

The Dover PTO Executive Board Meeting Minutes Friday, October 16, 2009

Attendees: Betsy Ryan, Anne Nolen, Jennifer Friesen, Pam LoDato, Judy Schulz, Georgia Dakoyannis, Suzanne Nystrom, Carolyn Ringel, Michele Mandel, and Vicki Hadar

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Ryan at 9:15 am. Ms. LoDato presented the minutes for the September 18, 2009 Executive Board meeting and asked for any final revisions. Given there were no changes, it was moved that the minutes be accepted.

VOTE:

To approve the September 18, 2009 Dover PTO Executive Board meeting minutes.

The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously by the board.

President's Report

Ms. Betsy Ryan opened her remarks with a thanks to all of the PTO members that helped the Chickering community over the past 2 weeks. The sudden loss of Michelle Worthy was an incredible experience. The school used its crisis protocol and had grief counselors and local clergy on hand to help members of the Chickering community.

The PTO stepped up to provide food and help to the teachers and administrators. Ms. Ryan has received many thank-you notes and a beautiful poster with an original piece of art thanking the PTO. Ms. Ryan suggested that this art be reproduced and sold as a tribute to Michelle and a fundraiser for her children's college fund. Ideas included art reprints and notecards. The High School PTO has also asked how they can help. These same items could be sold thru the high school. There was also some discussion of the high school doing a bake sale but it was concluded that there was fairly limited fundraising potential usually in these projects.

Members of the PTO were involved in setting up the Worthy Children's Education Fund at Rockland Bank. Ms. Ryan has also been in contact with the Worthy family to see what else can be done to help. Michelle's mother indicated the PTO may be able to help with thank-you letters. There has been discussion of renovating a book room at the school and dedicating it to Michelle Worth's memory. Mr. Downing is letting some time past before decisions are made based on the advice of the grief counselors.

The Chickering Book Fair will occur on December 1-3rd. The book company will set things up on Monday, November 30th. There will be evening sales on December 3rd which is a parent conference night. The Chickering PTO will receive 20% of the revenues. One suggestion was that the PTO could dedicate some of the book fair proceeds to the Worthy Children's Education Fund. While the board was very supportive of the idea of doing more for the Worthy family, there was concern of mixing the two fundraising missions as well as setting precedents. The consensus was to

develop fundraising items that were clearly marked for the Worthy family. Members of the Chickering Community could choose how much they wanted to give to each cause.

In follow up to the board's discussion on Dover Days from the last meeting, Ms. Ryan sent a letter to Dover Park & Rec with the PTO concerns.

The emergency tree was activated about the change in the bus schedule. The school wanted to be sure there would be no safety issues with kids missing buses due to the time changes. Given that it was September, not all class emergency information had been finalized. There was also the additional issue of families with multiple children getting many calls and e-mails. It was recommended that there be changes in the protocols so only one call goes to each family. This is similar to what is done with the backpack distributions going to the youngest person in each family. It was suggested that the oldest child's classroom parents be responsible for any emergency phone calls.

At the Tuesday, October 20th school committee meeting, Mr. Downing will present an analysis of the latest MCAS scores for Chickering. Anyone interested was encouraged to attend. Often these meetings only involve parents unsatisfied with the school while the majority of satisfied parents do not attend. The school committee members have also heard many complaints from parents on the bus time issues and the cancelation of school for Ms. Worthy's funereal.

Dads & Doughnuts is scheduled for November 20th. Despite suggestions to change the program, it will continue as is. There will be healthier choices to eat and limitations on the number of doughnut holes the kids can grab. The PTO will see about getting a discount for the food from Dunkin Doughnuts. Judy Schulz will submit information to the local papers as last year this event got front page coverage.

Vice President's Report

Ms. Anne Nolen reported that the Hospitality Committee will start up its monthly teacher appreciation lunches the first early release day in November. The PTO grant process will begin next week. Grant decisions will be made in December. It was asked if Janelle Madden in Food Services could put in a grant for the nutritionist to come give advice on the school lunch program and other healthy eating initiatives. The Nutrition Committee saw a need as the Chickering kitchen has no dishwasher and only a 4 burner stove so options are quite limited. All sorts of snacks, ice cream and drinks are sold with the profits subsidizing the \$2 lunches. Another suggestion was that a grant could be submitted for the Michelle Worthy reading room.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Jennifer Friesen handed out an updated PTO financial report with the YTD and the full school year PTO budget. It is still very early in the year. Fall fundraising revenues are showing good results. Rebecca Kovrlija has reported that sales for Chickering apparel has picked up significantly. So far \$3,000 of items have been sold, including many items already in inventory. The Directory will have a profit of around \$6,300,

boosted by the \$2,900 in ad revenues. Some of the Easy Money is also beginning to roll into the coffers.

There are no unusual expenses to report. The PTO finally received its webmaster bill and it was only \$850. The webmaster was paid \$1,000 for a job well done. There is still \$500 to be spent on website improvements this year. The checks are coming in for the Birthday Book Club but Mrs. Chase is still determining a way to handle the checks. In prior years the PTO handled the money.

Directory/Excuse Pad Committee Report

Ms. Pam LoDato reported that the directory and excuse pads have been printed and distributed. Order numbers were a bit down from last year but the project was profitable due to the increased ads that were sold. Ms. Ryan thought the directory next year could be printed from the PTO's existing Excel database as is done in the Middle School. The database could generate a preprinted sheet that returning parents could approve during the first week of school. The form could also include parental approval for release of emergency contact information to the room parents.

Communications Report

Ms. Judy Schulz shared that October 30th is the deadlines for the November 6th PTO newsletter. Ms. Schulz also reported that the nutrition speaker received front page coverage in the local paper. She has continued to send pictures and information on other Chickering events like the Power of One. It is hard to predict what the local papers will choose to include in any edition.

Fundraising Report

Ms. Georgia Dakoyannis reported that the Innisbrook Gift Wrap sales are about half way done. Information went out to the Chickering community on September 25th. Only 13% of the community has participated. The deadline for sales will likely be extended. There have been issues with making purchases online. Some board members suggested that there were parents who would prefer to write checks directly for the school although there will be no year end check writing campaign this year.

In October the Easy Monday campaigns will start-up including the Box Tops and the expanded grocery shopping cards. Other shopping options are being investigated.

The Auction Committee had its first meeting which went very well. The focus right now is on the acquisition of auction items. Ms. Dakoyannis and Ms. Nystrom will be organizing the national solicitations. The committee is looking for any connections that board members may have for auction items. There is still a need for town and shopping center solicitors. Vicki Hadar volunteered to do Needham and Judy Schulz volunteered to do Dover businesses. The plan is to collect solicitations in January so items can be posted for online auction by the middle of March. The committee is trying hard to keep solicitations to businesses to a single ask.

Volunteer Services

Ms. Carolyn Ringel reported that the committee is finishing up the final follow-up with volunteers. Committee chairs should contact her if they have additional needs during the year. Areas that may need additional help as the year goes on are Hospitality and Playground. Volunteers seem to be taking on their responsibilities with enthusiasm. This year 115 parents returned forms vs. 142 last year.

Curriculum Enrichment

Ms. Michelle Mandel reported that the school wide anti-bullying program, The Power of One, was well received by students and teachers. The program could have been a bit scary for some of the younger kids. Sherborn also did the program with similarly strong positive feedback. Ms. Mandel recently attended a Curriculum Enrichment Massachusetts Council event and uncovered some new funding sources. The town of Dover has Mass Cultural Council money for event grants. There is also an organization called The Big Yellow Bus that provides subsidized funding for class field trips.

Community Service and Community Relations

Ms. Vicki Hadar gave an update on the 2009-2010 speaker series. Margaret Duggan coordinated the first session on school lunches. Approximately 15-20 women attended. The evening started with a movie called Two Angry Moms. It showed how grass root efforts can improve school lunches. Ms. Duggan hopes to use this as a start of an expanded Chickering Nutrition Committee. The group will be under the SAC umbrella - not PTO. Tentative future speakers will be David Stenberg on parenting and discipline and Temi Correll on a nutrition topic. The PTO is not planning a shoe drive unless the Hartmans get back to the PTO with dates. Ms. Hadar had also researched the UNICEF trick or treat boxes but the school has a firm policy of no activities linked to Halloween.

Other Business

Ms. Schulz suggested setting up ways to get Grandparents more involved in the school as was done in her preschool. Grandparents are a potential fundraising source.

Next Meeting

The next PTO executive meeting will be held on Friday, November 20th, 2009 in the Chickering Art Room at 9:00.