

Groveland PTO Meeting Minutes

Location: GPE Library

Date: 09.30.15

Time: 6:00 pm

Attendees: 29

Agenda Items

1. Tiffany Dreher, PTO President, reviewed the PTO purpose of supporting our student's education through open communication between school, parents, teachers, and Friends of Groveland. Meeting norms that foster a positive and respectful communication style during meetings were established. Name cards will be used to promote name recognition.
2. **Review and approval of May 2015 meeting minutes.**
3. **Principal's Report**
 - a. **2015-16 School Enrollment Number is at 500 (this includes Pre K).** Class sizes are at or below caps except in teacher approved 5th grade classes. Current budget provides for existing staffing with an additional slated hire of a .25 Library Assistant.
 - b. **2015 MCA 3-5 grade school report is good.** 5% increase in Reading Scores, increased from 65%-70%, Math holding at 70%, the Achievement Gap was narrowed by 3-4%.
 - c. **Panda Paws:** An effort is being made to ensure everyone is getting their Panda Paws. If you have not been receiving Panda Paws or other school notifications, please contact the office. For submission to Panda Paws please check our website for schedule, guidelines, and due dates.
 - d. **iPad Roll Out** is scheduled for Jan 13, 2016. The roll out is well established and standardized throughout the district. Support and organization will be provided as rollout nears. More information will be provided at a future PTO meeting. A family event will be held prior to students receiving the iPads at school. Questions were asked about headphones, storage, and usage of iPads.
 - e. **Budget Review:** Parents were interested to learn if there is any possibility of hiring TA support this year because of extra funding we received from the legislation last year and the extra enrollment numbers. Rebecca Pedersen, Principal, explained that we used the additional funding we received to invest in our K program by hiring another teacher. **Parents expressed a need for a detailed explanation of current budget.**
 - **Principal, Rebecca Pedersen's Response** on how the extra legislative dollars we received last year and the extra money from our higher than projected enrollment numbers have been utilized:
 1. *In June 2015 the legislature allocated additional educational funds. On June 9, 2015, the School Board approved an additional legislative allocation to Groveland. We received one additional teacher. Groveland chose to use the additional teacher for another kindergarten class. The teacher was contingent on Groveland having enough students this fall. Our enrollment was over the spring projection this fall by approximately 30 students. (as of the end of September). In addition to the one*

additional teacher we have also been allocated enough money this fall to fund the additional preparation time for the one additional (K) teacher/class. With the additional preparation time now covered, we will be able to fund the library TA at .25 or about 7.5 hours per week.

- Jessica McDonald reported that our per-student funding last year appeared much less than comparable schools because that funding is based on number of students and the fixed costs of schools. Schools with higher number of students will appear to have lower funding per student because the fixed costs are divided out amongst more students. We also appear to have a higher enrollment because of Pre-K. Since Pre-K students only go half a day, it appears we have a higher enrollment number than we actually do.
 - Parents want to be advocates for our school and asked what can be done to assist in ensuring we help our interest in TA support. Parents asked where to direct interest in the budget - contact Assistant Superintendent, Sharon Freeman Sharon.Freeman@spps.org
 - The district looks at student enrollment in each school again by Oct 1. Becky assured everyone that we are stable with staffing/enrollment this year.
4. **Open House 2015** was perceived as a success in terms of combining supply drop off with the Open House activities and holding it before school begins for the year. Improved communication of GPE events and committee information at event was discussed. An assembly during the Open House is being considered for next year.
 5. **Before School Programming** hosted by GPE was explored by Jessica McDonald this summer, and although there seemed to be a lot of parent interest due to the logistics of hosting before school care, it is now being piloted and run through Parks and Recreation. The first program is the STEAM Science and Robotics, which will be on Tuesdays from 8:00-9:15, grades 2-8, starting October 6th. Angela is facilitating the class. Contact her at her email Angela@robots-4-u.com for any questions. Registration https://apm.activecommunities.com/saintpaul/Activity_Search/34801
 6. **Friends of Groveland (GPE PTO Fundraising Arm) Report:**
 - a. Christine Melchart, FOG Chair, explained how some of the funds raised are utilized at our school: Enrichment activities such as Northern Clay, Stepping Stone Theater and teacher grants of \$150 for each teacher to purchase supplies for their classroom are just a couple of examples. **Fundraising is important to the health of our school!**
 7. **Book Fair Fundraiser** Chair, Sabrina Sutliff-Gross, reported that the Fair will be held on the same night as the Family Movie Night on Friday, November 20.
 8. **Box Tops Fundraiser** Chair, Kari Hitchcock, urges families to collect Box Tops year round. Cut them out on the dotted line and store them to be collected by classroom teachers in February. This fundraiser costs us no money and made \$1,300 last year. Classrooms can win fun prizes that the kids get excited about.
 9. **Celebrate Groveland Fundraiser** Chair, Justi Leroe, encouraged EVERYONE to attend this year's Fundraising Bash. It is being held on Saturday Nov. 7th at the Cinema Ballroom. It is a great way to meet people, have fun, and raise money for the school. **There are also many ways to help make this event a success for our school. Attend the bash, be a sponsor, recruit a sponsor, host a Groveland Gathering, make a**

- slideshow, set up and/or break down at the event, and more. If interested, email Justi at justileroe@gmail.com Tickets for the Wine Wall raffle are also being sold. Tickets may be purchased from Justi. This is your chance to win a whole lot of wine!
10. **Classroom Village Chair**, Neha Lang, reported being excited about building community in our school through Classroom Villages this year. The idea of throwing an after school Boo Bash was proposed as our first whole school Classroom Village event. Classroom Village Coordinators are still need in a few classrooms . So if you want to be a Coordinator or help with Boo Bash? Contact Neha Lang at nehaup@hotmail.com
 11. **Volunteer Spot** is used by our school and our PTO to recruit and organize our volunteer force for the many events we support at GPE. Contact Chair, Deanne Lillemoe, at lilldesign@yahoo.com if you need assistance in setting up or understanding Volunteer Spot.
 12. **GPE Directory:** Make sure you are signed up correctly to be included in this year's Directory. This is our way of making sure you are informed about the events at GPE. Contact Chair, Sabrina Sutliff-Gross at stpaulskigrl@gmail.com if you need assistance.
 13. **PTO NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:** Spirit Wear, Teacher Appreciation, and Grant Writing.
 14. **Causus4 Change Report:** 2nd Grade Teacher, Jean Schaffer, and 1st Grade Teacher, Diane Johnston, spoke about this group of parents, educators, students and community members who work together to create stronger schools in St. Paul. They hosted an informative candidate forum in Sept for the four endorsed candidates running for school board this fall. They will be hosting two more events in October 6th and 13th. Check out their website for more information. <http://www.caucusforchange.com/>
 15. **Parents United for Public Schools:** An organization to unite and empower those who value public education in MN to be strong advocates for excellence in our public schools. They are a portal into the legislative world of education MN. They are hosting a Parent Leadership Summit on Oct 2nd 11am-2pm. Check out their website for more information. <http://www.parentsunited.org/>
 16. **Split Classroom Evaluation and Future:** Will be addressed at a later date.
 17. **Talent Show** is not on the calendar this year. If an alternative is to be hosted at GPE we will need a Parent Lead Committee to plan, organize, set up, run, and take down the event. Volunteers are welcome.
 18. **GPE Marketing Effort:** Parents expressed the strong need for a marketing strategy at GPE. Contact Marketing Chair, Sue Tomczak, at stomczak@runbox.com if you are interested in helping with the development of this vital tool for our continued growth.
 19. Thanks to all those who were able to attend the meeting.
 20. **WOW, CAN YOU BELIEVE ALL THE INFORMATION WE COVERED AT THIS PTO MEETING? PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT PTO MEETING THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22ND FROM 6:00 - 7:30 PM**