

## Groveland PTO Meeting Minutes

Location: GPE Library

Date: 02.18.16

Time: 6:00 pm

Attendees: 17

### Agenda Items

Review and approval of Jan 2015 meeting minutes.

#### Special Education Programming

- Fall 2016 Groveland school year will bring the Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD) program to our school. The DCD program is designed for students who have significant delays intellectually and who have deficits in adaptive behavior or functional skills. The program is looking at utilizing 2 currently vacant classrooms in the building for DCD classrooms. The program is funded through special education and provides the training and support staff needed to implement the program.
- District representative and parents of children with DCD spoke passionately about the wonderful benefits of this program both for the children with DCD and the entire student body. The program was described as providing an opportunity for shared learning and growth for all involved.
- A few GPE parents, although agreeing with the overall goals and value of the program, question the impact it might have on our school's growth opportunities because of the use of two classrooms. **Principal, Rebecca Pedersen agreed to contact the placement office to ensure our student enrollment will not be capped due to the need for two classrooms to implement this program. We are hopeful she will have a report regarding this at the next PTO meeting.**
- For more information on this program check out:  
[http://specialed.spps.org/special\\_education\\_programs](http://specialed.spps.org/special_education_programs)
- **PDF of information on DCD program at Groveland will be sent out this week.**

#### Recap of Past Events

- **Prospective Family Open House** was well attended. Student-led tours of the school seem a very effective marketing effort. A proposal was made to have the Student Leadership team run the routine school tours on Wed 10 am -11 am. Principal, Pedersen is open to having students run the weekly tours which usually run from November-March every school year.
- **Invention Convention** was very well attended. The student work and the live reptiles made the convention a great success. An organized and energetic event. Great job.
- **National African American Parent Involvement Day** was also well attended. The programming was unique and fun. The event gave the students a much valued chance to dance. Student art, readings, and singing that reflected African American themes were very much appreciated. **Parents expressed a desire to see next year's classroom activities reflect an African American theme.** African American poetry readings, songs, art projects, games, dancing, music were encouraged for next year's classroom activities.
- **National Walk In Event** a group of GPE parents and teachers gathered in support of fair contract negotiation for our teachers and schools. To learn more about the contract negotiations visit:  
<http://www.spft.org/contracts/2015-contract-negotiations/>

- There is strong still a need for a volunteer with basic Web skills to help update and revise information on our school website. If interested please contact, PTO President Tiffany Dreher at [tiffany.dreher@gmail.com](mailto:tiffany.dreher@gmail.com)
- Newbery Medal winning African American writer Kwame Alexander visited our school on Friday, Feb 19. The assembly was dynamic, fun, and energizing. Thank you to the National African American Affinity group for securing the grant and organizing the event.

#### Friends of Groveland (GPE PTO Fundraising Arm) Report, Chair Christine Melchert:

- **Apex Fun Run** ([www.apexfunrun.com](http://www.apexfunrun.com)) is underway. This year's character theme is Apex Dream Team, where students will join Johnny Dreamer and the Apex team in an exciting journey to learn what it means to become a Dream Team Leader: Dive In! Resourceful! Elevate Others! Attitude Check! Make A Difference! \$10,000+ is the amount we hope to raise from the Fun Run. The Run will be on Thursday Feb 25th. Students will run laps around the gym to raise money for our school. Fun Run Schedule: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade - 9:50 - 10:40, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - 10:40-11:30, 5<sup>nd</sup> Grade 11:30- 12:20, K - 1:20 - 2:10, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade 2:10 - 3:00, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade 3:00 -3:50. **Volunteer to help at the run on Thursday:** <https://www.volunteerspot.com/login/entry/1088755802015>

#### Current and Upcoming Events:

- **Conference Potluck** - providing meals for teachers during conferences - 03.17
- **Book Fair** - Fundraiser for school 03.18
- **Movie Night** - 03.18

#### Classroom Village Chair, Neha Lang, reported on upcoming events.

- **All School Skate Party** was super cold but fun. **We even got a handful of students on the ice who had never skated before!**
- A Clothing Drive and Talent Show were presented as ideas for possible upcoming events.

#### Gifted and Talented (GT) Programming and Staffing

- Groveland had GT staffing two years ago. When the funding for that position was reallocated for a first grade position (with input from PTO), the PTO's understanding at that time was that the GT staffing would return to Groveland. This has not happened.
- 33% of our student body is identified as GT. Support for those students would be appreciated.
- A comparison of Capitol Hill's resource for GT verse GPE was made.
- Securing a GT specialist for our school could give us a marketable edge in this community since Capitol Hill does not have the capacity to accommodate the needs of all the GT students in the district. This could potentially help our enrollment and retention numbers.
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher, Diane Johnston, stated that having a GT specialist was helpful in the development and implementation of differentiated curriculum for accelerated learning. She also stated smaller class sizes as an effective way to support students at all levels of learning within the classroom.
- Enrichment based programming within the classroom was encouraged instead of pull out method of education to support a mixed ability classroom.
- **The importance of resource allocation for GT staffing was in question because of our current needs for a librarian - since staffing for the library is mostly done with parent volunteers, for more nurse time - since our nurse is here 3 days per week and for a teaching assistance.** To learn more about GT practices, visit: <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/gifted-education-practices>

**Library Chair**, Elizabeth Lake is in need of more library volunteers. Parent volunteers are staffing the library this year so please help out if you are able so our kids can utilize the library as a resource. If you have the time and are able to make a weekly 1-2 hour commitment please contact Elizabeth at [ealake@hotmail.com](mailto:ealake@hotmail.com)

#### **Principal's Report**

- **Principal Rebecca Pedersen** is in the process of hiring a Special Education Assistant TA and a Clerk for our main office. This process might take some time.

**Groveland Lego League** has 2 teams going to the state championships on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. Great job and good luck.

#### **2016-2017 School Budget**

- Parents, once again, expressed concern regarding appropriate budgetary allocations for our school. This year, we wish to act proactively and express clear budget priorities for Groveland to our School Board *before* they finalize budgets for the next school year.
- We would greatly appreciate parent community support in joining us at the School Board meeting, and we welcome anyone who is interested in speaking on these talking points or any additional concerns for our school.
- **Please join us at the next School Board meeting this week on Tuesday, February 23rd, with Open Comment period at 5:30 pm, at the SPPS District Headquarters 360 Colborne Ave, St Paul, 55102 (Arrive by 5:15 pm)**
- Please contact Tiffany at [tiffany.dreher@gmail.com](mailto:tiffany.dreher@gmail.com) or Neha at [nehaup@hotmail.com](mailto:nehaup@hotmail.com) if you would like to speak to the Board or for any questions.
- **We will have a planning meeting at Coffee Bené on Cleveland Avenue, Monday, Feb, 22 at 7:00 pm. Please come and help us plan our presentation.**
- Discussion of the budget could take longer so extended hours for the next PTO meeting was requested. The next PTO meeting will be on March 8<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00.

Thanks again to all who attended!

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT PTO MEETING on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 PM**