

Devon Elementary School PTO Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2011

In attendance: Audrey Kese, Tricia Jennings, Tracey Sloan, Kelly Lee, Amy Susanin, Cathy Rains, Stephanie Thibault, Linda Murray, Lorann Wood, Tricia Petrane, Coleen Hillman, Chrissy Bennett, Sheila Czepiel, Sarah Keyes, Lori Piccone, Marla Mussman, Kelly Walker, Cindy Krapels, Myesha Kariuki, Dr. Tobin

Welcome

Audrey welcomed everyone to the meeting and passed around thank you notes for National Nutrition Day and the Teacher Appreciation Lunches.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The February PTO meeting minutes were approved. Tracey will submit to Katrina Wester for posting on devonpto.org

Faculty Update: Audrey Kese for Nicole Lohmeyer

- *Summer Camp:* Nicole is still working on the insurance necessary for camp. She will keep the PTO updated regarding this.

Principal's Report: Dr. Tobin

- Thanks to everyone who helped make the Teacher Appreciation lunches a big success.
- Thanks to the Speakers Bureau for a great job. The recent speakers were well received; Barb Bogle and Internet Safety.
- *School Security:* Please sign in and out at the front desk when visiting. Also, don't forget to wear your visitor sticker.
- *Changes to 2011-2012 School Year:* Dr. Tobin shared several items that will affect our school day starting next year. Some of them are as follows; the school day will begin 5 minutes earlier (8:45am), Applied Tech will no longer be offered in Elementary schools in T/E, (technology will be incorporated into the classrooms), and modified Kindergarten on 2 hr delay days will begin next year. On days with a 2 hr delay, the AM and PM Kindergarten will each go to school for 1hr 55min.

- *Blue Ribbon Celebration Update:* The celebration will be April 13th. It will be a full day of events for the kids, including assemblies, cupcakes, and a surprise visit from the Philly Phanatic. Also, t-shirts have been ordered for all students and staff.
- *Facilities Meeting:* This Friday, March 18th at noon, the meeting will discuss the redistricting topic. All are encouraged to attend.

President's Report: Audrey Kese

- *PTO Presidents' Meeting Update:* Lisa Lukens will be offering a seminar titled Social Networking, Technology Tools and Elementary Kids. The dates being considered are 4/11 or 4/26, 10 -11am. Audrey will let us know the date soon.
- *Newsblast Update:* The committee is in the process of reformatting the Dispatch. The last Dispatch of this year will be in the new format
- *Outdoor Science Room:* See minutes below from the last committee meeting. A motion was made to approve the additional \$5,000 and it was passed.
- *Blue Ribbon Celebration:* Cupcake requests will go out soon from HR parents. Also, Audrey asked the board if anyone was able to help with the decorating of the cafeteria. She will send an email to the board.

Outdoor Science Room Committee Minutes: Kelly Lee

March 15, 2011

Attending: Ruth Benning, Kelly Lee, Dr. Tobin, Dave Hyett, Melissa Minicozzi, DeVita Jones, Ashley Earle

Update on Boy Scouts: Colin and Andrew Weissman will be donating labor to the science garden as part of their eagle scout project. Both boys are students at Cat Pickering HS - Colin is a senior and Andrew is a junior. Colin will build raised beds and teepees for plants. Andrew will paint and seal the school house and bridge, place wood in the windows (to eventually be painted by Devon to reflect scenes) and make a door for the schoolhouse to enable it to be used as a shed, and will build a bench seating area. Their projects have been approved by their parents committee and we hope to have the painting/sealing of the structures and the beds installed by Earth day. Colin anticipates using Devon Cub Scout troops to help with the filling of the beds with earth.

How to progress from here:

Theme for Courtyard:

We spoke about a Theme for the courtyard area and did we want to proceed with that and ideas for that or if we wanted to move on to other areas/sites on campus for butterfly area, habitat, weather station etc. We decided that a theme and the work that will entail, should wait until next year. Suggested ideas were mosaic tiles for the fronts of the stone walls, a mural for the brick wall, scenes painted on the "windows" of the school house to reflect a view. We spoke of making the Chester County theme more obvious. Other ideas were to have views of Devon - ie students on a playground or scenes of what happens at Devon. We concluded with that perhaps Sarah Keyes would be a good replacement for either Kelly or Audrey as they roll off next year, and she could help artistically. Also, next year would be the rotation for Cultural Arts for Murals and this could be incorporated.

Bird/Butterfly Area

Ms. Jones suggested that perhaps we could move ahead with bird houses and butterfly houses because they could be done quickly. We agreed that we could site an area for butterfly bushes and plants that would attract butterflies and hummingbirds. Kelly mentioned that the Audubon Society was named as a resource for science gardens - Jenny Wetzel PTO president of New Eagle will provide information. Ruth and Kelly after the meeting surveyed the playground and suggested an area against the chain link fence along the hillside that falls down towards the lower level soccer/baseball field, below the newer set of swings. This site along the hillside is full sun, out of the way in an area that would not otherwise be used, safe from ball sports, yet still accessible to children on the playground. Additionally, it was far enough away from the play area that if teachers wanted to utilize the space during recess hours it would be removed from the center of play. We proposed to start small with a bed dug and planted by volunteers which could later be expanded. Bird houses and butterfly houses could be installed on the fence. Deer-resistant and drought resistant, native (where possible) plants would be used including perennials - Butterfly bush, coneflower, rubeckia, and annuals - pentas. These annuals could also be planted by the K students as part of earth day.

Dr. Tobin approved the spot and will ask Marshall of the district for permission to use the area.

Materials to be purchased:

We are going to begin purchasing materials for the garden with the \$2000.00 already allocated to this project by the PTO so that we may start. We will ask the PTO for additional funds for Scout materials.

Items to be purchased include:

<i>ITEM</i>	<i>Est Cost</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
Worm Farm begin	\$190	Spring focus on Worms will allow us to composting for courtyard area.
Round rotating barrel composter	\$200	Spring study of compost process
3 Red 7.5ft Aluminum Umbrellas Courtyard/Devon color	\$150	Provide shade for
3 Umbrella stands	\$60	Provide shade for Courtyard
30 Kneeling pads	TBD	Class supplies
30 Trowels	TBD	Class supplies
10 Plastic hand hoes	\$10	Class supplies
30 Clipboards	TBD	Class supplies
2 plastic watering cans	\$10	Water source
Hose wheel with 100ft	TBD	Water source

Action Steps:

- Ruth Benning to determine colors for Bridge and School House paint. Audrey Kese to assist.
- Dr. Tobin to talk to Marshall for permission for Butterfly bed.
- Kelly to purchase materials outlined above and to request additional funds for scout costs from PTO.
- Kelly to coordinate material purchases and identify volunteers that would assist to build butterfly bed.
- Teachers to coordinate with Ruth to determine what will be planted in raised beds.
- Teachers and Dr. Tobin to identify themes for next year and how to incorporate students and student art into area.
- Kelly to discuss with Sarah Keyes sitting on committee next year.

Vice President's Report: Tricia Jennings

- *PTO Board Positions:* Tricia announced the key positions that are open for next year; VP, Secretary, Treasurer and Directory (comes early in the school year). She will have HR Parents send an email soon.

Treasurer's Report: Cathy Rains

- *Camp Fair:* Earned \$14,157 (Budget \$12,000)
- *Ice Cream Social:* Cathy recently paid TESD Cafeteria \$220 for ice cream and sprinkles (never received original invoice).

Cultural Arts: Linda Murray and Lorann Wood

- *Chosen Dance:* Blue Ribbon Celebration
- *Step Africa:* Set for April, all school assembly

Fundraising: Amy Susanin

- *Friendraiser:* Follow up calls have been successful for donations. A lot of businesses are giving this year. Amy thanked Sheila for the electronic invite.

Social Functions: Coleen Hillman and Tricia Petrane

- *Pizza Bingo:* Good turnout, even with postponing
- *Barb Bogle:* Went well
- *Homa Tavanger:* Myesha spoke about Homa (author of Growing Up Global) speaking at Devon. It would be a lecture and book signing, with all proceeds going to Devon. Myesha requested another \$150 to book her. A motion was made to approve the additional \$150 and it was passed.

Issues, Affairs & Programs: Stephanie Thibault

- *Upcoming Committee Meetings:*
 1. BUILD: April 12th, 7pm, VFMS Audion, also April 12th
 2. Diversity: March 16th, 7pm, TE Admin offices, also May 4th
 3. InterSchool Council: April 13th, 7pm, TE Admin offices
 4. ARCH: March 16th, April 13th, and May 18th, 9 - 10:15am, TE Admin offices, also April 7th at Tredyffrin Library
- *Other Meetings of Interest:*

1. Facilities Meeting (to discuss redistricting): March 18th, noon, TE Admin offices
 2. Finance Committee Meeting: April 11th, 7:30pm, TE Admin Offices
- *TESD School Board Meeting Attendees:*

<i>March 21st</i>	<i>Linda Murray</i>
<i>April 25th</i>	<i>Amy Susanin</i>
<i>May 9th</i>	<i>Audrey Kese</i>
 - *National Nutrition Month:* Stephanie thanked Ruth Christner for all her work.

School Services: Lori Piccone

- Trying to fill open spots on her committees for next year.
- Several Board members attended the T/E School Board Facilities Meeting on 3/18/11 regarding redistricting. See the T/E website for the minutes.

February School Board Meeting Recap: Kelly Lee

- School Board recognized Flite Bookmark winners - Mary Claire Hanzche won from Devon.
- Legal Committee - upcoming state bills regarding:
 - 1) the pushback of Keystone Exams - thought TE was in good shape with recent curriculum moves to have kids prepared for when these are implemented.
 - 2) School Choice Vouchers -- would effect TE in year 3 of program if approved. Gives low income kids in poor performing districts choice, but in year 3 opens to low income in all districts.
 - 3) Ability for local districts to lay off teachers for budgetary reasons.
 - 4) These are all in either house or senate and have not been passed in a final form yet.
- Budget - See Finance committee notes for more detail. Current deficit after proposed tax exception is approx. \$4.8 million. Committee approved 12 items for budget cuts. Dr. Waters has asked for permission to explore custodial cuts as they need 120 lead time and also for implementing applied technology classes into core classroom.
- Policy - They made minor revisions to policies regarding principals and assistant principals. Biggest change is to policy regarding "Residents of the school district" - You must reside (not just own property or business) in the township in order to attend school. Will affect families moving into or out of district at beginning or end of school. Only exceptions are court order or if you are a CHS senior and have

attended soph and junior years and have another family within the township to reside with.

- Facilities - Discussed need for space for the maintenance department who are currently spread amongst the schools. Also, need to redistrict for Devon to avoid new capital spending during current budget. Had report about bond rating and need to keep it for financing new capital projects. Spoke about land available in township for future schools with 8 acre ESC site the preferred site. The district also owns 15 acres at Chesterbrook which if not used for a school, must be used for playing fields or park. Chesterbrook not as desirable a spot because of cul-de-sac location.

New Business: Marla Musman and Ann Keech (Devon Cultural Arts Endowment Fund)

- Marla and Ann gave the PTO some history about the Devon Cultural Arts Endowment Fund. The fund generates about \$2,500 in interest per year. Only the interest is used to fund events. The fund is at a point where they would like to increase the principal (currently \$58,000) to generate \$5,000 per year. The last time the principal was increase was 2002, when Devon PTO contributed \$2,000. There have been direct solicitations, but they haven't been successful. Audrey suggested a meeting of the Endowment Fund board (which includes the Devon PTO President, VP and Treasurer) meet to discuss ways to increase the principal. After this happens, she will report back to the PTO.
- Chrissy Bennett shared 3 main Cultural Arts changes that have occurred since 2005/2006:
 1. Language on the invitation for Friendraiser was changed to include other recipients of the proceeds, in addition to Cultural Arts.
 2. The program was looked at as a whole. It was decided that the program wasn't reaching the younger kids. The following year this was addressed.
 3. Devon's Cultural Arts Program has become a model for our district and others, such as Radnor.

Upcoming PTO Events:

March

14th - 25th ~ PSSA's

28th ~ Calendar Change, school now open

April

4th - 8th ~ PSSA's, 4th grade science

9th ~ Friendraiser

13th ~ Blue Ribbon Celebration

27th ~ PTO Meeting

27th ~ Handel's Spirit Day

28th ~ Handel's Spirit Day (rain date)