



Cottage Street School PTO Membership Meeting Minutes from September 10, 2013

Meeting began at 7:00 p.m., adjourned at 8:25 p.m.
55 people present

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
2. **Approved June 2013 meeting minutes by voice.**
3. **Treasurer's Report:**
 - a) Reviewed 2013-14 budget. Budget approved by voice.
4. **Committee Updates:**
 - a) **Membership:** Membership drive is underway. The stated deadline to be in the directory has passed but it is not going to print until October so there is still some time to be listed. Membership is accepted throughout the year. All PTO members get a directory. Contact Meg Dussault, PTO President, if the membership fees pose a financial hardship. Emails will be sent to confirm directory information this year instead of having it posted on the wall at Back-to-School Night.
 - b) **New Families:** Calls were placed to welcome kindergarten and new families. Contact Liv Van Dyke, PTO President-Elect, with questions.
 - c) **Room Parents:** Amy Wiebe, Chairperson, described the role of a room parent and thanked those who volunteered. There are openings for room parents in the following classes: Kauffman, Liberfarb, Kinney, Smith, and Sullivan.
 - d) **Programming:** Jennifer Brown, Co-Chairperson, described how programming is provided to the school by PTO funds, noting that most grades receive two programs per year in addition to two all-school programs/performances. The Programming Committee consults with classroom teachers when selecting programming in order to support the curriculum. Mr. Madden mentioned the "Artist-in-Residence" program which will occur at CSS again this year.
 - e) **Beautification:** Will meet at CSS on Sat. 9/14/13 from 10:00 am- 12:00 pm to do gardening and ground cleanup.



- f) **Birthday Books:** Students/families can donate to the Birthday Book Fund and dedicate a book to the CSS Library in someone's name. It can be done for any occasion, not only for a birthday. Students can announce their book dedication over the public announcement system. Irina Gott, Chairperson, can be contacted with questions and asks that requests be sent in at least three weeks before the book is to be dedicated.
- g) **Back to School Cookout:** Will be on Sat. 9/15/13 from 1:00 pm- 4:00 pm. Today was the last day to purchase tickets at the price of \$10/family. Tickets will be available at the door for \$15/family.
- h) **Lunch Bunch:** A description of the program was provided. Sign-up forms were in the PTO Welcome Packet. Due to a change in lunch times, the times on the forms are not synced with the actual times.
- i) **KidStuff Coupon Books:** Will be sent home soon. 50% of the profit comes back to the PTO!

5. Nurse's Report

- Mrs. Molinda plans to be on-line more than in the past. If you need to reach her urgently and she is not answering her phone, please call Jeanne in the office and have her find her.
- Medications **MUST** be brought in by the parent/guardian, not by students. Mrs. Molinda needs doctor's orders and a parent/guardian signature in order to dispense medication.
- The policy on "no outside food" will be strictly enforced this year. Students and parents are not allowed to send in food to the classroom to be shared with other students (e.g. birthday treats). The only exception to this policy is if the teacher gets permission and makes the request of parents.

6. Principal's Report

- CSS has more students than ever, about 513. However, class sessions have been added in 3rd and 4th grade, along with Special Education and ELL. Many individual class sizes are actually smaller than last year due to the addition of classes.
- Security will be heightened due to the increase in students and as per district policy. All visitors will be asked to identify themselves before being let into the building, even if they are known to the office staff. All visitors will need to wear a "visitor" sticker when



in the building. CORI checks are required of all adults who volunteer at school or school activities. A CORI must be completed every three years and must be done for the Sharon Schools even if one has been done for another agency. Applications are in the office.

- The district is considering doing a mock evacuation at one school in order to learn from it and improve upon the process.
- The amount of time allotted for lunch/recess remains the same as it has been in previous years (40 minutes total). Each grade is sharing lunch/recess with another grade based on the number of students this year rather than by chronological order (e.g. 1st and 4th grade are together).
- The school is piloting three math programs as part of a district initiative.
- Back to School Nights (9/16 and 9/17) will be conducted differently this year due to the increased number of students. Parents will report directly to the classrooms rather than the cafeteria. The general address from Mr. Madden, Mrs. Molinda and the PTO will be presented via Cougar TV.

7. New Business

- PTO will be holding the Fall Book Fair during Back to School Nights on 9/16/13 (grades K-2) and 9/17/13 (grades 3-5). ***New this year: Cougar Gear will be sold at Back to School Night! Also new: credit cards can be used to purchase Cougar Gear!*
- Popcorn Fridays resume in October. The first Friday will be free. The committee can use more help- contact Colin Barbera if interested.
- Walking Wednesdays resume in October.
- Please vote for CSS at the “Give With Target” site. Voters do not have to be CSS students/families. The drive ends 10/1/13. Donations can also be made to CSS with the Stop & Shop A+ Program- last year CSS received about \$800 from this program!

8. Committee Vacancies

- The Yearbook Committee needs assistance photographing students at school activities. Contact Eric Norman if interested.
- Michele Spiewak described Fun Fair and noted that it is the biggest PTO fundraiser of the year, grossing about \$16,000. Fun Fair will be held on Sun. 3/23/14. Chairpersons are needed for the General Store and Raffles. A chairperson is needed to replace Michele for the 2014-15 school year



and it would be best to have this person shadow the current chairs, Michele and Betsy Strauss, this year. If interested, contact Michele or Betsy.

9. PTO President Meg Dussault emphasized that while the PTO greatly appreciates any financial contributions it receives, the Board recognizes that families have varying financial situations and only requests that each family contribute as able. If financial hardship poses a barrier to participation in any PTO activities, please see Meg and know that the conversation will be kept confidential.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.