

Devon Elementary School PTO Meeting Minutes

November 11, 2009

In attendance: Linda Murray, Francie Rosato, Cathy Rains, Tricia Jennings, Audrey Kese, Dr. Tobin, Kelly Lee, Coleen Hillman, Merle Wells, Tracy King, Lori Piccone, Elaine Klinger (via phone)

Welcome/Introductions: Kelly Lee

- There will be no PTO meeting in December; look for email discussions about upcoming topics.
- We voted on and approved the October meeting minutes. Lori will forward to Mr. Axel to put on the website.

Principal's Update: Dr. Tobin

Health update:

- Dr. Tobin was happy to report that the flu and lice issues are better; there were only 10 students absent on November 11th. One month ago, we had 60 students absent.
- Devon previously had about 13 cases of lice, but is now down to just one. We are still advising students to put coats in their book bags and that girls pull their hair up, etc.

Board of Education Committee Meeting Update:

- There was a lot of discussion about FLES and if it has achieved its outcomes. T/E Superintendent, Dr. Waters, is recommending that FLES be eliminated next year. A vote will take place on November 23; the final decision will be made in January or February 2010.
- The Book Fair is going well.
- We are looking forward to parent/teacher conferences.
- Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

President's Report: Kelly Lee

Board of Education Committee Meeting Update: (See the "T/E Insight" newsletter for details.)

- Kelly attended the meeting and handed out slides. She noted that there were a lot of people at the meeting, but not a lot of comments.
- The newly approved Keystone Exams were also a hot topic. (Note that many school districts, including T/E, opposed these tests.) Students must pass these end-of-course tests in order to graduate from high school. Some of these tests can be taken in middle school. For example, if a student takes Algebra 1 in 8th grade, he/she can take the Algebra 1 Keystone Exam at the end of the course. These tests are controversial in that they count for 1/3 of the actual class grade. (i.e., if the student fails the Keystone Exam, he/she will most likely also fail the class and

have to repeat). However, once the student passes the Keystone Exam, he/she can take advanced courses in that subject.

- The 7th-and 8th grade will be “de-teaming” for scheduling purposes.
- The District is considering changing the high school schedule from an 8-block period to a 7-block period, which will result in more time per instructional period.
- The possible elimination of FLES garnered a lot of discussion. Kelly noted that there will be other opportunities for parents to comment. Right now the proposal is to eliminate FLES and replace it with other existing “specials.” For example, 1st graders will attend an additional music and science class each week; 2nd graders will attend an additional art and science class each week, etc.

PTO President’s Meeting:

- The district policy states that children’s last names cannot be posted on a public website.
- Kelly has already spoken to Kathy Meaney about not including any students’ last names in the “Devon Dispatch.”

Website status:

- The PTO approved the budget, and we are moving forward. Kelly is working with Katrina to get this up and running.
- New Eagle Elementary School is doing its first-ever sports equipment drive to benefit T & E Cares. Kelly passed around a flier with information.

Treasurer’s Report: Cathy Rains

- Assemblies are paid for.
- We made our donation to FLITE and the Dental Clinic.
- Camp Fair money is starting to come in.
- Cathy is still waiting to get the final word from Claire Kennedy about the Innisbrook sale.
- Some of the PTO’s gifts to the school are still outstanding.
- The PTO donated money toward indoor recess board games. Half the money has been spent; the cafeteria staff will survey the students to see which games are popular then use the rest of the money to purchase more games.
- The Fall Festival actually brought in \$600. This is supposed to be a break-even event.

Vice President’s Report: Audrey Kese

- We still need a Chairperson for the Spring Fair.
- Kathleen Weiss and Marla Musman have agreed to be next year’s co-Chairs for the Fall Festival.
- Tricia Jennings will be the Chairperson for Handel’s Spirit Day.
- Regina Mauro will be the Chairperson for the 4th-grade yearbook.
- Christine Kovan will be the Chairperson for the Book Fair next year.
- Audrey heard a parent concern that the PTO was spending too much on school gifts and not enough on community service. We will try to insert “Did You

Knows?" in the "Dispatch." For example, "Did you know that the PTO pays for assemblies, makes donations to FLITE, etc?" If anyone has a "Did You Know" for their area, please send it to Kathy Meaney.

Cultural Arts: Linda Murray

- Tony Vacca and the Bee Man presented great assemblies.
- Paper engineer/author David Carter visited Devon in November. Chrissy Bennet organized this event and there was no charge to the Cultural Arts budget.
- Coming up: Mother Goose (kindergarten) and a Day in the Life of a Soldier (4th grade).
- All grade assemblies will be finished by January. We have two all school assemblies and Arts Express Week for the remainder of 2010.
- January 13th will be the Writer's Workshop; Linda is still working out the details.
- Arts Express Week: The Conestoga High School Theater group will be coming in to help. (Side note: it would be nice to coordinate Arts Express Week with CHS's internships next year.)
- Next year's Arts Express Week theme will be "Circus," unless anyone has any other ideas. We usually stay on the cycle, but went off last year to do the Film unit because the opportunity came up.
- Kate McMullen is a possible visiting author for September 2010.

Fundraising: Elaine Klinger

- **Box Tops:** The box tops contest was a success. Suzanne Emerson did a great job organizing. The contest brought in \$200 more (2,000 box tops) than then we collected this time last year. The winners will be announced in the "Devon Dispatch" and on the flat screen in the lobby. Two 3rd grade classes and one 2nd grade class were the top three winners. Dr. Tobin will announce the \$5 gift card winners from each class.
- **Acme receipts:** We are looking for someone to take over this fundraiser. Several board members volunteered if Elaine isn't able to find someone.
- **Friendraiser:**
 - This year's Friendraiser will be held at the Carty home. We are happy to continue this Devon tradition of having the Friendraiser at a family's home—it helps keep costs down as well as creates a friendly, relaxed atmosphere.
 - Elaine, Jen Neely and Cindi Overton will be hosting a Friendraiser meeting (at Elaine's house) on Thurs. Nov. 19 at 7:00. They plan on creating committees for Friendraiser duties (auction items, decorating, etc.)
 - It has been difficult in the past to get auction items. If anyone has contacts who have event tickets, a vacation home, etc. that they are willing to donate that would be great. Kelly will make mention of this in the "Devon Dispatch."

Social Functions: Coleen Hillman

- ***MLK Day Service Project:***
 - Part 1: Tricia Jennings has organized a great MLK Day project benefiting Cradles to Crayons, which provides items for needy children in the Philadelphia area. We will have a drive to collect new socks and underwear, as well as new and gently used baby items. The drive will start the second week of December and run through MLK Day in January. A large collection bin will be in the lobby. More information will follow in the “Devon Dispatch.” After the holidays, Tricia will solicit volunteers to sort the items and put the baskets together (maybe the Cub Scouts or Brownies could do this as service projects).
 - Part 2: Cradles to Crayons also provides birthday presents and cards to underprivileged children. Per Dr. Tobin’s suggestion, in lieu of a craft during the Winter Parties, each class will design birthday cards or decorate brown wrapping paper. The craft parent for each class will be contacted with instructions.

School Services: Francie Rosato

- Picture retake day is Friday, November 13.
- ***Dental Clinic:*** Trish Connell suggested we start thinking about the Dental Clinic as a possible recipient for an end-of-year gift. There are several children who need a great deal of orthodontic work. The Dental Clinic is asking the school PTOs and the public for additional funds. Kelly suggested that we mention it in the “Devon Dispatch” along with instructions on how to make a charitable donation.

Upcoming PTO Events:

November

9th-12th Book Fair 8:30-4 p.m., extended hours Tues. and Wed. until 8 p.m.

13th Picture retake day

18th No school, conferences

19th-20th ½ day, no kindergarten, conferences

26th-27th Thanksgiving break

December

4th Mother Goose visits kindergarten

5th TE Township Winter Rec begins

10th Winter Concert

22nd Winter Parties

23rd-Jan 3rd Winter Break

January

18th MLK Day

20th PTO meeting

27th Camp Fair