

## PTO Regular Meeting

February 27, 2014

8:40 a.m., cafeteria

- Looking for someone to fill the position of Secretary. This is a great way to get involved with the PTO and the time commitment is minimal. If interested, please contact PTO Co-Presidents, or Lisa Adams, who is Acting Secretary.
- Book Fair will be on Thursday, March 13, 12:30-8:00 p.m. Book donations are being accepted in library. (No adult non-fiction please.)
- Family Dance will be on Saturday, March 22, 6:00-8:30 p.m. This year's theme is Mardi Gras.
- Core Values Night will be on March 24, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- Invention Invasion will be on Friday, April 4, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
- Spring Fling will be on Saturday, April 12- need volunteers to bring food and to help with decorations and publicity.
- Cabot Fair will be on Saturday, May 31. Donations of new or gently used small toys and prizes are being accepting. Also accepting donations of small gifts for punch board. Also in need of coolers for that day.
- Campaign for Cabot- Thank you to Lori Knowles and Heather Mehra for their leadership of the campaign this year and thank you to all parents who participated!
- Note of Interest- The PTO website has a search option. Type in key word to find information about PTO events and other PTO information.
- Guest Speaker- Tricia Kelleher, Cabot's Instructional Technology Specialist
  - Technology being integrated well at Cabot
  - Kindergarten teachers using iPads purchased last year in their curriculum- for example, to take pictures of students reading, to record students' voices as they read, etc.
  - Library has 22 screens, which is the district goal
  - Focus at Cabot is how to integrate technology in the curriculum- Tricia helps teachers find ways to do this
  - Some examples:
    - Voice threads and Story Jumper in 3d grade
    - Explorers cartoons in 5<sup>th</sup> grade
    - Making documentaries in 5<sup>th</sup> grade science classes with "Explain Everything" program
    - 10 new iPads in art room- developing photography units
  - Where we should be going from here? Leo Brown, District Tech. Coordinator, has set goals for the minimum amount of technology in Newton schools- 5 screens per classroom (Cabot has met this), 3 carts of computers per school (Cabot has almost met this), 22 computers in library (Cabot has met this)

- Recommendation for Cabot is to maintain current equipment, but do not add more to carts because a new building is on the way.
- This year, PARCC evaluation is being administered to Cabot 4<sup>th</sup> graders in math on computer.
- Tricia works at Cabot two full days/week. Splits her time between Cabot and another school.
- Q about teacher websites at Cabot: no district-wide policy requiring teachers to maintain them. Tends to be by school. Some teachers better than others at maintaining them. May be due to lack of training and familiarity with program.
- Q about monitoring appropriate use of technology among students: teachers are trained on how to monitor/teach appropriate use of technology, including Google Docs. Suggestion to send information on monitoring usage home to parents as well to help prevent cyber-bullying.
- Continued Discussion about Technology:
  - Educational Technology Resources- Erin Edwards created a page of resources that is available on the PTO website under Cabot Ed Tech Resources (or search “technology” in search box).
  - Boston Globe Article on 1/19/14 discussing how PTOs play a key role in funding technology in Newton.
  - The PTO Council or “PTOC” (a council comprised of all of the PTO Presidents) has been working on making things more equitable in Newton among the various schools. Cabot is sitting at the top with the most technology, along with the Ward School.
  - The PTOC is working on a proposal to cap technology spending at \$25/student district-wide under equity items with the district picking up the rest of the cost. This would be a \$25 separate cap for technology to allow the district to track spending. The \$25/person was arrived at by analyzing data. This is a big change from the way technology is managed currently in our district. (Technology is currently not an equity item in our budget.)
  - On March 4, Cabot PTO Co-Presidents will attend at PTOC meeting to discuss this topic. The present concerns from Cabot at this time are:
    - Want technology to be equitable among schools
    - Want to hear from schools who have hardest time fundraising
    - Want to know that proposal will not adversely affect the schools
    - Want to ensure that if this proposal passes that there isn’t a redistribution of technology among schools, but an effort to bring every school up to district goals
  - PTO Co-Presidents would like to hear from Cabot community on this—please voice your comments or concerns by contacting Erin or Vanessa.

Meeting adjourned: 10:00 a.m.