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| http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/userfiles/images/DOWNEY_LOGO_ONLINE.pngDowne­­­y PTO Meeting | | | | |
| **9.11.2018** | | **7:00PM-9:00PM** | **Cafeteria - Downey School** |
| Type of meeting | Downey Beginning Year 2018-2019 PTO Meeting, 7-8pm closed, board members only, 8pm-9pm open meeting | | | |
| Attendees | Beth Murphy, Sudha Sarma, Nayla Daly, Anne McMurray, Paula Timofeev, Hillary Mosca, Liz Gauthier, Jenn Killilea, Brenda Bruno, Liz Mullen, Kerry Donlan, Monique DeWan, Tammy McGowan, Mariam Nasr, Patti Rockensies, Darcy Petres, Sandra Castaldini, Grace Li, Liz Polin, Genovefa Emmanouilidou, Amber Crowley, Principal Gallagher  ***Additional Open Meeting Attendees:*** Theresa Laham, Stephanie Abundo, Jessica Imbornone, Lori Casavant, Katie Callahan | | | |
| 1. Welcome and Board Introductions (Beth and Sudha) | | | | |
| 7:10pm-7:50pm | Discussion: Into to current 2018-2019 board members, message from co-presidents | | | |
| ***Welcome to PTO***   * Sudha: intentions in joining the PTO to be a part of creating a great environment for kids and staff, also wanted to meet people, * Beth: great events just don’t happen, wanted to help out * Individual introductions by name, children’s grade levels, and PTO position * Icebreaker – pull a question out of a hat * Message: “We are a better group for knowing each other better.”   ---------------  ***Beth and Sudha’s Vision for the PTO***   * Outlining of roles and responsibilities, house rules * Point made: There is a lot of responsibility in being an official group with tax filings. * Review of mission statement from Bylaws * Group was asked by Sudha to “Think Big, Broadly, and Boldly”: What are ways to support kids and staff, include multicultural events as we are a diverse community. How can we be more inclusive? The PTO is now thinking beyond the greater board, for 2018 we have added the new role of a special education rep, * The PTO welcomes new ideas.   -----------------  ***Roles and Responsibilities:***   * Grade Level Reps represent and communicate with their classroom, we have multiple reps per grade * executive board will draft emails and forward to GLRs to forward to their grade levels within 24-48 hours depending on the events * *Question:* do we build our own lists? * *Response:* waiting for ASPEN input from new parents, members of executive board will take a list from the teachers and populate first list for GLRs * Teachers will be contacted about about new students added to class lists * currently Principal Gallagher is sending out the emails to make sure that new families are included. * May also contact GLR about votes that happen “offline” * Looking for a different voting platform other than email * Point made: Topics may re-circle, history may already have dealt with certain issues, may have to “parking lot” or table certain issues if they have already been discussed as to use our meeting time efficiently. * Appeal to board members: Please voice frustrations and complaints to members of the executive board, we would like to come up with solutions “in-house.” * Committee heads are fully authorized to make decisions within the budget for their committees, questions to Deb should go through co-presidents for the time being * Still committee spots to be filled * Encouragement to reach out to Liz Pollen about special education concerns | | | | |
| Action Items: | Board members to volunteer to fill open committee slots, or to encourage members outside of PTO board to fill them, Grade level reps to send out emails to prepopulated lists as requested by the board. Board members are encouraged to think “Big, Broadly and Boldly.” | | |
| 1. Budget (Paula Timofeev) | | | | |
| 7:50pm-8:10pm | Discussion: Review of proposed 2018-2019 budget | | | |
| * 2018-2019 PTO budget was handed out to the board, will be available to view on the Downey PTO website * Gala has been the primary source of income * Committee chairs can spend up to the budgeted amount * Question: how many buses per grade for field trips? Answer: Per students not classes * PTO to cover buses for 2 trips per grade * Suggestion to use PTO money to subsidize bus money if they go over the proposed budget * Response: PTO should pay for all buses for all grades for 2 field trips, grades should be treated equally, we should use the money we have, we should manage cash flow, but since we have the funds we should use them * Questions about budget for Halloween party, is it $1000, and are we not including bounce houses? Answer: yes, $1000, and no, we are not including bounce houses. Question: does the $100 Involve 5 grade haunted house? No involvement with haunted house, budget to cover inside Halloween party. * Board was informed that our PTO insurance no longer includes liability insurance for treasurer, executive board voted to approve spending of $199 to add that insurance back in. * Over $1000 to send out PTO mailings, recommendation to send out mailings electronically, going to include all important information on Downey Website. * Question to increase line item for curriculum night babysitting, idea for a separate babysitting area for children with sensory issues and anxiety, proposal to increase $ to pay for 4 IAs * Motion to amend budget to include money to pay for 4 IAs up to $600 from $200, board voted yes on this amendment. * Board unanimously voted “yes” to approve 2018-2019 budget | | | | |
| Action Items: | Paula and the committees to follow approved 2018-2019 budget and request amended to budget as needed. | | | |
| 1. OPEN MEETING beginning 8PM for all Downey Community | | | | |
| 8:10pm-8:25pm | Discussion: Brief Welcome and Introduction, Principal’s Update | | | |
| * Brief introduction to the board, we welcome all feedback * “Thank-yous” to those who have joined us tonight * PowerPoint from Principal Gallagher: Principal’s Update * Smooth opening and beginning of year * 100 children attended summer school at Downey this past summer * Solarium makeover complete. * Carpets added to first grade classrooms. * Hooks for new classrooms added. * Request from Principal Gallagher: Follow Downey on Twitter @downeyschool * Class size chart shown. * Grade 3 both classes exceed guidelines at 23 students, part time IA assigned to the grade. * 280 total students currently enrolled at Downey. * Shared revisited class size guidelines * Guidelines: **Grades K-2:** *18-22 students*, **Grades 4-5:** *18-24 students*, shared plan for when a class size goes over the guidelines, not likely to add a section when over by 1 student * Group was informed that there is currently a co-taught 5th grade. * ***University station update:*** now a buffer zone between 3 schools (Downey, Deerfield, and Hanlon) as voted by school committee, 11 new elementary students moved into the Gables this summer, 1 ended up at Downey, others split between Hanlon and Deerfield | | | | |
| Action Items: | Principal to keep and eye on the class size situation and respond appropriately, Community to follow Downey school on Twitter | | | |
| 1. **Hospitality Committee Update (Brenda Bruno)**   Babysitters are taken care of $ | | | | |
| 8:25pm-8:27pm | Discussion: Teacher Breakfast and Welcome Back Coffee | | | |
| * Both events went great, committee all worked really hard to run events and get everything they needed * Deb stated committee events have been pretty impressive, committee has gone above and beyond | | | | |
| Action Items: Curriculum night dinner to be organized by committee | | | | |
| 6. Downey Directory and Cabinet (Sarah Young-Hong) | | | | |
| 8:27pm-8:30pm | Discussion: Update | | | |
| **Directory**   * Families can opt out, or just have their children’s names and/or phone numbers in the directory * Diane emailed all families who need to update their Aspen * Sarah to pull data later this week or early next week * Paula received 5-6 opt out forms * Sarah to send out lists to GLR to cross check names to see if she is missing anybody * People have until the 14th to send in “opt out” forms * Hoping Jeannine Salcedo will help with organization of directory before they are sent to print   **Cabinet**   * We have a new cabinet * Sarah came in over the summer and restocked and took inventory of cabinet * There is going to be a google doc updated with supplies to be checked before ordering new supplies for events * New cabinet is great, a bit smaller than the original | | | | |
| Action Items: | GLRs to cross check lists with Sarah, Sarah to pull family data from Aspen and to touch base with Jeannine about compiling data for the directory. Directories to be sent to printer and distributed to families who have paid dues. Sarah to create Google Doc with inventory list from cabinet, to be checked by board members before ordering supplies. | | | |
| 1. Picnic Update (Paula Timofeev and Darcy Petres) | | | | |
| 8:30pm-8:37pm | Discussion: Update | | | |
| * Picnic is on Friday Sept. 14th, 5:30-7 on the playground * Pre-ordering pizzas, $10/pizza by 10AM Friday or bring your own food * Weather looks good, rain date in place * Sign up genius still has gaps, please sign up if you have time * Idea to bring a sign in sheet for kindergarten and other families new to Downey to add email addresses | | | | |
| Action Items: | Setup for picnic to take place by volunteers beginning at 4:30pm, board members and community encouraged to sign up for open volunteer spots for picnic, Hillary to bring in a sign-up sheet for families new to Downey | | | |
| 1. Outdoor Classroom (Sudha Sarma) | | | | |
| 8:37pm-8:39pm | Discussion: Update –Project is underway | | | |
| * To be called an Outdoor Learning Center * Taken a while to get a plan together, met with a landscape architect today (9/11/18) * Location already squared off with fencing, near the tennis courts * First phase to create a naturally landscaped seating area to bring out class * Build event tentatively scheduled for October 6th | | | | |
| Action Items: | Sudha and committee to continue planning for the Outdoor Learning Center, Continue to reach out to Downey community for the build event. Committee to send out a sign up genius for volunteers to help. | | | |
| 1. **Playground Equipment (Sudha Sarma and Anne McMurray)** | | | | |
| 8:39pm-8:41pm | Discussion: Update on Playground | | | |
| * Have met with the person who put in structures to come up with what was missing and important pieces to add * Feedback: we need monkey bars and places to climb * There was an idea to have kids vote on it, but committee found it more important to get feedback from playground consultant, principal, and teachers * Proposal for playground equipment, table, and umbrella, going to school committee for approval Thursday 9/13/18 * Being viewed as a gift with a large sum of money, school committee has to approve * Hopefully equipment to be delivered and installed this fall 2018 | | | | |
| Action Items: | School committee to approve donation of equipment from Downey PTO, Committee to set a date with the company for (hopefully) a Fall 2018 installation of new monkey bars and climbing equipment, along with a new table and umbrella. | | | |
| 1. **Downey Gala (Nayla Daly and Anne McMurray)** | | | | |
| 8:41-8:45pm | Discussion: Brief Gala Update | | | |
| * changing the venue, want to create a more inviting atmosphere, still be elegant, less formal, more casual, * looking at a few venues, waiting on quotes and prices, looking at live bands and other forms of entertainment, * looking for a venue within minutes of our neighborhood, want to reinvent and shake it up, “keep it fun” * Looking at a theme: Rock of Ages, fun rock theme, late spring, March 23, 30 or early April * Purpose of Gala to raise funds to stop “nickel and diming” the parents * Will have more at the next meeting | | | | |
| Action Items: | Committee to continue looking at venues and for entertainment. Committee to pick a theme and a date. Committee to reach out to community for volunteers when needed. | | | |
| 1. **Halloween/Fall Festival (Monique DeWan)** | | | | |
| 8:45pm -8:48pm | Discussion: Update and Questions | | | |
| * Restatement: no jumpy houses * coming up with entertainment for the kids * have 7 volunteers already, open for more, * Question about having party outside, board discussed and agreed to keep it indoors for safety reasons * Want to have indoor trick or treating * Event is off and running | | | | |
| Action Items: | Monique and committee to continue planning the Halloween party which will held the Friday before Halloween 10/26/18 | | | |
| 1. **Bake Sale (Mariam Nasr)** | | | | |
| 8:48pm-8:52pm | Discussion: We are having a bake sale | | | |
| * General reminder to have “playbook” updated so that the next year’s committee head can have your notes * Idea to set up a sign up genius for shifts to work and also people who are baking * In the past we have had Turkey Dinner Raffle donated from Wegman’s and Roche brothers * Question: Is there a school-wide raffle permit? Response: Let’s look into it * Bake sale is a great way to include the public at large in Downey fundraising efforts * Idea to have a donation box on the table as well * Idea to have a combination bake sale/food drive for the community | | | | |
| Action Items: | Committee to set up a sign up genius for shifts to work and also people who are baking, Sudha to get Miriam a list of concerns for food that is acceptable to bring in | | | |
| 1. **Enrichment (Tammy McGowan)** | | | | |
| 8:52pm-9:00pm | Discussion: Update on 2018-2019 Enrichment ideas | | | |
| * Tammy to reach out to Principal Gallagher and teachers for ideas and feedback * There were a few school-wide and a few grade specific enrichment activities last year, including Discovery Museum * Tammy open to all ideas, happy to make the calls and do the research * Potato hill poetry already booked for the upper grades this year * Idea proposed for multicultural enrichment * storyteller was a great way to incorporate multicultural * Mrs. Goldman has great ideas for enrichment * Free theater enrichment troupe already booked, grades 3-5, do environmental themed plays * Idea: celebrating our differences, tied in with veterans day, disabled veterans come in and do activities with students in the gym * Idea for mental health and mindfulness enrichment, bullying speaker/comedian * Calming path to be potentially connected to outdoor classroom, would help with mindfulness and enrichment * Amber has done enrichment research, mindfulness is a good one, trying to get the weather warrior from ABC to come in, potato hill is still loved by 3-5 teachers, science coordinator and teachers all positive feedback * Gen requested more enrichment for weather and life cycles * Idea for Audubon society to come out. * Amber said woman, Kate Hooper, from Dorchester house can come out, applies to 2nd grade - 5th grade curriculum * At this point, everyone is happy with enrichment thus far | | | | |
| Action Items: | Tammy to continue to work with teachers, principal, and committee on developing and arranging enrichment for the Downey School, Downey Community to share enrichment ideas with Tammy | | | |
| 1. **Downey Play (Sarah Young Hong)** | | | | |
| 9:00pm-9:12pm | Discussion: Update on current status of 2019 play | | | |
| * Appeal for help: no official chair for the committee * Sarah, Paula, Patti, Kerry, Pam have emailed over 20 people who could be possible directors, all over Boston area, no one jumping on the opportunity yet, but a lot of people passing it along * Sarah has heard from 1 guy from Wheelock theater * Committee also reached out to Erin Mcmannus, she is interested in co-directing * Mrs. Starsiak is not available for a 3 month production, could do 2 week intensive, 1-5 grade, no kindergarten * 2 week intensive could accommodate about 40 students, could possibly do 2 different 2 week intensives * Best current option is Mrs.Starsiak * Principal Gallagher to put it out to staff as well, what is the stipend? Paula responded $3600 * Sarah would like decision finalized before the next meeting   Board members to reach out to people who might be able to help direct, and co-chair the board, can advertise committee at picnic, get in the district newsletter and hometown weekly? | | | | |
| Action Items: | Sarah and committee to find a directory by the next PTO meeting, Principal Gallagher to check with staff to see if there are more interested teachers | | | |
| **Other Business (from Downey community)** | | | | |
| Go see Charlie Appelstein tomorrow night (9.12.18), 7-9 at the Sheehan school. | | | | |
| **PTO updates: Stay connected – Facebook, Downey Website Page** | | | | |
| **Next Meeting: October 2, 2018** | | | | |