

# **Dover Elementary PTO**

## **Minutes of an Executive Board Meeting on September 21, 2007**

**Attendees:** Dana White, Wendy Darragh, Jennifer Friesen, Laura Rinaldi, Betsy Ryan, Sue Dangel, Julie Cook, Gina Saltonstall, Annemarie Thompson, Christine Colbert, and Dawn Fattore

An Executive Board Meeting of the Dover Elementary PTO was held at Chickering Elementary School, commencing at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, September 21, 2007. Ms. White, the President, chaired the Meeting and Ms. Rinaldi, the Secretary, recorded the minutes.

### **President's Report**

Ms. White started the meeting by stating that the Dover PTO Mission is as follows:

#### **To Build the Chickering Community by**

- (1) Enabling communications between school and families**
- (2) Providing volunteers for school/classrooms**
- (3) Raising money for Chickering projects**
  - a. Curriculum Enrichment (53% of 2007-08 budget)**
  - b. Classroom/teacher support (32%)**
  - c. Chickering community (15%)**

Ms. White also stated that the Dover PTO's 2007/2008 initiative to "Go Green!" will touch all aspects of the PTO. We will reduce paper flow by increasing electronic communication, and we will promote and fund special projects like the outdoor classroom. Curriculum Enrichment is planning a "Bash the Trash" school-wide recycling program. Fundraising will have Tupperware sales and other similar efforts that will tie into the "reduce/reuse/recycle" theme.

Another 2007/2008 initiative for the Dover PTO will be to build an even stronger Chickering community. We will strive to broaden participation in leadership, volunteers, meetings, events, and fundraising by reaching out to the community in creative new ways. We hope to accomplish this by enabling more robust and effective communication including:

- Electronic communication through email and the new website, [DoverPTO.org](http://DoverPTO.org)
- Two-way communication through things like the PTO survey and e-mailbox [DoverPTO@comcast.net](mailto:DoverPTO@comcast.net)
- Better communication with our working parents by working with a "working parent liaison"
- More communication across the Dover/Sherborn district – Pine Hill, the D/S Middle School, and the D/S High School

Ms. White also reviewed the results of the 2007 Dover PTO Survey. There were 123 respondents; with 89% saying that the PTO was either “adequately effective” or “highly effective”. However, only 32% said that they felt “adequately” or “highly” connected to the PTO. This is an opportunity for us to help parents feel more connected.

Ms. Darragh, the Vice President, stated that the Family Fun Fest will start Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30pm. The PTO General Board meeting will be held at 6:15, while a DJ plays music for the kids and they eat pizza. The first 200 Chickering kids to come to the Fun Fest will receive free PTO water bottles, consistent with the “Go Green” initiative. Any siblings who would also like a water bottle will be able to order one. There will be a table set up with volunteer opportunities, Tupperware sales, and information about our upcoming CE Fall speaker (Anastasia Goodstein). The PTO Executive Board will wear nametags so that they can be easily identified, and the lights will be turned on in Chickering field for overflow parking.

Ms. Friesen, the Treasurer, provided the budget numbers for the 2007/2008 school year that were approved in June, with some minor changes. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade graduation number (\$750) was added, and \$1000 of previously unallocated funds was earmarked for Family Fun Night. The unallocated amount was replenished by \$500. The previously-approved Curriculum Enrichment increase to \$38,000 was brought back to \$37,000, and Fundraising increased the spring event budget from \$30,000 to \$35,000. The 2007 school year numbers are the actual numbers now, and the final budgets will be posted on Chickering’s PTO website.

Ms. Friesen also reviewed the insurance for the Dover PTO. The Dover PTO operates as a 501(c)(3), and needs General Liability coverage as well as Bond insurance. In addition, each Executive Board member is covered with Officers Liability insurance.

Currently, Ms. Friesen is the only officer with check-signing authority. To facilitate future transitions between treasurers, Ms. Friesen asked the board to approve adding the President and Vice President as signing authorities. This will also enable check-signing when needed in Ms. Friesen’s absence.

**VOTE:**

**To give the President (Dana White) and Vice President (Wendy Darragh) check-signing authority.**

Upon motion duly made and seconded, this request was unanimously approved.

Ms. Friesen will come back with an investment policy for the deposit account.

Ms. Rinaldi, the Secretary, updated the board on the status of the PTO Directory. The student artwork contest winner was announced, and the directory cover and back page were showed to the board. The Directory will be finalized and submitted for printing the first week of October, with a proof the second week, and distribution during the third week of October.

The Board discussed how to better communicate with our working parents, and some suggestions so far have included publishing our quarterly minutes, having a lunch-time briefing via conference call with our PTO President or Principal, hosting a “dad’s event”, and all possible communication via email.

Ms. Thompson, Fundraising Chair, provided a review of the Fundraising Plan for 2007/2008. In the fall, the directories and excuse pad orders will be processed and distributed, and school pictures will be taken. The Tupperware Product Sale will kickoff at Family Fun Night, and there will be an order packet that goes home in backpacks the next day. In November, there will be a “No Wrap, Wrap Sale” for a fall check-writing campaign. Another Family Fun Night is planned for the winter, where Fundraising will sell canvas bags, consistent with the “Go Green” initiative. Our spring events include the Spring Couples Event and Dover Days. The Board brainstormed about casual, fun themes for the Spring Couples Event and ways to facilitate ongoing collectibles such as recycled products and box tops.

Ms. Ryan, Communications, distributed the Communications Protocol which will strive to (1) clearly and consistently identify PTO activities by utilizing the PTO logo and document layouts, and (2) streamline communications to the Chickering community and increase their impact. The PTO newsletter will be sent the first Friday of each month, and there will be a press release about the CE Fall speaker, and a “Go Green!” article will be submitted on Monday to the local paper with pictures from Family Fun Night.

Ms. Dangel, Volunteer Services, stated that we are up 74% in volunteer responses from last year. All Room Parents have been selected and notified, and the New Parent Coffee was a success. Ms. Dangel divided the volunteer responses into categories and distributed these names and relevant contact information to the respective committee chairs. Ms. Dangel expressed the need for the actual hours spent by volunteers in the classroom be tracked and reported back to her.

Ms. Fattore updated the Board on the status of the Outdoor Classroom. The budget and plan were approved in the June Executive Board meeting, and the timeline of implementation is currently being adjusted with an estimated completion for spring. Next steps include identifying a list of potential contractors. The taskforce hopes to submit a grant to DSEF to fund teacher training for the Outdoor Classroom.

Ms. Cook, Curriculum Enrichment, presented the schedule and budget for the 2007/2008 school year. The planned enrichment is aligned with the Chickering curriculum, and only four spots out of forty-four have not been filled yet. The plan includes enrichments that span all classes across all grades and includes two school-wide programs. Ms. Cook is meeting with Kim Gregory to compare with Pine Hill’s Curriculum Enrichment.

Ms. Colbert, Community Outreach, reviewed the speaker series for the 2007/2008 school year. On October 10<sup>th</sup>, Anastasia Goodstein will speak from 7:00-9:00pm. She is the author of “Totally Wired – What Teens and Tweens are Really Doing on the Internet”,

and will speak to our community about their children and the internet. A second speaker has not been identified yet, but Ms. Colbert will schedule it around early March.

A major part of Ms. Colbert's responsibilities will be to streamline the charity/community work being done throughout the school. Ms. Colbert will be the "gatekeeper" for charitable drives and community donations. All teachers, parents and Dover-Sherborn students are asked to coordinate their initiatives first through Ms. Colbert so that we can maximize the effectiveness of everyone's efforts by coordinating them.

Ms. White thanked all those present for attending. As there was no further business to come before the Meeting, upon motion duly made and seconded, the Meeting was adjourned.

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Laura Rinaldi