**Downey PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** May 5th 2025  
**Time:** 7:30 PM – 8:31 PM   
**Location:** Downey Library and Virtual  
**Executive Board Members present:** Amanda Fairbanks, Liz Polin, Elin Agoston, Sam Sturma, Bill Bruce and Natasha Thoren

**1. Welcome and Introductions (7:30 – 7:39 PM)**

The meeting began with introductions and a welcome to attendees.

**2. Principal's Update – Deb Gallagher (7:39 PM)**

* **Student Council** is working on creating a Downey school song.
* **Field Day** will be a half-day with snacks and an all-school movie following the activities.
* T-shirt colors are listed in the Downey Newsletter; check the website if you cannot find the email.
* Volunteers are needed — check **Sign Up Genius** to sign up.
* **Transition Day for 5th Graders** is May 9. Middle schoolers will visit Downey; 5th graders will visit the middle school in June.
* **K–4 Transition Day** is June 13. Each grade will meet next year’s teachers.
* **Back-to-School Open House** will take place the day before school starts.

**3. Teacher Update – Caron Miller & Kelly Fitzgerald (7:46 PM)**

* Families are reminded to **schedule Teacher Experiences** if they won.
* Next years’ experience may be **Kids Rule the School**.
* **Park Street Book Fair** was a great success:
  + More book-focused, less toy-oriented.
  + Suggestions for more non-fiction books for older boys.
  + Teachers appreciated students donating books from their wish lists.
  + PTO covered the cost of any unpurchased books from teacher wish lists.
* Teachers expressed appreciation for **conference dinners and breakfast** provided by the PTO.

**4. PTO Events – Liz Polin & Amanda Fairbanks (7:50pm)**

**Recent Event:**

* **Park Street Book Fair** – April 30 (Organized by D. DiMuzio and parent volunteers)

**Upcoming Events:**

* **Teacher Appreciation Week** – Includes spa day, breakfast, lunch, and ice cream bar (Cate Hawkins, Jen Anderson, Amanda Sarkis)
* **Downey Family Formal** – May 10 (J. Imbornone, H. Mosca, A. Minerva, J. Ostroff, C. McVay)
  + Volunteers needed for setup (3–5 PM) and cleanup (after 8 PM)
* **All-School Enrichment:**
  + **Bamidele Drummers** – May 21
  + **Grade 3 Colonial Trades Outreach** – May 27
* **Downey Field Day** – May 30
* **Multicultural Night** – June 11 (L. Dalton, G. Morrel, K. Mudarri, A. Sandoval-Focil)
  + Almost canceled but revived thanks to new volunteers
  + Flyer and Sign-Up Genius to come for country tables
* **Boxing Fundraiser and Caregiver Night Out** – May 8

**5. Budget Update – Elin Agoston & Bill Bruce (8:01 PM)**

* Expenditures to date include:
  + All unpurchased teacher wish list books
  + Three Downey flags for display
* Budget overview:
  + Membership dues are down
  + Fun Run performed slightly under expectations.
  + No direct sponsorships, but corporate matches offset losses.
  + Fewer mini courses created savings
  + Estimated $3,000 in surplus for next year.
* Reminder: Submit expenses for reimbursement as soon as possible
* Most events broke even, minimizing budget impact.
* Questions can be directed to the PTO email and will be answered by the Treasurers.

**6. Introduction of 2025–2026 PTO Executive Board (8:08 PM)**

* **Co-President:** Laurien Bean & ***one open seat***
* **VP of Fundraising & Events:** Amanda Sarkis
* **VP of Enrichment:** Liz Polin
* **VP of Communications & Social Media:** Rachel Dow
* **Treasurers:** Kate MacLean & Bill Bruce
* **Secretary:** Amanda Farren
* **SEPAC Liaison:** Amanda Fairbanks
* **DEIB Liaison:** Annie Hancock

**7. SEPAC Update – Sam Sturma (8:10 PM)**

* Next SEPAC Meeting: Wednesday, May 14
  + Location: Library on High Street and on Zoom
  + Time: 7:30–8:30 PM

**8. DEIB Update – Elin Agoston (8:12pm)**

* **Conversations with Caregivers Event** – Tuesday, May 13
  + **5:30–7:30 PM:** Screening of *Out of My Mind* with pizza and salad
  + **7:30–8:30 PM:** Group discussion on fostering inclusivity
  + Attendees can join just for the discussion if they’ve already seen the film.
  + Event is hosted by the School Engagement Committee

**9. School Committee Update – JoAnna French (8:17 PM)**

* **Upcoming Meetings and Topics:**
  + May 8: School Committee Meeting (WHS, 6:30 PM) – Includes Cell Phone Task Force
  + May 19: Town Meeting (WHS, check-in at 5:30 PM, meeting starts at 6 PM)
    - Includes vote to upgrade Sheehan's electrical panel.
  + May 27: Cell Phone Task Force Panel Discussion (TMS, 7:30 PM)
  + June 2–5 (tentative): Community forums on facilities
* **Master Facilities Study:**
  + Presented options, urgency scores, and cost evaluations.
  + No decisions yet; community input ongoing
* **Portrait of a Westwood Graduate & Strategic Planning:**
  + Plan is now in development with leadership including Deb Gallagher; Dori Parmelee and other parent volunteers.
* Contact JoAnna French via the School Committee website with questions.

**10. Thank Yous (8:25 PM)**

* Gratitude extended to all parent and caregiver volunteers.
* Special thanks to Elin, Sam, and Natasha for their work on the executive board
* Appreciation for **Girls on the Run** volunteers and if interested in volunteering for next year please reach out.
* A heartfelt thank-you to all **Downey teachers.**

**11. Adjournment (8:31 PM)**

* Motion to adjourn made by Natasha Thoren
* Seconded by Liz Polin
* Meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM