

Downey PTO Meeting



11.6.2018

7:30PM-9:00PM

Cafeteria - Downey School

Type of meeting	Downey October PTO Meeting, 7:30-8pm closed, board members only, 8pm-9pm open meeting.
Attendees	Beth Murphy, Paula Timofeev, Hillary Mosca, Anne McMurray, Nayla Daly, Patti Rockensies, Grace Li, Tammy McGowan, Liz Polin, Sandra Castaldani, Jenn Killilea, Sarah Young-Hong, Miriam Nasr, Ms. Gen, Amber Crowley, Deb Gallagher <i>Additional Open Meeting Attendees: None</i>

1. Welcome (Beth)

7:30pm-7:38pm	Discussion: Welcome
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- Brief welcome
- “October was busy”
- Bake Sale, Outdoor classroom – fun event! Halloween Event – went great, everyone talking about it, “felt different” in a great way, great idea to open up half hour early for children with special needs, 5th grade haunted house was great, kids were great, clean up was so fast! Allergy awareness was great too, people very appreciative.

Action Items:	Current committee heads to update past event information sheets for future committee members to use when planning next year’s events.
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2. Budget (Paula Timofeev)

7:38pm-7:45pm	Discussion: Review 2018-2019 budget items
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- As of 11/6/18, 132 families have paid dues, the number has gone up since last meeting, and some dues are slowly trickling in.
- Halloween party netted out at about \$1600, high numbers due in part to no bounce houses, and Monique being an “awesome” shopper
- Current apparel sales at about \$1790 – way better than usual.
- Bake sale brought in about \$800 including a \$250 donation from Wegmans.
- Outdoor classroom has cost about \$800 so far.
- Enrichment \$7200 been paid so far, budget is \$11,000. If we need more \$ for enrichment than the allotted \$11,000, board will have to vote to amend budget.
- Field trips quiet so far, only one has happened. Probably more money will be needed for buses in the spring.
- Total bank account balance at about \$50,000, we are well positioned for future expenses.
- Request from Mrs. Gallagher to purchase 20 books of Rescue and Jessica for the teachers – can be paid from teacher request budget, Question: how transparent does the treasurer need to be with the board?
- Request for funding for Rescue books was granted by the PTO.

Action Items:	Paula to continue to track expenses and amend the budget as needed over the 2018-2019 year.
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3. Open Items/ Recent Events (Grade level reps and committee heads)

7:45pm-7:50pm	Discussion: Current status of completed and upcoming events
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- Recent events discussed earlier under item 1. Welcome.
- Point made: Mr. D, the custodian, is retiring in December.
- Question: Does PTO want to do something or would that be overstepping?
- Point made: He is usually the one to help with PTO events, and clean up after us, we want to do something to say “thank you” and good luck.

Action Items:	Patti and Beth to brainstorm ideas to show appreciation and get back to the board
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4. School Play (Sarah Young-Hong and Paula Timofeev)

7:50-8:10pm

Discussion: Play Update

- We found a director!
- Retired school teacher, a lot of experience with drama with older kids
- Has worked in elementary education.
- Should be a really good fit.
- Waiting for Mrs. Gallagher's input, we have never hired anyone outside of the district for this position before.
- Teacher needs to be Cori checked through Westwood.
- Will Erin McManus still co-direct? Yes, she has still expressed interest.
- Point made by Principal Gallagher that the committee should go over practice schedule and dismissal times with Diane and new director to avoid confusion.
- New director wants rehearsals 2x a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a quality production.
- She would like to work with 1 cast twice a week, she can be here at dismissal, and kids can get started at 3:15.
- Proposed 3:15-5/5:15 rehearsal time block
- Space needs to be booked out for use for the play; we may not use the music room this year because the room is in use by a classroom teacher.
- Idea for dividers to be used for the space in the cafeteria since all students will be in there for practice.
- Question: should PTO buy the dividers, Answer: we wouldn't have a place to store it at Downey.
- Question: could we use back hallway? Unofficial answer: "yes."
- Play to take place potentially the 1st weekend in April (2 performances), rehearsal could start at the end of January with auditions at the beginning of January.
- Question: What is the plan for all kids in the play?
- Director wants to do a preregistration to determine the numbers.
- Point made: We are going to have double the kids at one time if we are not dividing into 2 casts.
- Director wants to have a parent meeting to review expectations for the production.
- Any other options for director? Answer: Not really. No one wanted to commit for a play with 2 casts 4 productions, up to 100 students
- Other option was the 2 week compressed program with Mrs. Starsiak
- We did have one other fabulous first choice but that person wasn't available to align their hours to fit the needs of our community.
- Question: Will there be flexibility with students who have conflicts with after school activities? Answer: this will have to be addressed at the parent informational meeting.
- Concern: Fear that older kids will have a challenge committing to 2x a week due to other after school activities and we will end up with a much younger cast, is the 2 week intensive better?
- Idea: Maybe stagger times of rehearsals to avoid conflicts?
- Idea: Maybe a survey, what grade is your child in? Would you prefer a 2 week intensive or a 2 month production?
- Does it have to be Tuesday/Thursday? Answer: Yes.

Action Items:

Play committee to move forward with Leslie, get her CORI, send out flyer to parents introducing Leslie and announcing the meet and greet, online survey to be written by the committee and sent out through the Downey school to gauge availability and interest in the Tuesday/Thursday 3:15-5:15 proposed play schedule.

5. PTO Email Address (Beth)

8:10pm-8:15pm

Discussion: New PTO Email Address

- A former member of the PTO created the email address we have been using previously and it is connected to her Gmail account.
- Beth reached out to Principal Gallagher, and we now have a new email account through the school system.
- New email address is now: DowneyPTO@westwood.ma.k12.us
- Paula stated that we have had similar challenges with PayPal account and Amazon Smile all in Julie Mulvey's name.
- Point made: Sign up genius also needs to be changed over.
- The Downey book program link needs to be changed to Amazon Smile
- Mrs. Cantarella is in charge of the book requests but is hoping for a liaison to be in charge of the link and making sure the book list is updated online.

Action Items: Paula to change over PayPal and Amazon Smile information so she can have access to it when needed. PTO board member to volunteer to help Mrs. Cantarella with managing the content on the Amazon Smile list. PTO representatives to provide the new DowneyPTO@westwood.ma.k12.us to the community so that people can better communicate with the board through email.

6. OPEN MEETING FOR DOWNEY COMMUNITY TO BEGIN AT 8PM Principal Gallagher Update

8:15pm-8:25pm

Discussion: Update

- Dismissal update- all the walkers changed to gym door for safety and security reasons.
- Safety concerns: kids are crossing the street while their parents are chatting.
- Community officers don't feel like the parking is unsafe, people don't want to park on Putting and Smith.
- District is pursuing a security audit, they will be looking at all parts of the building and offering feedback
- Question: will audit involve looking at windows in the school?
- Audit will involve interviews with principals, teacher forum, parent forum, checking nighttime access to the building, will make recommendations
- December is national inclusion month for schools: what are we doing? Don't want to put a spotlight on it; this is what we do here.
- We will be broadcasting a live webcast from the building on December 11, on the Rescue and Jessica book that promotes inclusion
- Filming live from Downey school. Small audience of about 18-20 kids. 3 kids from each k and 1st grade class. Other classrooms will log on and watch from their classrooms.
- Piloting a peer mentoring program, starting with 5th graders, peer mentors will give up recess once a week to reach out to certain kids in the building, a great leadership opportunity, hoping to roll out right after thanksgiving.
- Additional question brought up by board: Spirit shirts? Should we order more? Maybe order more smalls and extra smalls?
Answer: Aren't we trying to deplete the stock?

Action Items:	Principal Gallagher, staff, and parents to participate in schoolwide safety audit. Principal to share findings with the community. Students to participate in Rescue and Jessica live webcast broadcast from Downey. Peer mentoring program to begin after Thanksgiving break.
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7. Playground Equipment (Anne McMurray)

8:25pm-8:35pm	Discussion: Update on Playground
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- Playground equipment expected to arrive November 19th
- Needs to be scheduled for installation once all equipment has arrived.
- Will figure out a ceremony once we have a better idea about when equipment will be installed.
- Need to coordinate the recognition and dedication for Mrs. Rocha with the official build of the playground. Need to coordinate with her out of town family. Would like the students present during the ceremony so the family can see their excitement.
- Idea: Could broadcast the unveiling live if her family can't be there.
- Question: Is her husband aware that this might be happening? He is and he isn't.
- Jen Shea to coordinate with her husband, family.
- Need a plaque for dedication.
- Does the table have plaque insert? Can we order right through the company?
- Anne to check in with Nancy the playground representative about table and plaque insert.

Action Items:	Playground committee to schedule installation date once all equipment has arrived. Playground committee to work with Principal Gallagher and Mrs. Rocha's out of town family to choose a date for the dedication ceremony. Jen Shea to act as liaison between Mrs. Rocha's family and the school. Anne to check with Nancy about a plaque for the table.
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8. Pre-Holiday Shopping (Tammy McGowan)

8:35pm-8:37pm	Discussion: This event is coming up!
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- Anyone can come
- Pay at door
- There are raffles--Vendors offer prizes
- This year there will be more vendors than usual including: cabi, pampered chef, pure haven, Usborne books
- 48 "yeses" so far
- Event to take place Thursday November 15 at 7pm, vendor presentations to take place at 7:30

Action Items:	Tammy to host Holiday Shopping Party 11/15/18 at 7pm.
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9. Holiday Gift Fair (Tammy McGowan)

8:37pm -8:45pm	Discussion: Update
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- Tammy taking over from Julie Mulvey, Monique to help
- Starts at 5:30, same time as book fair, parents can stay in the book fair area.
- Opening up shopping early for kids who need it, concerns about 5th graders helping certain students, maybe having an adult staff member to help them.
- 5th grade holiday elves to help kids shop – should kids sign up for a slot, or should they just “show up”
- Agreed kids should sign up.
- Point made, there are more small children in the school, and they will need help.
- Tammy needs help with sign up genius, needs a lot of volunteers, Liz P. to help with sign up.
- Sign up genius settings to be changed.
- Point made: sign up genius not user friendly
- Question: Is there basketball in the gym during the book fair?
- Will have to figure out how to keep book fair books away from those in town basketball practice.
- No children in the building early except for those whose parents are working.

Action Items:	Tammy and Liz to send out sign up genius. PTO members and Downey community to volunteer to help with Holiday fair. 5 th graders to sign up to work designated time slots as elves.
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10. Scholastic Book Fair (Beth Murphy)

8:45pm-8:48pm	Discussion: Update
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- Will take place in school on December 3rd and 4th, teachers will bring kids down
- Will also be open the night of the 6th (the holiday fair) for parents to buy while they wait for their children
- Will be held in the gym, need long dividers to separate book fair from P.E. class

Action Items:	Volunteers to sign up to help work the book fair, dividers needed to separate the book fair from the rest of the gym, Principal Gallagher to inform the town of the book fair being in the gym to avoid conflict with town
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11. Enrichment (Tammy McGowan)

8:48pm-8:55pm	Discussion: Update
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- Whole school enrichment coming up from *Ill Style and Peace Productions Dance Troop* - December 21st, 2 shows k-2 and 3-5 \$1300 – this has a multicultural tie-in
- Potato Hill poetry is coming throughout the month of November for grades 3-5
- Discovery Museum – Weather came to K
- Discovery Museum – Changes of Matter came to GR5
- Museum of Science – Force and Magnetism came to GR3
- Museum of Science – Star Lab is coming to Grade 1
- Wampanoag Class Visit – Plimoth Plantation is coming to Grade 2
- Discovery Museum – Sound is coming to Grade 1
- Museum of Science – Engineering Bridges is coming to Grade 2
- Colonial Trades Historic – New England Programs is coming to Grade 3
- Discovery Museum - Amazing Animal Ambassadors is coming to Grade 1
- Discovery Museum – Laser & Lights is coming to Grade 4
- The following still need to be booked:
 - Discovery Museum or Museum of Science – Force & Motion - K
 - Weather Warrior – Grade 3
 - Museum of Science – Life Cycles – K
- Eversource free show (grades 3-5) was great!

Action Items:	Tammy to continue to book enrichment opportunities for the Downey community as they are found and requested by the teachers, Tammy to continue to research and bring forth more opportunities for enrichment. Any increase in enrichment budget to be discussed, voted on, and amended, as needed.
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12. Gala (Nayla Daly and Anne McMurray)

8:55pm-9:00pm	Discussion: Update
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- Signed agreement for Dedham Hilton for March 23rd at 6pm.
- Rock of ages themed.
- This year the goal is to be more casual/inclusive.
- We have sponsorship letters, looking for businesses or anybody who would like to be a part of it.
- Working on save the date design, Cramer is helping.
- Silent auction requests to be going out soon.
- Company sponsors will be listed in the 2019-2020 Downey directory.
- Communication and promotions to be going out through social media.
- Communication to be going out in November, GLR letters to go out then too.
- We are hoping for more title sponsorships, Needham Bank was wonderful last year.
- Dress code: People can wear jeans... but business casual...
- "Rock of Ages" not 80s themed, not dress up. "The Best of Downey"
- Information given: Medfield Gala, no silent auction, golden eggs for \$20, won either a 20 gift card to a local business or a scratch ticket, also sold light up rings for \$20, easy and fun

Action Items:	Nayla and Anne to work with Cramer on save the dates, committee to send them out to Downey community, Nayla, Anne, and Committee to work on finding more title and community sponsors. In addition to save the dates and word of mouth, gala to be promoted through social media and email.
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13. Hospitality Committee (Brenda Bruno)

9:00pm-9:01pm	Discussion: Update
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- Parent teacher conferences food all set
- Comella's is coming, as requested, for parent teacher conference night, Wednesday, November 14

Action Items:	Committee to meet and plan next hospitality event (teacher appreciation in the spring). Food from Comella's already ordered and set to arrive on the evening of November 14.
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14. Movie Night (Hillary Mosca)

9:01pm-9:05pm	Discussion: Update
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- We have the letter with action steps from last year
- Going to arrange for different packaging for popcorn distribution this year
- Free admission to include popcorn and 1 bottle water
- Idea for boxes for popcorn instead of bags
- Idea for "go box" and no charge for candy, last year we kept running out of change
- Each child can pick one box of candy to go with their popcorn and water
- *Current Movie suggestions: Hotel Transylvania 3, Peter Rabbit, Incredibles 2, and Small Foot*

Action Items:	Board to finalize movie list for students to vote on at December meeting, Downey students to vote on top pick for movie night, committee to check with showcase about popcorn donation in January, committee to purchase waters, candy, and other supplies.
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Other Business: My School Anywhere – online directory, used at other schools in westwood, summer mailing committee to look into this for next year.

PTO updates: Stay connected – Facebook, Downey Website Page

Next Meeting: December 4, 2018