

## PTO Executive Committee Meetings - 5/6/2020

Meeting held via ZOOM @7:30pm

In attendance - Michele Morris, Agnes Pietrzyk, Eric Sprung, Joanna Josephson, Nicky Chapman, Ginny Richmond, Lauren White, Flora Edwards, Susan Sloan, Suzy Yospin, Ali Dunn, Robin Levenson

### TREASURER'S REPORT:

- Budget - Actual to date distributed via email prior to meeting. Not much movement at this time. A few checks cashed.
- Waiting on a few refunds to come in.
  - Permits from Spring fling.  
Decision not to pursue refund of deposit paid to bartender at this time.
  - CASC presenters we are waiting on Tsongas, W-9 submitted in April - we were told refund will take a while  
Also waiting to hear about Women in World Jazz which was city wide and half the schools had it but half, Cabot included didn't. Ginny to check in with Stacy Moriarty.
- Teacher Grants - only 2 payments made so far. Discussion as to whether others will be honored this year or not. (OT will hold off, K- incubators?, Rachel Candee - hip hop not happening this year)  
NC Suggested that if there are items that could be bought this year for use in the future, and we have the funds it makes sense to make the purchases reallocating equity lines.  
ES commented that he is sure that teachers would want to jump at buying things for their classrooms.  
Question asked if teachers are wanting or needing anything while at home, for improvised home offices, to help teaching remotely etc. ES is sure that if presented with the opportunity staff could come up with a number of ideas that could be funded for this year and/or next. MM & AP to follow up and check in at PTOC meeting next week if there is any city wide guiding with regard to spending this year or next.
- Noted that we have 43,000/47,000 of budgeted income raised this year without the silent auction
- Looking ahead to next it is difficult to predict spending and fundraising capacity if there are no gatherings about 50, etc still in place.

### SPRING FLING

- JJ has set up an account with - 32 auctions at a cost of \$100. It is ready to have items added whenever we decide to hold the auction.  
She has been in contact with the person who runs the Preschool auction who held theirs as things were just shutting down. They used some of the money they would have spent on the event itself for facebook advertising.  
Other thoughts
  - We could put camps and teacher items aside as they would be hard to carry out at this time.
  - What if places don't reopen? Do bidders assume the risk and bid anyway.
  - Could we give x percent of winning bid back to organizations when they reopen to show our support? Is that necessary if people are likely to spend more than the gift card when they go in, also could they even take it back as most of the donations are a tax write off in the first place.

- Discussion around whether we really need to hold the auction at this time when the businesses are closed and there are families who have lost a wage. Decision that it would be a good to save the items and hold it when we get back as a celebration with each other.
- JJ to reach out to corporate sponsors (Sue's dentist, Flag football, Village Bank and offer to hold onto donations for when the event happens, or to return as the event is not happening as promised.

#### FUND FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

- Brown has one that is blind to PTO , handled by school.  
ES wanted us to know the School has done, and continues to do a lot of outreach with families with both academic and food needs trying to make sure they have basic necessities. E.g. Any students over the course of 1-2 weeks where there has been no sign of them on class calls etc, the school is reaching out and following up.
- Idea comes from the desire to help out with items that the basic needs assistance that from state, town, etc. does not cover.
- Suggestions
  - Newton neighbors helping neighbors facebook group, needs are often met quickly-
  - Use the Principal discretionary fund - this is where field trip subsidies have come from this year. Currently have 1300equity/800nonequity in funds, some of which is already allocated but could be topped up if needed this year due to underspend in other budget categories.

#### PRINCIPAL UPDATE -

- Feedback from the city wide survey is in. Expect minor changes to come but nothing major. Results will be reported to the school committee on Monday and minor tweaks put into place in coming weeks. Likely to mean Additional from specialists but not from class teachers.
- Lot to happen/figure out in the 7 remaining weeks.
  - Graduation there has been a lot of talk about drive by for 5th and 8th graders - this looks to be off the table due to challenges for public health/safety for the city. Mayor weighed in on this. Aim is to make it as special as we can.
  - Incoming kindergarten - Still need to welcome half of the families, potentially via zoom but how the screenings will happen is a work in progress
  - How to get stuff out of schools - a city wide issue, Principals not involved in decision
  - Student reports - there is a committee working on what this will look like for this year. Stay tuned.
  - Teachers not returning - Marisa Aftandilan taking second year of parental leave Jen Steiner will continue. Leah Callahan moving out of state - position not yet filled but interviews happening.
  - As a whole the system will have to wait for the state to come out with guidelines before decisions are made. Currently in phase 3. Phase 4 is reentry.
  - Placement for next year - conversation is happening at this time and, just like parents, the teachers are worried about students transitioning back too. They are having meetings in vertical grouping where they share info with the next grade's teachers so everyone can be as informed and prepared as possible.

- Question - how are teachers doing? - Teachers are doing OK in general. They all want kids to feel connected and they want to keep it fresh and enthusiastic, energised and engaged
- Question - Any idea about specialists doing more live sessions/videos with kids. - this is one of the tweaks coming. Noted that weekly videos from the specialists and the activities they have shared have been great also that Ms. Candee is doing small group lessons with instrument learners.
- ES wants to acknowledge that there are varied levels of working and surviving and that with parents helping out with the making school work the, teacher appreciation goes both ways.

#### COMMUNITY SUPPER

- SS mentioned that now is the time we usually apply for the permit. There is obviously uncertainty as to how things will look in the fall but will pull the permit anyway - it doesn't cost anything, and then we can evaluate as we know more closer to the time. Community supper - permit anyway?

#### 5th GRADE ACTIVITIES

- Yearbook moving along
- T-shirt design made up
- SY met with a group of parents and all are sharing the emotion of the lack of connection. Hitting them hard as they were excited to be first graduating class and feel a loss of connection with space. Want to create a sense of community with them before they disperse into a bigger school.
- Thoughts - What can we do?
  - class by class car parade - not happening.
  - Senior week activities in lead up to zoom celebration.(banner on fence at Cabot, Rock garden). ES notes that an additional challenge is anything we do that has something outside on the school/city grounds has an approval process via superintendent/mayor. Not as simple as the Principal says it's OK.
  - Zoom celebration could include, show slideshow/yearbook pages etc.
  - Will talk with ES and staff with regards to a Physical celebration when things are lifted and it was agreed to keep the budget that they had fundraised available for that. Teachers want to do that - get together physically even if it is more of a reunion. LC has indicated she would be willing to come back from RI for it.
- SY asked MM and AP to share ideas via PTOC and see what ideas have been thought up by from other schools. ES said that Principals have a shared list of ideas/things happening at other schools and many schools will now have to reevaluate now the Mayor has said no to cars

#### SLATE FOR NEXT YEAR - lots of gaps to fill.

- Co pres. - Need someone to work with Agnes (Michele says she won't leave her alone but it would be good to keep the staggered terms going.
- Assist Treasurer - Ali ready to hand it over after 5 years
- Recording Secretary - Norah Ferry agreed. ? over K rep. But it is a better fit than the other roles that involve being in school more.
- Communications - Tanya Gapud and Mikki Samet both interested
- First Grade rep - Blair Lesser-Sullivan?
- Kristin O'Connor- Marie Callahan - appreciation/social action.
- CASC - Ginny is working on filling reps for each grade and will share gaps with MM and AP.

- 5th Grade rep - Suzy is looking for a rep to replace her next year. She is willing to help whoever it is but feels someone else would be better as the lead.
- A stand alone email or note from grade liaisons highlighting the need to fill the slate should be sent out to spread the word to the wider community.

#### CASC Next year

- At the last district meeting there was some pressure to book presenters online but many of the presenters we choose to bring in are not offering that and we are not sure that online presenters is the direction we want to go. Next meeting is the year end wrap up. Ginny will ask Stacy Moriarty what she thinks CASC may look like in school next year with not wanting to bring in extra people in school and hold large gatherings/assemblies. Stacy meets with other districts too so may have some ideas.

#### BUDGET FOR NEXT YEAR

- Even with all the uncertainty of next year a draft budget will be prepared and put to vote with things we would like to do. It can always be amended by vote should circumstances dictate the need to reevaluate.
- Question - should we add a line for sanitizing (glove, masks, sanitizer, etc). ES says that once guidelines are set by state and city, any needs should be met by them with NPS providing supplies.

#### CONNECTING FAMILIES

- Parent Night out zooms. 5th grade have been successful in implementing some even with- Dualling zooms. (Dads/Moms on different zooms in different rooms)
- Suggestion had been made in one of the Principal Coffees to have a way for parents in grade to connect, share ideas, etc. NC looked into Community messages boards on MTK. Biggest reservation is no way to moderate or delete comments. Since there has been no followup or further request since the coffee we will shelf the idea for now.
- Parents have the directory to be able to reach out to other parents if they would like to, no need to invent something new at this point.
- It was noted that the students are missing out on connecting with each other. NC pointed out that all students can now contact each other via their school gmail. - This is a surprise to some members of the group so a suggestion was made for grade reps to let all parents know in their update emails.
- Question - is there any chance of cross grade connections - Maybe a zoom with cabot families? ES said there are approx. 40 families. Teachers were concerned about logistics of making this happen and are working hard to connect with students in their classes.

#### BUSINESS PAGE in MTK

- NC shared the cabot families business page and where to find it in MTK. Decision made to make it public and for NC to put together an email to the community with a link to a Google form for families to be able to request adding their business to the page.
- Note that ES and others are looking for ways to support local businesses as best they can so it would be good to know if there are any gift cards etc that can be purchased for when everything reopens.

## RECENT ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

- Invention invasion - lower turnout than usual, only about 10, but impressed with the variety of ideas and video sharing seemed to work. Would be good to hear from Matt and Dean how they felt it went.
- Principal Coffee - well received by the community and great way to stay informed. ES, MM and AP meet ahead of coffee to brainstorm likely questions so Eric can address them in his opening talk. Feel free to email any questions ahead so he can cover as much info as possible. Next coffee will be moved to 22nd after the Governor's announcement on 18th.

## GRADE REP EMAIL CONTENT

- Make Aware of Teacher appreciation week
- Can contact classmates via gmail.
- recruiting for next years slate
- Cabot got talent entries
- Principal coffee 22nd.
- Spring fling/Auction postponed

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- CGT - not sure of numbers yet but hopeful for good participation
- June 2nd next exec meeting -
- June?? - Combined Principal Coffee and Final General PTO meeting.

## AOB

- What will report cards look like? Currently work kids are getting at home is not graded, what is mandatory - how do we gauge that? ES noted that the reality is there are some families that can't do any of it so a blanket statement you'll fail if you haven't done x, y, z. will not work. That said if a child submits work they should get acknowledgement.  
Content-wise Phase 3 plan from the state laid out what students need to know before the next grade. Also we need to prepare for transition back and schools will have to scaffold work as there will definitely be discrepancies between students. Helpful information when reporting out to parents is where students are in preparation for the following year.
- Will school report card be addressed in the next coffee? - Not planning on going over it now, usually save it and cover it along with MCAS results meeting in the fall.
- Parent teacher conferences - are they likely to happen via zoom? Everyone citywide has missed out on the conferences and no decision as yet as to what they, or reporting, will look like. A meeting is happening in the coming weeks with a group of teachers, principals, district curriculum coordinators, and Asst superintendent.
- Any idea on school numbers for next year? Currently at 404, may be a small uptick next year although 5th grade is a big class. Currently 61 incoming K. Others are registering online for other grades. Funding for a 4th class/ teacher in 1st /2nd grade but on hold to to wait and see enrollment figures.