**Downey PTO Meeting Minutes**  
**Date:** Monday Sept 23, 2024  
**Time:** 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm  
**Location:** Downey Library and Zoom

Attendees: Co-Presidents: Liz Polin, Amanda Fairbanks, Co-Treasurers: Elin Agoston, Bill Bruce, Secretary: Natasha Thoren, SEPAC Rep: Sam Sturma

Fai, Heidi Sullivan, Jen Anderson, JoAnna French, Julie Hunter, Kristine Campagna, Lauren Holly, Mary Beth Hubner, Minh F, Katie Callahan, Danielle McDonagh, Monique DeWan, Rebecca Long, Amanda Sarkis, Jessica Imbornone, Karla Garmendia, Caron Miller and Deb Gallagher

**1. Call to Order**

* **Time:** 7:40 pm
* **Led by:** Amanda Fairbanks
* Amanda welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. School Committee Update**

* **Time:** 7:45 pm
* **Presented by:** Joanna French
* **Key Points:**
  + School committee meetings schedule available on the website.
  + **District Taskforce:**
    - Focus on a vision for future Westwood graduates.
    - Formation of a task force to drive improvements for students.

**3. Principal and Teacher Update**

* **Time:** 7:50 pm
* **Presented by:** Caron Miller, Deb Gallagher
* **Fun Run:**
  + Kick Off happened
  + Awareness issues among younger students; needs increased engagement
  + **Updates:** More inclusive prizes, 5th graders to help explain the event to younger students, less money to Booster, and no stickers for race day.
* **Additional Updates:**
  + Caron thanked the PTO for welcome snacks, the back-to-school BBQ, and Curriculum Night.
  + Upcoming parent-teacher conferences scheduled for October 16 and October 30.
  + Caron will poll teachers regarding preferred meal options.

**4. Membership and Dues**

* **Time:** 7:55 pm
* **Led by:** Amanda Fairbanks and Liz Polin
* **Action Items:**
  + Encourage members to update information, include children’s details, and submit dues via the membership toolkit.
  + Tiered payment system this year. Dues for a **single child is $50 and $75 for two or more** students. Also included an option *Other* for donors that want to be more generous in their support for Downey initiatives.

**5. Budget Update**

* **Time:** 8:05 pm
* **Led By:** Bill Bruce and Elin Agoston
* **Key Points:**
  + Annual budget of $77,500 for the 2024-2025 school year.
  + Primary funding sources: Fun Run, dues, restaurant partnerships, corporate support, book fair, etc.
  + Adjusted 5th-grade budget due to class size changes.
  + Field trip support: one bus per grade.
  + Projected positive balance of $2,000-$4,000.
  + Introduction of new accounting software (QuickBooks).
* 501(c) Certificate available at the PTO office for reference.
* **Additional Notes:**
  + Transparency initiative on PTO expense categories.
  + Corporate matching opportunities – contact Elin for assistance.

**6. Upcoming Events**

* **Time:** 8:20 pm
* **Key Points:**
  + Fun Run: Details about inclusive prizes and updates for 2023-2024.
  + Inclusive Prize System: Wheel of names for swag box winners (upper and lower hallway divisions).
  + Fall Festival
  + Lynch Creek Holiday Sale – beginning of Nov
  + Past Events
    - Teachers Back to School BBQ
    - Welcome Back Picnic
    - Curriculum Night Dinner

**7. Volunteer Opportunities**

* **Time:** 8:32 pm
* **Event Chair Openings:**
  + Positions needed for Grant Writing, Fall Festival, Play, Multicultural Night, Holiday Fair, Mini Courses, Book Fair, Family Formal, Teacher Experience.
  + If we don’t get volunteers we will have to cut activities.
  + **Action Item:** Send out a blast email to recruit volunteers.

**8. SEPAC Update**

* **Time:** 8:39 pm
* **Presented by:** Sam Sturma
* **Updates:**
  + Upcoming SEPAC events listed on westwoodsepac.org.
  + October 18: Coffee meet & greet with special education heads at Neroli.
  + Virtual meeting with a speaker on the new IEP form.

**9. DEIB Update**

* **Time:** 8:45 pm
* **Key Points:**
  + Monthly parent liaison meeting to collaborate with teacher rep Kelly Fitzgerald.
  + Read Aloud Program: Educating children on disabilities.
  + October 24: Event on “waituntil8th and anxious generation.”

**10. Adjournment**

* **Next Meeting:** November 12 at 7:30 pm on Zoom.
* **Time:** 8:45 pm
* **Motion to Close:** Jessica Imbornone
* **Seconded by:** Natasha Thoren
* Meeting adjourned.