

Notes for 10/13/20 Exec and Beyond the Board Zoom Mtg

Present: Pam Schnatterly, Hongmei Xu, Alana Marino, Rebecca Wasynczuk, Kelly Welch Anderson, Colleen Ford, Sarah Herlihy, Jackie Keaveney, Karen McCaskill, Mary Mulkeen, Maya Plotkin, Alix Stuart , Stacey Theofilou

Co-chairs: Hongmei Xu and Pam Schnatterly

The co-chairs hosted the meeting and started with special thanks to all the committees for their diligent participation. Pam summarized the discussion and process regarding the lanyard initiative that was proposed in September. After consideration and feedback from students, parents, principals and teachers, it was determined that we would not go forward with the idea of providing lanyards for students to wear to identify them at the beginning of the school year.

Hongmei has gotten the AtoZconnect up and running for the school year so families can pay dues and have an online directory. As of October, we have 32% (198 out of 628 families) who have paid their PTO dues. We discussed ways of making the paying of dues easier for families. We discussed passing out a paper flyer at school with directions on how to pay dues online, but Thurston is trying to limit paper handouts. We discussed sending a flyer in the mail as an insert with other mailings from Thurston, and also sending an email including detailed instructions of how to pay dues using AtoZconnect. We discussed making a curriculum night announcement about dues paying. Rebecca will follow up with Matt/Mike about these ideas.

Secretary: Rebecca Wasynczuk

Notes from September board meeting are on the Thurston website, where they will be shared from each meeting. Each board member has access to completed board directory. A summary of the board initiatives will be featured in the principal's newsletter each month. In addition, we have included a request in the newsletter that parents pay PTO dues, and we continue to encourage 100% participation in paying dues as there will be few opportunities for fundraising this year.

Treasurer: Alana Marino

In a continuation of our discussion on dues, parents have been encouraged that they can pay the \$40 suggested amount, or any additional amount. Contributions raised from families paying above \$40 have added up to \$1700.

In a big effort, the Bylaws have been updated and posted online.

The current PTO bank balance stands at around \$43,000, with expenses so far this year including: \$55 in tax filings, \$500 for accountant to prep taxes, \$500 for METCO welcome bags, and a \$200 SEPAC donation.

Beyond the Board Updates:

Apparel Coordinator: In an email, **Liz Williamson** detailed her plan for an apparel sale from October 22- November 1 online using a dedicated URL. Items will be shipped to buyers; there will be no in-person pick up.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding advertising for this sale. We discussed the need for a social media presence to send messages to the Thurston community about upcoming events, programs, clubs, the use of AtoZconnect, and paying dues. Martha Jones has social media accounts run by a parent, and Pam will reach out to her to see if she is interested in helping to take this on for Thurston. Jackie Keaveney is also willing to work in tandem with a social media coordinator.

Community Enrichment Coordinator(s): Roula Bakis and Karen McCaskill

Karen is pursuing the formation of online clubs to help build community especially among new sixth graders and new students through shared interests. A time frame of January, February and March is expected. We discussed an idea that high school students could facilitate the club meetings, and also acknowledged that a parent/adult may also need to monitor them. The next steps are for Karen and Roula to write a plan that Pam and Hongmei can propose to Matt and Mike.

8th Grade Event/Semi Coordinators(s): Dawnmarie Shu and Julie Prendergast

In an email, Dawnmarie and Julie shared ideas they have for events that will work during COVID. They have assembled a team of volunteers and are running ideas past Mike and Matt.

METCO Coordinators(s): Alix Stuart and Stacey Theofilou

Ronisha Gordon, Mandy Taft-Pearman, Catherine Buttner

An enormous thank you to Stacey and Alix and crew for the work they have done in a short period of time to support the efforts of the METCO program with Lateefah and Reese. They have started meeting bi-weekly and added three additional parents (Ronisha, Mandy, Catherine) who have expressed interest in this committee. To start the year, The METCO coordinators presented 30 welcome cinch-sacks/backpacks to all METCO students and incoming new students to Thurston. The sacks contained a Westwood sticker and a welcome letter which included helpful community information. The Westwood Library also wanted to welcome the new students and did so with 30 of their own bags. PTO board members also reached out via email to new students. In the upcoming months, the committee has plans of forming welcome buddies (current parents for new parents, and current students for new students) with hopes that the future could include social events and game nights.

SEPAC Coordinator: Kelly Anderson

The SEPAC group provides support and hosts events for families of students with 504 plans and IEP plans. The next event is in November and is called "Strategies for Behavior Support during Remote Learning". SEPAC would also like to host a Zoom meet and greet and Kelly is looking for a parent who will cohost with her. We discussed ways of disseminating information to other parents who have students with needs, and decided that teachers in the learning center could email relevant parents which would keep their identities confidential.

Site Council Coordinators(s): Sarah Herlihy and Colleen Ford

Sarah and Colleen are ready for work and awaiting direction from Mike about what he needs from the site council.

Teacher Appreciation Week Coordinators(s): Jackie Keaveney and Mary Mulkeen

Although teacher appreciation week is held each year in January, we brainstormed ideas of ways we could also encourage our teachers in the nearer future. Possible ideas we could try including ideas we heard about from other schools are: providing lunch/sandwiches/special snacks, refreshing the faculty room, edible arrangements, inspirational bracelets, kcups, making signs of support and holding them outside when teachers arrive at school, and notes of appreciation from students.

Volunteer Coordinator(s): Alana and Rebecca

Through the course of the meeting we identified the following places we might need new volunteers: A designated person to manage social media, extra helpers for a near term teacher morale boost, a co-host for Kelly's Zoom meet and greet