

## Devon Elementary School PTO Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2009

**In attendance:** Kelly Lee, Evelyn Shreve, Dr. Tobin, Tim Donovan, Pattie Littlewood, Audrey Kese, Lori Piccone, Cathy Rains, Stephanie Thibault, Francie Rosato, Lorann Wood, Elaine Whiteman Klinger, Sheila Czepiel, Claire Kennedy, Brenda Hess, Coleen Hillman, Gina DeFlavia, Tricia Jennings, Jennifer Neely, Cindi Overton, Tracey King

**Welcome/Introductions facilitated by Kelly Lee**

**TESD Guest: Tim Donovan, Director of Educational Programs**

Tim visited the Devon PTO to discuss the 6-day schedule.

**History:** Last spring he visited the five elementary schools to talk about the 6-day schedule with students and staff. Although each school has autonomy, TESD wanted to standardize the 6-day schedule. Four main themes came out of the visits:

1. Morning recess needed to return.
2. Large instructional blocks of time were needed for language arts, math, science, etc.
3. Social Studies needed a dedicated time.
4. Flexcore (pull-out) time needed to improve.

**Current Status:** Tim is visiting the five elementary schools again to get feedback from parents. Devon PTO parents had the following feedback:

- Having the day number on the lunch calendar is great.
- The Flexcore schedule is good because students are not missing the same subject every time.
- How many fewer periods of “specials” are there in one year compared to a fixed schedule? *Answer:* Six
- Will the cycle be across the board (e.g., all classes have spelling tests on day 5, etc.)? Tim said “No, this is at each teacher’s discretion.”
- Parents seem to prefer extra curricular activities on same day every week (e.g., orchestra on Mondays).

**TESD Guest: Pattie Littlewood, volunteer coordinator for TESD**

Thanks for everything you do!

**Review and Approval of September Minutes**

The minutes were approved and Lori Piccone will forward to Mr. Axel to put on the website.

### **Principal's Report: Dr. Tom Tobin**

*Health:* Many students have cold, fever, and flu-like symptoms. The absentee rate has tripled. We are taking precautions with extra cleaning in the school. We ask that parents keep their children home if they are sick.

- Lorann Wood suggested that we turn off the water fountains during the flu season.
- Coleen Hillman asked if there have been any H1N1 reports. Dr. Tobin said that the absentee answering service asks for flu or flu-like symptoms. There *are* students sick with the flu.
- Dr. Tobin said that TESD has no plans to take over vaccinations or testing at this time.
- Tim Donovan added that TESD has had conversations with the CDC who said that people should talk with their doctors about the vaccine.

*Head Lice:* Lice have hit kindergarten and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at a much higher rate than usual. We ask children to keep jackets in book bags and that girls tie their hair back. When a child (or a sibling) has lice, the nurse checks the entire class. We clean the nurse's office several times a day. Dr. Tobin will be sending a school-wide letter home this week with more information about lice prevention.

- Kelly Lee noted that the school nurse notifies all scout leaders about lice and that we should all mention it to sports coaches, dance teachers, etc.
- Elaine Whiteman Klinger noted that the nurse needs another magnifying glass—we should keep this in mind when discussing school gifts at the end of the year.
- Stephanie Thibault asked why the entire school isn't notified during a lice breakout. Dr. Tobin said we usually just inform those most affected by it.

*Crossing Guard:* A parent inquired about the police officer at the corner of Sugartown and Fairfield Rds. Dr. Tobin said that this is temporary until TESD hires a crossing guard.

### **President's Report: Kelly Lee**

- Kelly passed around thank you notes.
- *PTO President's Meeting:* The PTO presidents meet once a month. Sandi Gorman from T & E CARES (a social outreach group that supports lower-income families) spoke about trying to better coordinate care between them and the churches, etc. Go to [www.tecare.org](http://www.tecare.org) for more information.
  - Dr. Waters, TESD Superintendent, spoke about Goal One, which is a series of goals established by the district. These include:
    1. The possible elimination of FLES (Pattie Littlewood handed out a white paper on this topic). This is TBD. The Devon PTO's job is to inform parents, NOT to take a stand on this matter.
    2. Middle school tests, specifically graduation competency testing.
    3. Technology.

Kelly was very impressed with Dr. Waters and that he seems to be a proponent for change. There will be articles about Goal One in upcoming issues of the Devon

Dispatch. Tim Donovan said that you can hear Dr. Waters talk about Goal One on the TESD website or on TE TV.

- *PTO Website:* We voted and approved the purchase of a website for the Devon PTO. The 2-year contract will cost \$125. Devon parent Katrina Wester has offered to be the webmaster. She is currently building the site and will await approval from Dr. Tobin.
- *Parent Speaker Night:* This is a chance to get parents together socially in the school setting. We agreed to have former Devon Counselor Barb Bogle give the first seminar in February. She has offered to do the seminar at no cost. We need to drum up some more speakers, such as nutritionists, authors, etc. Dr. Tobin suggested a seminar on technology safety.

### **Issues, Affairs & Programs: Stephanie Thibault**

- *School clubs:* Enrollment is good.
- *Mileage Club:* Under way and will wrap up next week. Francie Rosato reported that she is giving the students chains for their toe tokens—they seem to be a hit. Kelly Lee said that Nicole Lohmeyer and Tami Noel would love to see some organized activity (similar to Mileage Club) over the winter, perhaps on the blacktop.
- *Red Ribbon Week:* This is a low-key drug awareness campaign that, unfortunately, runs at the same time as UNICEF. Pattie Littlewood added that ARCH will meet on Nov. 4 at 7 p.m. Tredyffrin Library.
- *Beautification:* Suzanne Emerson did a great job with plantings around the sign in front of the school.

### **Treasurer's Report: Cathy Rains (see report for details)**

Cathy said that her emails sometimes get kicked back, so if a matter is urgent, please call her. She handed out her monthly report and noted the following successful fundraisers:

- *Innisbrook* (Claire Kennedy) raised approximately \$6,000; Devon will receive half of that. Claire is looking into whether or not parents can continue to order online throughout the year.
- *Directories* (Linda Barber) made a profit of \$570. Kelly said that any directory typos should be emailed to her or Linda Barber.
- *FLITE:* The PTO will not provide snacks for FLITE, but rather make a donation to FLITE in the amount that we had budgeted for snacks.

### **Vice President's Report: Audrey Kese**

Please let Audrey know if you want to advertise any event on the sign in front of the school.

### **Cultural Arts: Lorann Wood and Linda Murray**

- *Assemblies:*

- 1<sup>st</sup> grade assembly with the Weather Guy from the Franklin Institute was great. We will definitely have him again.
  - Tony Vacca (percussionist) is coming on Tues. Oct. 27.
  - The Bee Man is scheduled for a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade assembly on Nov. 5. We will request parent volunteers.
  - Pop-up book author/artist David Carter will be coming on Nov. 11.
- *Arts Express Week*: Sheila Czepiel reported that she is working with the Walnut Street Theater for this year's Arts Express Week. The WST folks are great to work with and have a great program all ready to go. The schedule is currently being reviewed.

### **Social Functions: Brenda Hess and Coleen Hillman**

- *Fall Festival*: We have lots of volunteers. Barb Weigand and Liz Ward will not be doing it next year, so we need to find successors. Audrey Kese suggested that we solicit volunteers by painting the festival in a very positive light.
- *Winter Party*: Coleen presented the idea of a pajama/movie party, but after much discussion the group decided that no winter party was necessary.
  - Jen Neely suggested we bring the students together to do something philanthropic. The group decided that Tricia Jennings' MLK day project (see below) would be a good fit.
- *MLK Day*: Tricia Jennings is working with Cradles to Crayons, which will entail a drive for newborn baskets as well as new socks and underwear for older children. It is still in the planning stages.

### **Fundraising: Elaine Whiteman Klinger**

- *Box Top Contest*: Suzanne Emerson is doing a great job organizing the contest, which ends on Oct. 29. The kids seem to be into it. Each class will have a drawing for \$5 gift cards.
- *Acme Receipts*: We should consider placing an ad in the Devon Dispatch to encourage this no-cost fundraiser. We have until December 31 to reach our yearly maximum of \$5,000.
- *Friendraiser*: Jen Neely and Cindi Overton have a few ideas in the works.
- *Handel's Spirit Day*: Tricia Jennings offered to chair this on April 28. It entails making and distributing a flier and scheduling the teachers to scoop in shifts. Nicole Lohmeyer has already volunteered to scoop all day!
- *Spring Fair*: We are still looking for a Chairperson.

### **School Services: Francie Rosato**

- *Directory*: Thanks to Linda Barber and Laura Hutton.
- *Creative Kids*: Thanks to Liz Thompson. The orders are being processed.
- *Spirit Wear*: This is close to wrapping up.

## **Upcoming PTO Events**

### October

23<sup>rd</sup> 6:00 p.m. Fall Festival

24<sup>th</sup> 9:05 and 10:15 Tony Vacca World Rhythms—also performing Nov. 13 at  
7:30 p.m. at VFMS, tickets available via DELTA

30<sup>th</sup> 2:15 p.m. Halloween Parade and Parties

### November

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

11<sup>th</sup> 7 p.m. PTO meeting