Cobbles PTA Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Present: Robyn O’Grady, Ursula DiPasquale, Gina Geraci, Laurie Pincus, Ashley Lieber, Mindy Staba, Cynthia Ueland, Cara Acker, Lisa Tripodi, Emily Belcer (BOE), Renee Yandow, Kellie McNair, Lori Morris, Allison Trawinski, Courtney Schwiled, Michaela Wall, Dianna (virtual, not sure of last name)

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm

Approval of December minutes (Gina, Ashley)

**Teachers Report (Renee Yandow)**

A big thank you from the teachers for the holiday breakfast from Tree Town Café that the PTA provided. The teachers would like to celebrate a monthly “national” day (ex. National Chocolate Day). They wondered if the PTA would be willing to contribute at all? A quick discussion was had about what fund this would come out of, probably Staff Appreciation. Ashley thinks we have enough to cover a couple hundred dollars for the school year.

**Principal’s Report (Kellie McNair)**

Monday was a professional development day. The staff had a morning presentation from the district that touched on many topics including SEL, grading practices and cultural topics. The teachers were happy to have the time to spend together and also to catch up on planning.

Jane Czascar had moved on to a job in West Irondequoit that is closer to home. She will be missed.

Report cards were posted on Friday in the portal.

Parent teacher conference day will be on 3/3, which is not as close to the time of report cards as in previous years.

The Equity and Cultural Awareness committee met yesterday and has plans for Black History Month for February.

**Board of Education (Emily Belcer):**

The last meeting was on January 10th. They had a presentation from the Mosiacs Club at PHS petitioning to change the name of Columbus Day to Indigenous People Day. There was also a presentation on the upcoming enrichment program reviews. The next community conversation on the Code of Conduct will be on 3/29.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

**World Language Program (WLP) (Gina Geraci and Laurie Pincus)**

This program, previously known as LOTE, is back to being an in-person program! The program runs for 3 Wednesdays in February (1st, 8th & 15th). The students/teachers at PHS are only able to offer Spanish this year, but there were will a virtual program offered later in the year with other languages. Three out of the four elementary schools are doing WLP this, and next year all four will be able to participate. We were able to have about 10 kids per grade participate, split into 5 classrooms. Gina and Laurie are working on the logistics and need about 4 more volunteers to help out. They also need someone, or a few people, to take this over for next year. The classrooms used will be in the 4th/5th grade hall. A discussion was had about how to dismiss the kids and get them to the correct classrooms. Renee Yandow offered her room as a meeting place for the younger kids, and the volunteers or PHS students can pick them up. Renee will also make sure that this is added to the morning announcements to remind teachers and students.

**Fifth Grade Moving Up (Robyn)**

There are many parents of fifth graders willing to work on this. We confirmed that the PTA is covering the cost of Seabreeze for them this year, along with t-shirts.

**Staff Appreciation year end luncheon (Molly sent notes)**

Molly Menge-Maguire has been chairing this program but needs volunteers to help her. This event is the day after school ends for the kids. It is a catered lunch (Wegmans – menu already set) and each teacher/staff member goes home with the gift basket. Many of the prizes are donated by Cobbles families. There is about $2000 budgeted for this event. Lisa Tripodi and Cara Acker volunteered to help Molly with this.

**Screen Smart Week**

We don’t have a chair for this program this year. We discussed moving the week but looked up and confirmed that it is a national event. It runs from 5/1-5/7 this year. Allison Trawinski volunteered to take on this program.

**Ice Cream Social/Year End Bash (Robyn)**

A brief discussion was had on the timing of this – we remembered that last year it was on a Friday before a long weekend and many teachers and staff members were unable to help out. It was suggested to have this on a Thursday night instead to increase teacher participation and we decided to choose the date 6/15 for the 2023 event.

**Equity Committee (Michaela Wall)**

This group has a few new members. They are continuing to meet monthly, virtually. Sarah Dowd is Michaela’s co-chair. They are working on getting their newsletters up and running and doing another book discussion.

**Presidents’ Notes/PAB Update (Robyn & Ursula)**

PAB meeting talked about the upcoming 5th grade ceremonies.

The Penfield PACE.org group is looking for members (focus on enrichment)

The SEPTA (Special Education PTA) is really struggling. They have very few members and very little money. They don’t have enough man power to run the book fair again this year. Our group talked about running the book fair and continue having the funds go to their organization. A suggestion was made to have a different type of book sale where families donate their old books and everything is $1.

The topic of low morale among teacher and staff at Cobbles right now was raised. Many people are leaving to work at other schools and our staffing is low for special ed right now. Kellie said that teachers spent some time brainstorming ideas and want to bring back some pre-Covid things they used to do. They’d like to have theme days, BYOC day (Bring Your Own Cup with coffee and tea in the staff lounge). It was noted that it is a drain on the teachers when they have to spur of the moment cover recess monitoring instead of being able to use that time for work or to eat their lunch. Kellie is trying to work out a process so that they can all plan better. A monthly breakfast treat day is also coming back. They have a candidate to hopefully replace Danielle Blier (social worker) who is meeting with Dr. Putnam on Monday. The teachers are feeling unsupported and short staffed and a lack of control in their classrooms. Renee Yandow noted that social activities like happy hours are starting to come back after Covid. This is a real problem that parents are very concerned about.

**Miscellaneous Items**

There was a mistake in how tardies were being counted in the Infinite Campus program which isd being fixed.

Kellie McNair will bring up the question of parents being able to come in and eat lunch with their kids again to the Elementary Cabinet.

A suggestion was made to produce a “At A Glance” calendar for the end of the year events when there are so many things to keep track of and attend.

A suggestion was made to bring back the PTA table at events like Bingo Night to try and recruit more PTA volunteers.

Reed Sanchez (3rd grade teacher) took over the snack cabinet. Several suggestions were made to increase ease and awareness for parents such as putting a box out for kids to drop snacks in on their way into school (along with a Food Shelf box) and to put out a note on Parent Square because many parents don’t know about this program. It should be pretty easy to keep full if people are aware.

**Treasurer’s Report (Ashley Lieber)**

The Square 1 Art profit check came and we didn’t make as much money as we have in years past. This year parents had to pay for their own shipping ($12) and the time of the year was changed from spring to holiday season and many people thought both of those things contributed to less people ordering.

The Fun Run had a bill arrive late which cut into our profits for the year. We still ended up making $4,000 and plan to do it again next year.

Our current revenues are larger than our expenses and we are on track for a good year.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm

Next meeting will be Thursday, February 16th at 7pm in the Cobbles Library