

Cabot PTO Meeting Minutes DRAFT
Tuesday, November 17, 2015

Location: Cabot School Library
Time: 6:00 pm
Present: Nicky Chapman, Mary Lou DiBella, Joshua Klein, Lisa Jones, Jennifer Abbott, Valerie Gopinath, Pratima Prasad, Tom DeLong, Andrea Steenstrup, Joanna Josephson, Cecily Andes, Patrice Freeman-Lau, Vanessa Allen, Alice Reynolds, Jacqueline Badeau, Christine Fahey, Agnes Pietrzyk, Kathy Liu, Allana Kelly, Sarah Levy, Catherine Dunn Rappaport, Emily Shumsky, Heidi Lucas, Melissa Nash, and other PTO members

Item I: Welcome and Introduction

Item II: School Building Reports – Principal Mary Lou DiBella

- Eastside Parkway could become one way
- Next joint meeting of the School Building Committee/ Design Review Committee is Thursday, November 19, 5:30pm in the Trustee’s Room at the Newton Free Library
- Design is set
- April is the drop dead date for vote – design will be presented to Alderman who will vote; 2/3 vote is needed for the application to the Massachusetts School Building Authority to be approved
 - Not expecting City Council to provide full support
 - See the recently conducted Traffic Study available on CabotPTO.org

Item III: Present Budget – Cabot PTO Treasurer – Nicky Chapman

- Proposed amendments to the budget were developed by Treasurer and budget financial review team: Nicky Chapman, Jen Abbott, Joshua Klein, Andrea Steenstrup
- Proposed amendments to the budget are mostly in the income section – rollover of retained earnings approx. \$30K towards equity
 - Goal is to spend down surplus
 - No big purchases this year as in years past (typically, there would have been technology, playground, or other large spend items)
 - Two major pieces to expenses – equity and non-equity
 - Equity capped at \$44K
- 3 most notable changes to the budget
 - Raised PTO contribution to 5th grade activities from \$500 to \$1,200
 - New: Optional pizza/ snack tray for end of year picnics

- New: T-Shirts for current students and staff
- Move to approve the budget amendments – Andrea Steenstrup
- Move seconded – Vanessa Allen
- Vote on motion to approve budget amendments
- All in favor
- Budget amendments approved

Item IV: Rotating PTO Leaders

- Grade leader review – Joshua Klein
- Current PTO co-presidents through mid-December are Lisa Jones and Joshua Klein along with Jennifer Abbott
- Mid-December to February: Vanessa Allen, Alice Reynolds
- Need a first grade co-president for late Feb/early March to late April/ early May to accompany Cynthia Sanger
 - Kathy Liu expressed interest in this role

Item V: Calendar/ Upcoming events

- Events between now and January include Food Drive, Understanding Our Differences, Book Fair, Gift Drive
- Food Drive now through November 24
 - Emily Shumsky reviewed list of acceptable donations
- Book Fair on Thursday December 3
 - Using bookends.org
 - Children’s titles \$1
 - Adult titles \$2
 - Need 3-4+ more volunteers
- Holiday Gift Drive part I – scheduled on the Cabot Calendar to start Nov 23rd although no announcements or publicity have come out on this event yet
- Friday Nov 20 – Cabot PTO SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Committee) is having a coffee 9-10:30 at l’Aroma Café in West Newton for parents of Cabot students on 504 or IEP plans
- Spring Fling – scheduled for April 9, 2016 – save the date!
- Cabot Fair – still needs help
- May – Taste of the World is a go
- Question from Alice Reynolds on bringing back the Family Dance
 - Had been dropped from PTO calendar of events due to poor attendance in the past; also the PTO had reduced the list of events this year without a clear leadership plan in place; also, no one to lead it

Other items

- Question from Heidi Lucas –
 - clarification needed on Grade Leader roles/ events – are the community building events assigned to each grade school wide events or events only for that specific grade?
 - Josh and others helped clarify – most of the events are school wide unless the grade is assigned a grade-specific event such as Kindergarten registration; in addition to being assigned events from the PTO calendar to be responsible for, each grade can do community building events specific to their grade – not required, just optional
- Room parent update – Jacqueline Badeau
 - Still need room parents for several classrooms – Williams, Kesten, Bowler, Tirrell, Green
 - Gift policy has been revised by NPS; gift from the classroom has been removed from the list of acceptable gifts
 - Update on gift policy is coming as well as room parent meeting
- Melissa Nash – talent show update
 - Will take place again this year, perhaps late May
- Core Values Night will be taking place again this school year

Next PTO meeting: January, TBD; will be attended by NPS Superintendent David Fleishman

Questions: contact cabotpto.copresident@gmail.com