

Janney PTA Executive Board Meeting February 2, 2010

Present at the meeting were: Rennie Anderson, Gerry Gretschel, Karen Harris, Malin Kerwin, Elizabeth Levenson, Maureen Leventhal, Norah Lycknell, Fran McCrackin, Jonathan McHugh, Dan Rosenthal, Heather Roy, Diane Schiff, Lucy Smiles, Pippa Trench.

Approval of Minutes

The January 2010 Executive Board meeting minutes were approved.

Principal's Report, Norah Lycknell

- Teachers are currently doing report cards, trying to norm comments (and eventually grades) and are sharing best practices on comments.
- DC BAS and interim testing results are very good.
- Reading level, fluency and comprehension are now being assessed in classrooms.
- It is time for another paw print celebration which will, again, be led by Maureen Leventhal.
- Norah is working on modifying the existing paw print system for the upper grades since the current system is not motivating. Looking at rewarding acts of kindness from student to student. Will likely pilot a new system with the 5th grade.
- Jamboree theme this week is determination and perseverance.
- Career Day, organized by Maureen Leventhal, is this Friday.
- Discussions about recess are ongoing. There is a misconception that the kids are kept inside more than they really are. Kids will not go outside in extreme ice, down pours, extreme wind and thunder storms. The "32 degree rule" is used as a guideline not a set policy. Going out for the 10:30 recess is at the discretion of individual teachers.
- Conversations continue about available outdoor play space during construction. Looking for a balance between open space and open hard top space. Parking will move off-site.
- LSRT has twice reviewed the budget but it is not yet final. Once approved there will be a community meeting. Enrollment next year will increase by 38 students, although the budget will decrease from the current year. Each classroom will be completely staffed but some other positions have been cut. There will be three pre-K classes
- Prior to completion of the addition, the science teacher will be in the classrooms but will then move to the science lab when it is complete.
- Conversations continue about the foreign language program. Additional information will be presented at the next meeting.
- Discussions continue with someone specializing in cooperative play to teach students skills needed to deal with the stresses of construction.

Treasurer's Report, Dan Rosenthal and Gerry Gretschel

- No budget item revisions have yet been made.
- Instead of mailing tax letters to every donor, a note will be placed in the newsletter informing people to contact Dan Rosenthal if they need a donation letter for tax purposes.
- Donations were received in memory of Elizabeth Knott a former Oasis tutor who passed away. A book will be placed in the library with her name in it and a note will be placed in the newsletter.
- The Janney band is going to be over budget as expenses have remained constant with a decrease in membership due to the move of the 6th grade to Deal. The PTA will fund the band over the budgeted amount but has requested an estimate of that dollar amount.

President's Report, Jonathan McHugh

- Attendance at PTA meetings has dropped. Discussion ensued about ways to address this, including reiteration about the availability of on-site babysitting during meetings.
- The SIT will be meeting tomorrow night at 6:00.
- Recruiting for next year's board will begin soon. We need to advertise broadly and reach out to potential candidates, as well as inform people that payment of dues at any financial level qualifies them to take part in the PTA.

LSRT Report, Norah Lycknell

- Current focus is on completing the school budget. Once finalized, financial assistance for specific items may be sought from the PTA.

SIT Report, Norah Lycknell

- Current construction plans will be posted in the school and online. Discussions continue about use of the eastern edge of the property.
- There is a meeting tomorrow night to discuss phasing. At the next meeting discussion will address landscaping – how the site will be laid out.
- Applications for construction permits have been submitted, with the groundbreaking set for March.
- A list of frequently asked questions is being developed and will be distributed to the community once completed – either on-line or both on-line and hard copy.
- The SIT has discussed a formal approach to talking to the students about the construction process.

Unfinished Business

- Janney's Wild will be at House of Sweden in April. A final date will be chosen this week. It will be a casino night with a silent/live auction and a band. Appetizers, dessert, wine and beer will be served. Volunteers and large ticket item donations are needed. Incoming pre-K families will also be invited.
- Additional details of the new after school programming structure will be available next week – to include after school care, academics, recreation and arts/crafts. A possible part-time coordinator who reports to Norah will be needed to oversee the program. This will be a Janney program that will include JED as a component. It will not be a JED run program.
- The bricks in front of the school will be removed and then reset after construction. The front of the school needs to be made ADA accessible. Additional bricks will be sold as a fundraiser.

New Business

- The Yearbook comes out in May and will be sold as a fundraiser. Last year they were \$20 each. This year they will be \$25 each for the first purchase and \$20 each for additional purchases. They will be sold on a pre-order basis.
- There will be a Spring picnic. No date has been set. Reading Rodeo will be in the parking lot area.
- The field has been unusable most of the year due to rain and snow. Drainage is poor. Repairs were purposely not made since this area will be used during construction. OPEFM will fix it when done.
- Discussions continue about outdoor play space and possible alternatives.
- There will be no rooftop garden but the west side of the building will have a garden area.
- Current playground equipment can not be re-used once dismantled. OPEFM does not include swing sets in its standard play equipment. The PTA may be asked to help purchase some play equipment.
- Congestion at drop off/pick up and general traffic issues are expected to be exacerbated during construction. DDOT runs a Federal program called Safe Routes to School that promotes safety around schools by promoting walking and biking to school and through improving the flow of traffic. Last week an SRTS representative observed drop off and pick up and provided us with a list of dangerous behaviors that are occurring. We need a system to reduce car traffic and clarify parking options and safe places/ways to drop off children from cars. Signage must be clarified and parents/students better educated. The goal is to have 80-90% of parents change their behaviors. Pippa Trench provided a handout of preliminary ideas, not for general circulation. SRTS will help run a meeting to get community input and buy in on changes to be made. We need a PTA committee to work on this project, link to Ms. Franklin and her crossing guards and coordinate with SRTS.
- The server was put in today and can be used by Norah. It will be rolled out soon for other users.

Meeting adjourned.