parent Forum requested donation.

b. Goal of increased teacher involvement.

Angela and Cris would like to get the teachers more involved, both with the PTO and the Peirce community.

i. Send teachers personal invitations to community events.
They might like to bring their own kids.

ii. Teacher silent auction.

This fundraiser fell through last time, but was successful in previous years. The second grade teachers, for example, took a few kids to Clay Dreams and out for ice cream. Karen offered "half day as principal." Weekend and evening events are hard for teachers who live out of town or have families. But Alicia says they would still be up for doing something like the auction every other year, as their one big fundraising effort as a group. (Individual teachers also volunteer at events such as the Spring Fair and Ice Cream Social.)

iii. Suggesting half-year or monthly terms on the PTO board for each teacher.

Alicia will ask about this. The next staff meeting is October 14.

c. Bake Sale on Election Day.

Lori will talk to Susan Goetcheus about it.

d. Lantern Walk.

A draft of the letter that will be sent to parents explaining the Lantern Walk was distributed, along with a tally of expenses for the event. Friday, November 7 was the only spot open on the fall calendar. We will meet at Peirce right at sunset, about 6 PM, but we will not have access to the school – so no bathrooms. We will walk with our lanterns as group to McClennen, around the dirt path, and then home. A very simple, doable, community-building event that encourages walking and costs very little. The Parks and Recreation Department is fine with it – we can fill out a picnic table request just to let them know officially that we’ll be there. Safety concerns: The police would get heads up (perhaps we could get them to volunteer), and there are cross walks and sidewalks all the way. We will need the room parents to distribute the bags with lantern-making directions and supplies. (Every child will get a kit, whether they decide to come on the walk or not.) Prior to sending the kits home, the room parents will distribute the letter explaining the event (and include a thank you and reminder for the Annual Fund).

e. Apple TV Training

Alicia reports that some of the teachers are uncomfortable with the new Apple TVs, and most of them could use some help troubleshooting. The PTO will look into getting them instruction. (There may be grant money for this as well.) Ultimately it would be nice to have an Apple TV for each classroom.

f. Peirce School Directory.

Susan Goetcheus is putting together the Peirce Directory this year. Instead of being bound, it will consist just of stapled sheets – this is cheaper and makes it easy to print more if necessary. It will only contain family contact information this year – everything else can be found on the Peirce website. Registration information will be sent out October 6. In order to be included, families must go to the website and either enter or update their information. (Only those who do not have internet access should use the paper form to enter or update their information.) Deadline for submission is October 17, and the directories will be distributed November 3. The Peirce Directory data base is separate from the information the school has.

g. PTO-sponsored Mini-Grants.

Upcoming Dates

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| Friday 10/17 | 6:30-8:30 PM | Family Dance and Book Fair kick-off |
| Friday 10/24 | 2:30-3:30 PM | Pumpkin Decorating |
| Saturday 10/25 | 2:00-4:00 PM | Bottle Rockets (at Summer Street Field) |
| Wednesday 11/5 | 6:30-8:00 PM | PTO Meeting |
| Friday 11/7 | 6:00 PM | Lantern Walk (meet on basketball court) |
| Saturday 11/15 | 10:00 AM-2:00 PM | Holiday Craft Fair |