

PTO Executive Board Meeting – 11/12/2020

Meeting held via ZOOM 7:30pm – 9:45pm

In attendance - Agnes Pietrzyk, Jayven Rappa, Eric Sprung, Michele Morris, Ginny Richmond, Lauren Myers, Robin Levenson, Roxanne McCarley, Krisla Strand, Norah Ferry, Annette Nedeljkovic, Nicky Chapman, Richelle Smith, Blair Lesser-Sullivan, Josina Raisler-Cohn, Flora Edwards.

OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES – approved

UPDATE FROM CO-PRESIDENTS

District wide meeting of all PTOs on 11/11/20. Topics for discussion included: fundraising, community engagement, all schools struggling with the same challenges around both.

Some events from other schools:

- Franklin: Halloween playground party, flamingo flocking sign.
- Burr: election day bake sale and raffle
- Others: Mystery social, morale pals, book fairs (Williams is using Scholastic; Underwood is using Children's Book Shop), cookbooks, raffles, auctions (questions around whether appropriate to use previously-donated gift certificates given economic challenges for small business)
- Community outreach: food drives, clothing drives, initiatives to support local businesses (Mason Rice)

PLAYGROUND & CASP

Lee has asked that PTO help clarify the playground schedule. 3:30-4:30pm: CASP will be on the playground.

ES suggested involving the CASP board. School cannot put up signage.

JR spoke to Lee and situation has improved with the state-wide mask mandate and daylight savings timing. Lee is hoping to get a bigger sign, in conjunction with Newton Parks & Recreation.

CONNECTIONS AMONG DLA & HYBRID STUDENTS

Concern about connecting students before the cold weather comes.

[New guidelines from the Baker-Polito administration 11/2/2020](#): 10 people maximum in private residences, confined indoor spaces, 25 person limit for outdoor events at private residences. Limits on gatherings held in public spaces remains the same.

Discussion around planning a school-wide virtual event. E.g., dance party or scavenger hunt, student pen pals spanning grade levels.

[GooseChase](#) platform costs 500\$ for the year. Unlimited games, can be used by pto and staff.

UPDATE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

District conversations around extending K-2 school day: Elementary team is discussing how to make sure K-2 Hybrid students can be in school for a longer day. Discussions are underway with the NPS School Committee and appears this will be discussed further at the SC meeting on

Monday 11/16/2020. Question around how to support K-2 DLA students and ensure they receive additional instruction time. ES confirmed that Jen Shore is part of the conversations.

Honoring Molly Williams: committee is currently working on events, fundraising, scholarships in her name, and a week focused on JOY at Cabot School, conversation with Ms. L and library about folding in books that celebrate the theme and MW. Conversation with GR on a complementary CAS event.

Anti-racism: Letter sent to the Cabot community. Thinking about ways to educate ourselves as staff, students. Thinking about culturally-responsive teaching in partnership with that. Teachers are collaborating with the parent group.

Principal Coffee: scheduled for 11/23/2020 – right before Thanksgiving at 9:00am. Will include some PTO conversation.

Cabot Masks for students: forthcoming. Student council is helping ES put labels on them. DLA families are picking up materials on Friday, will include masks.

Picture day: makeup session will be in the spring for DLA and Hybrid students.

Outdoor tents: were compromised by the snow and strong winds. They became a safety concern and had to be taken down. Students and staff can still be outside, eat outside; they just won't be under a tent.

Switching educational models: ES received approximately 5 requests from Cabot families, so confident the school can grant the requests.

GRADE-LEVEL UPDATES

K – RL: Q around free t-shirt for Kindergarteners. Initially launched so that students had a matching Cabot shirt for field trips; it was a common practice that all new students at Cabot receive one for a few years. Last year, cost-benefit analysis removed it from the budget. K students receive *Kindergarten Rocks* book; this can be discussed further.

1 – BLS: Playground meetup was well received. Offered 4 time slots (5-7 attendees per slot). It was nice to offer different time slots and have more options because of the unpredictability of who in the community will be at the playground at the time of the meetup.

2 – JRC: When will families know definitively about the extended day schedule? ES: Logistics need to be worked out – including, staffing, teacher planning time, sufficient notice for families. Will this additional time include time with the students' grade-level teachers? ES: Ideally, we would want more time with students' teachers, but this is unclear still. Will this be optional, since some families have other arrangements for PODS, childcare? ES: still unclear.

3 – LM: Planning playground meetup for Saturday 11/21/2020 – creating signup genius with two distinct time slots. Discussion around maximum number of attendees – see updated state guidelines on gatherings. Question around class lists: distributed lists did not include DLA students. GR is updating MTK to reflect DLA families, who gave permission. LM is planning to take DLA materials packets into Boston.

4 - : No representative.

5 - AN: Playground meetup was successful. Creating a committee (Victoria Jaffee and others) to help with 5th grade activities (e.g., yearbooks, party). Logistics of doing Penny Wars may be too challenging. Will likely ask parents for donations, in lieu of fundraising. Last year with the school closure, ES notes that there was considerable district-level discussion around what was

appropriate by grade level (high school was only supposed to do the drive-through graduation, lawn signs).

DLA – KS & GR:

DLA materials available for pickup Friday 11/13/20 5-6pm.

Class lists: GR and KS continue to work on these.

Family community flow chart: who you should contact based on your issue.

DLA website is now more prominent on NPS website, also on the PTO website.

ES put together a nice Cabot-specific specialist list, which was appreciated.

K-2 – next focus is how to ensure DLA is developmentally appropriate for these students.

Administrative presentations (e.g., coffee chat, webinars): Question around parents not being able to ask questions during the presentations. Talking with administration about how to improve transparency.

Connections: Trying to create connections and bridge gap between Hybrid & DLA students. Discussion about possible virtual events – karaoke, trivia (e.g., Games with James, Stump Trivia, Drawful)

FORJ

The broader note that ES sent to the community – much appreciated. High-level communications can make a difference. Group is very active.

Book club will discuss *The Origin of Others* on 12/2/2020 at 7pm.

Discussing ways: to promote more conversation with children, considering reviving *One book, One school* with discussion questions for families; tighten connection with teacher group; bridging the gap between Hybrid and DLA students.

Upcoming virtual event at the district level about segregation and housing – [Conversation with Richard Rothstein](#) author of *The Color of Law, A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* on 11/17/2020

CABOT CONNECTING FAMILIES

Upcoming virtual event – Conversations and Raffles – on 11/22/2020 5-6pm.

Question for ES: Can we take a photo of this event with a screenshot? If you ask people, it's usually okay to take a photo b/c people can turn cameras off if they do not wish to be photographed.

Excited for the event and trying to drum up support. People are exhausted fighting this pandemic and daily racism, so will see how attendance goes.

ES notes that we/Cabot could do a better job when Kindergarten students enter, making them feel welcomed and included in the Cabot community.

Discussion around a Welcome Basket for Boston families (Burr did this) and other new families.

PTO EVENTS RECAP

Discussion of past events, including:

- FORJ Welcome Event
- Picture Day
- Spirit Days
- Back to School Night
- DLA Curriculum Night: was well received. Parents have been encouraged not to helicopter. Mrs. R did a day in the life of the students with breakout rooms, which was fun.
- Grade-level Meetups
- Halloween Candy Drive: 15 large shopping bags of candy were donated to mens' and womens' shelter. JR dropped off and it was well received.
- Social Action fundraiser for Greater Boston Food Bank – already surpassed goal of \$500.

SUPPORTING CABOT FAMILIES THAT ARE FOOD INSECURE

Question around how we can support families at Cabot. ES: Cabot provides weekly food bags for families that are food insecure. Discussion around whether the PTO could add grocery gift cards. Discussion around how Social Action committee and 5th grade can coordinate.

TREASURER REPORT

Campaign for Cabot and sale of Cabot goods are raising funds.

Campaign for Cabot: correspond with Giving Tuesday 12/1 and keep the donation window brief (e.g., 1-2 weeks). MM shared the Countryside pamphlet and would like to replicate. Facebook will double donations – EA is working on this. Company match opportunities.

FUNDRAISER IDEAS

- Raffle Baskets – baskets were compiled for Spring Fling 2020. Discussion around raffling one basket each month.
- Read-a-thon – Winter 2021
- Humpty and his mask – when it slips off, fine him, and organize a Bail for Humpty fundraiser.
- Virtual Master Classes – taught by parents. Pay a small amount and hold a zoom (cooking class, sewing class, yoga, *Wings of Fire* fan discussion) for students.
- Countries of the world display and how to keep that going – think about how to involve parents.
- Cookbook to replace Taste of the World.

CAS

Women in World Jazz will be coming (virtually) to Cabot on: 12/16/20 for Grades 3-5, and 1/13/21 for Grades K-2. Promotional materials to come.

OTHER UPDATES

[Chronicle story that features Cabot](#), and parent Nicky Chapman for making the Humpty mask.

Membership Toolkit: every student listed on the class lists distributed by email to families have been entered into MTK. NC working on getting 11-12 new families in. 30 students in the system who are not on the class lists.

PTO OPEN POSITIONS

PTO is seeking:

- 4th grade representative to PTO Executive Committee
- SEPAC liaison to serve on PTO Executive Committee
- Corresponding secretary to handle the weekly PTO newsletter
- Co-Directory Administrator (to help with Membership Toolkit/Directory)
- Room parents for 5 hybrid classes and 6 DLA classes

NEXT MEETING: Thursday December 3 @7:30