



Cottage Street School PTO Membership Meeting Minutes from October 3, 2013

Meeting began at 7:00 p.m., adjourned at 8:10 p.m.
30 people present

1. **Principal's Report given by Andy Zides**
 - Red Sox theme day will be 10/4
 - Staff adjusting to larger school population, 515 students compared to usual population of about 430 students.
 - Popcorn Friday will begin 10/11. First Friday is free.
 - There will not be a specific school theme this year other than "Cougar values" due to the number of new initiatives in the school.
2. **Welcome and Introductions**
3. **Approved September 2013 meeting minutes by voice.**
4. **Committee Updates:**

- a) **Membership:** To date, 263 children (196 families) have joined PTO, approximately 50% of the school population. The directory should go to the printer next week and is expected to be ready about two weeks later. Membership committee needs volunteers for next year.

Membership Chairperson, Leandra McLean, is also the Book Fair chair and reported that we saw a 10% increase in sales at the Book Fair this year. The sale made about \$1700 for the PTO and provided \$600 in vouchers given out to students, as well as \$500 toward raffles at Fun Fair. Leandra thanked all of the volunteers.

- b) **Fun Fair:** Volunteers are needed for all aspects of Fun Fair, but especially for the following positions: Co-chair for the 2014-15 school year (would shadow the current co-chairs this year), Raffles, and General Store. There is an informational meeting on Wed. 10/9 at 7:00 pm for anyone who would like to learn more about Fun Fair. It will be held at Betsy Strauss's house, please contact her at strauss.betsy@gmail.com if interested.
- c) **Box Tops:** One week left to hand in the current Box Top sheets before the drawing for an Orange Leaf gift card. Each Box Top brings \$.10 for the school, and last year Box Tops brought in \$1200!



- d) **Programming:** Co-chair Jennifer Brown described some of the programs being arranged for grades K-2 such as Crazy Tracy, Zoo Mobile, and Historical Perspectives. Co-chair Beth McLaughlin described some of the programs that are being arranged for grades 3-5 such as Museum of Science-Windmills and Geodomes, and Historical Perspectives.
- e) **Popcorn Friday:** Begins 10/11 and the first week is free.
- f) **Kidstuff Coupon Books:** Fundraiser is almost over. Please return coupon book if not purchased, or pay \$25 to keep the book. Additional books that were ordered will be delivered in about three weeks.
- g) **Beautification:** The next cleanup will be on Sun. 10/6 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.
- h) **Website:** Eric Norman will be talking to committee chairs about uploading their own information to the PTO website and sharing documents via Dropbox. A question was asked about an on-line directory- Meg responded that this has been considered but issues of privacy and ownership of the information have been prohibitive. Members were encouraged to “like” PTO on Facebook.
- i) **Playground:** Mark Nelson, Chair, stated that new wood fiber will be needed soon for the playground. He questioned whether the sandbox should be replaced as children don’t seem to use it. Suggestions were made for potential alternative items that would appeal to younger children, as well as keeping the sandbox but putting in more sand toys and covering the sandbox.

Mark asked for funds to replace the tether balls which are 1.5 years old and have broken ropes. He requested 3 balls at \$20/ball, plus shipping costs. Vote held and approval given for funds not to exceed \$90 to replace the tether balls.

- j) **Cougar Gear:** Orders placed for tie-dye shirts will be filled on Friday or Monday. Cougar Gear will now be sold at PTO events but there will also be an order form will go home for specialty fall items soon.
5. **Treasurer’s Report:** Elizabeth reviewed income and expenses, report distributed.
6. **New Business**
- a) **Committee Vacancies:** Allison Leichtman and Sondra Widland volunteered to serve as co-chairs for Turn Off the TV Week.



- b) Halloween Bingo will take place on 10/29. The Halloween costume fundraiser is underway- PTO will receive 15% of the cost of each order placed.
- c) Barnes & Noble Night will be held on 11/20. There will be performances by music groups from each elementary school and books read by the principals. We are partnering with Texas Roadhouse (walking distance from Barnes & Noble) who will give 10% of all meals purchased on 11/20 to the CSS PTO.
- d) Someone raised the issue of the increase in cultural diversity among CSS families and asked how the PTO can address this. A suggestion was made to provide more explanation about what the PTO does to families who don't speak English as a first language or who are from other countries. Another suggestion was to provide a forum outside of the regular PTO meeting for new families to ask questions. Meg noted that the chair of the Diversity Committee provided Mr. Madden with a calendar of various important celebrations from different cultures.
- e) Someone suggested that it be clarified that individuals can volunteer at PTO activities even if they did not pay the PTO membership fee. Meg emphasized that donations of time and service are valued along with monetary support, and that any offers of help are welcome.
- f) A recommendation was made for a possible open list server to facilitate communication among CSS families. The feasibility of this will be discussed with John Marcus, Director of Technology for the Sharon Public Schools.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.