

ACCESS Academy PTA

Minutes of General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, September 27, 2017, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium, Rose City Park School, 2334 NE 57th Avenue, Portland, Oregon

Attendance: 53 people signed the attendance list, of whom 35 were members for 2017–18. 6 members constitute a quorum for a General Membership Meeting.

Meeting called to order by President Jennifer Ellis at 7:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the General Membership Meeting of 23 May 2017 were neither reviewed nor accepted. This will be done at the next General Membership Meeting.

Introduction

President Jennifer Ellis introduced herself and the other PTA officers: Vice President Catherine Beckett (who distributed chocolate); Secretaries Lisa Karplus and Gil Neiger; and Treasurer Sally Maltman.

Jennifer also introduced Kristi Byfield, the President of the ACCESS Foundation. Jennifer explained the different roles and responsibilities of PTA as compared to the Foundation. She also explained that the PTA operates under the Bylaws of National and State PTAs and that the PTA officers can only take actions authorized by the bylaws or approved by the general membership.

Principal's Announcements and Updates

Principal Anh Nguyen-Johnson discussed two items: Run for the Arts (RFTA) and school enrollment.

Run for the Arts

RFTA is an annual fundraising effort (now done in the fall) organized by Young Audiences of Oregon and SW Washington. The funds raised are available to the school for arts-related experiences and teaching. (As noted at an earlier meeting, they cannot be used for things such as instrument repair, purchase of sheet music, etc.)

The Principal reported that she was gathering information from administration and teachers on how the funds were spent last year. Teachers planned residencies, trips, and supplies that they could use. Some went to the school talent show; a presentation from OMSI (School of Rocks); a field trip to the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall for a concert; a Taiko (drumming) group that came to the school; work related to photography; and arts supplies (some of the supplies went to support the other activities). (See above regarding supplies.)

The Principal reported that funds of about \$33,000 were still available at the end of this past June. Those funds are being used now for initial expenditures this year.

A parent asked how decisions were made with regard to how to spend the money. The Principal said that the staff will get together, either by content area or by grade level, and decide how to divide it. It will probably be allocated by classroom, although teachers will be free to pool resources as they choose. Students in middle school (but probably not at the elementary grades) may also have input.

A parent asked about theater or curriculum-based plays. The Principal encouraged parents to connect with their children's teachers. She noted that there may be additional contract fees for expenditures outside the Young Audiences "label."

Enrollment

It had been hoped that a representative from the PPS District Office would attend the meeting, but one was available.

Principal Anh Nguyen-Johnson reported that the District is aware that gender imbalance has been an historical problem at ACCESS, and they are looking at ways to address it next year. Parents with comments or concerns are encouraged to communicate them to the School Board.

The Principal said that she did not have the opportunity to provide input as to which applicants went into the second lottery that was conducted this year. This was done by the PPS Enrollment and Transfer Center; the pool coming into that lottery was already skewed 2:1 males to females. Lottery thresholds were changed, but it was not enough to compensate for this imbalance.

The second lottery was re-run with a reduced threshold because of the under-enrollment that resulted from the first lottery. The school remains under-enrolled with respect to what parents believe Board had discussed in recent past. Enrollment levels relate to the general question of whether a future building for the school will have capacity sufficient for growth.

Discussion

A parent asked whether there were a concern that reduced enrollment may impact funding for staffing (e.g., number of FTEs) or other budget items. The Principal said that she is advocating for ACCESS to retain its current funding even if the District considers the school to be under-enrolled. Karl Logan, the PPS Senior Director for the Grant and Jefferson Clusters (including ACCESS Academy), is also advocating for this. The Principal is hoping to increase the allocation for the School Climate Specialist to a full FTE.

A parent asked what parents can do to support the Principal in this regard. The Principal encouraged parents to continue to communicate their perceptions of the school's needs to the District. The Principal will continue to advocate to preserve or increase the FTEs

assigned to the school. It is already the case that other schools that had lost FTEs may need to increase their FTEs in October.

A parent asked whether the School Climate Specialist is being supported with new funds from the District or with existing funds from the Foundation. The Principal explained that only a small amount of Foundation funds are still available; most has already been allocated to staffing. Only a small amount of Foundation funds were used for this position. The Principal worked with Mr. Logan to secure funding from the District (which is paying 0.39 FTE of the 0.5 total).

correction, as of 10/20/2017: JEREMY JOHNSON -LK
A parent asked which positions the Foundation funded last year. The answer was Mr. Thom Johnson and Ms. Millis. In general, Foundation funds are used to support the least senior teachers, as they have the lowest salaries, allowing Foundation funds to go further. FTEs supported by the district can thus be used for the more senior teachers with higher salaries.

Financial Updates

Treasurer Sally Maltman gave a brief financial update.

A draft budget for 2017–18 was reviewed at the General Membership Meeting of 23 May 2017 with the understanding that the PTA will operate under this draft budget from July 1st (the beginning of the fiscal year) until a final budget is approved in September.

In the interest of time, approval of the final budget is being postponed to the General Membership Meeting of 18 October 2017. There was a proposal to allow the PTA to operate under the draft budget (reviewed in May) until that meeting in October. The proposal was seconded and approved without objection.

The PTA budget from 2016–17 had a surplus, and the PTA will make \$3,000 of that surplus available to the community in the form of grants. Grant-request forms were available at the meeting for those who were interested. Sally will also distribute forms to all teachers and staff. Grant requests are due by 12 October 2017. Applications will be reviewed at the General Membership Meeting in October.

The October meeting will also include a regular financial review.

Standing Rules

Secretary Gil Neiger discussed the fact that the ACCESS PTA operates under Bylaws (established by Oregon PTA) and Standing Rules (established by the ACCESS PTA). Copies of these were available for review.

Gil explained four proposed changes to the Standing Rules:

1. Section: Annual Dues
 - Change the section's title to "Membership and Dues"

- Add to the section a paragraph reading as follows: “A member for an academic year may participate in business meetings from the beginning of that September through the end of the following September.”
2. Section: Meetings
 - The section states that “General meetings of this association shall be held at least every other month on a Tuesday.”
 - The phrase “on a Tuesday” will be deleted.
 3. Section: Budget Change Authority
 - The current wording is ambiguous.
 - The section will be revised to read as follows: “For any budget item, the Executive Committee is authorized to spend a limited amount in excess of budget. The excess may be up to 10% of the budgeted amount or \$100, whichever is more.”
 4. Section: Standing Committees
 - Currently, the Standing Rules identify the following Standing Committees: Communications, Community Service, Fundraising, Social Activities, TAG Education Advocacy, Teacher Appreciation, Volunteer Coordination, Health and Wellness, and Emergency Preparedness.
 - Gil explained that, last year, some of these committees never met and were even without chairs for much of the year.
 - The proposal is to remove from the list Communications, Community Service, Fundraising, Teacher Appreciation, Volunteer Coordination, and Health and Wellness (leaving Social Activities, TAG Education Advocacy, and Emergency Preparedness).
 - Judy Berck pointed out that she was chair of the Community Service Committee (one of the committees to be removed; see below). President Jennifer Ellis clarified that the proposal only to change which are officially Standing Committees (which have certain administrative status under the Bylaws) and not to change the nature of efforts undertaken by the PTA.

Because notice of these changes had not been given at a previous meeting or in the call to this meeting, they could be approved only by a two-thirds vote.

There was a proposal to make the four changes identified above. This proposal was seconded and approved without objection.

New Special Committee: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

President Jennifer Ellis reported that the Executive Committee is planning to create a Special Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. PTA members can volunteer to be on (or chair) the new committee. Volunteers were encouraged to sign up with Co-Secretary Lisa Karplus after the meeting.

Announcements

Foundation. Auction Chair Kristi Byfield reported that there was a great first meeting of auction organizers. The auction is planned for Saturday, 21 April 2018. They are looking

for volunteers and ideas for a theme (ideas related to Earth Day are being considered). Volunteers can contact Kristi at accessacademyauction@gmail.com.

Emergency preparedness. Deborah thanked those who have volunteered to help with comfort kits; she will send out information on how to make them. The plan is to have one per child at the elementary grades. Next Friday (6 October), after the Principal's Coffee, there will be a gathering to organize supplies.

Box tops fundraiser. Sue Fisher explained that the school has the opportunity to raise \$400–500 by collecting Box Tops for Education. Parents are encouraged to clip participating box tops and contribute them via their children's classrooms. (Middle-school parents can deliver their box tops via the office.)

Apples and pears fundraiser. Seana Lane reminded the community of the annual fundraiser selling apples and pears from Kiyokawa Family Orchards. Last year, the school raised about \$1,500 in one day. There were order forms available at the meeting; they are due by Friday 13 October. Orders can be brought with payment to the school office and left in the big ugly green box with collage stars (it is a secure lock box). Fruit will be delivered to the school on 18 October and will be available for pick up from that day through 22 October.

Scrip. Seana is also organizing scrip again this year. Last year, scrip raised about \$2,000 for the school. This year, Chinook Books will also be available. Seana had four available on hand for sale at \$25 each for an app/book combination.

Girls on the Run. Eowyn Rieke encouraged parents to take a look at this program, which encourages pre-teen girls to develop self-respect and healthy lifestyles. There are two programs: one for grades 3–5 and another for grades 6–8. The deadline for signing up (with no obligation) was the following Friday, 29 September.

Camp Atom. This is a program by which the 8th grade class raises money for their spring trip. The 8th graders provide childcare for younger kids. The first Camp Atom will be held Friday, 29 September. There will be pizza, activities, etc. Children coming to Camp Atom must be of school age (but not necessarily ACCESS students) and potty trained. The charge is \$20 for the first child from a family and \$15 for each additional child.

Walk and Bike to School Day. Abbie Rankin reported that Walk and Bike to School Day was next Wednesday, 4 October. There was a need for parent volunteers (from 8:20am to 8:45am) to congratulate students and hand out prizes. [correction, as of 10/26/17 - LK] October

Halloween Haunted House. Sara Kennedy Adams reported that this year's "haunted house" would be in the auditorium during the last week of ~~August~~ October. The 8th graders are leading this with help from teacher Heather Kelly (middle school Language Arts and Social Studies) and Counselor Devin Harkness. The students are working to come up with a plan and make it work. They will be soon sending out a list of items with which they need help.

Community Service Leadership program. Judy Berck organizes this program, which runs from October through May. The program will be highlighted in the next Atomic Flyer. Every ACCESS student can participate in the program through volunteer work. Students who complete the expected number of hours (which varies by grade) will be recognized by the Principal at a special school assembly. Students can participate by volunteering in any number of different areas. Parents supervise their children's participation. A parent asked whether parents identify the volunteering activities, or does the program do so. Judy said that parents can do this, but she can help out by providing ideas. Another parent pointed out that there are some coordinated events at which students can volunteer (e.g., at the Children's Book Bank). Judy will coordinate these efforts. She asks parents to let her know of any appropriate volunteering activities.

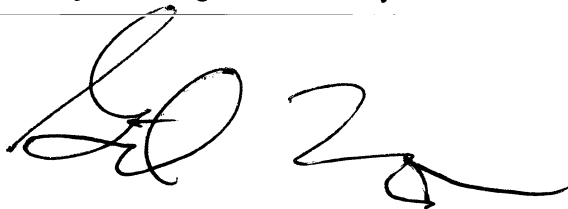
Harvest Festival. Lydia Dennehy reported that this year's event will be on Sunday, 22 October. There will be a planning meeting of volunteers at Kobos Coffee at 11am on 1 October. Lydia will send out announcements of volunteer opportunities.

Staff potluck. The first staff potluck is on Tuesday, 3 October. The Atomic Flyer has a link to SignUpGenius for those who want to contribute. President Jennifer Ellis noted that 8th graders can volunteer as part of their community service (see above).

The main meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

At 9:00 pm, President Jennifer Ellis proposed that the PTA send envoys to meet with representatives of KairosPDX. These could include Jennifer, Heather Kent, Toya Fick, and perhaps Catherine Beckett. Jennifer clarified that no statement joint with KairosPDX would be issued without a vote by the general membership of the ACCESS PTA. A show of hands indicated approval of this proposal.

Minutes compiled by Gil Neiger, Secretary



APPROVED 10/18/2017