

March 13, 2017

Present: Neha Lang, Marjorie Marjorie, Sarah Emma Borre, Tiffany Dreher, Carrie Faust, Dan Sheehan, Ben Lang, Sarah Murphy, Kerry Furtney, Heather Allison, Becky Pedersen, Kathryn Wegner, Sue Tomczak, Roopali Phadke, Sarah Anderson

Review Highlights of February Meeting Minutes - Approval Minutes.

Notes from last time:

- ice skating party couldn't happen due to weather
- Groveland doors that were replaced have all been claimed
- the DCD position is still open

Committees Overview

Inclusion and Equity Initiatives:

- Developing a new Buddy system for Family Partnerships. This would be a database of families who are willing to be a partner for another family. Need a plan for how to share this with school staff. Contact Neha Lang if you are interested. groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com
- Planning for a Community Forum. The District's Office of Equity and Engagement have staff with experience on this topic, though they don't have a forum structure already planned. Neha will hear ideas from them soon. Sarah Murphy also recommends the YWCA of Minneapolis.
- Opportunity for those interested at the MN Historical Society, Exploring Identity in Multicultural Classrooms. It's designed for teachers, but might also be interesting to parents. This event is focused on A Good Time for the Truth - Race in MN. <http://education.mnhs.org/node/12117>
Authors from the event may be speaking at Central and may be also available to speak at other sites.

Garden Committee: Boy Scouts are planning a clean-up, but there are opportunities for more families to be involved on 4/22 Earth Day. More information will come out at a later date.

FOG (Friends of Groveland) - Fundraising Report

Great event!

Until pledges are received, we won't know how the event did as a fundraising event. We are aiming for 100% fulfillment this year. Funds are going to enrichment, field trips, and library materials, and have helped to fill in gaps in the budget.

Apex raised almost \$1000 in corporate sponsorship, thanks to them and to the kids and to all volunteers.

Any feedback on this, please contact the FOG leaders: Christine (cmelchert@gmail.com) and Heather (hmcmf04@yahoo.com).

News and Events

PTO Movie Night 6:00pm, Friday March 17th

1. Movie *Trolls* - Doors open at 6, movie starts at 6:30pm
2. Wear PJs, be cozy!
3. Volunteers Needed
4. Concession Stand Only: chips, popcorn, juice boxes, veggie straws. (Fewer volunteers needed in a volunteer heavy couple of weeks.)
5. Bring water bottles if you want water.
6. Parents, please stay with your children.

Parent Teacher Conferences Potluck

Volunteers Needed

Book Fair

Volunteers needed

SPPS Board Meeting (Public Comment Period) -March 21st -

Information: <http://www.spps.org/Domain/10382>

-Opportunities to speak during the public comment period.

Committee of the Board Meetings - April 11th

-More insight from the board at these meetings, though the meetings are long.

Community Action - Heather Allison

1000 Who Cair / Challenging Islamophobia and Defending Civil Rights - Heather Allison

Sat, March 25th, 4-8pm at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, St. Paul

-many events, many dynamic and well known speakers at this great event. A focus on educating and dispelling myths. Probably designed for adults and older kids.

<https://www.cairmn.com/>

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1000-who-cair-call-to-action-challenging-islamophobia-defending-civil-rights-tickets-31512752491>

Parent Comments

Tiffany Dreher - Committee of the Board Report - SPPS District Budget 2017-18 Review

-The March meeting was held last week and covered a great deal of information.

-Budget: we have a deficit of \$23.3M dollars. Due to a decrease in student enrollment, less FRL applications, and rollover of expenses from this year to next. Marie Schrul was basing her estimate on some conservative planning. Revenues: conservative estimates from the state and elsewhere. Q-COMP program is still included in this estimate but has not been implemented yet (additional funds would come from the state if Q-COMP was adopted). Expenses: could cut on transportation if actual amounts come in under the estimates, could cut on some of the funds which were protected last year, and could cut some staff by not replacing empty positions for instance. The board will discuss these options, and base decisions on what individual school recommend. There will be school-based implications but it is not clear what these are yet.

-Racial Equity reports from some specific schools; Heights and Vento. These (and the Restorative Justice presentations from February) are heartening.

-The Hmong and Somali PACs presented as well. Hmong parents focused on equity and on access to the programs. Somali parents expressed concerns about harassment and bullying of students in SPPS.

-Timeline for the superintendent was discussed. The search firm was pushing for an accelerated timeline. The board negotiated with the firm at the meeting and had a middle ground timeline.

Please look at it and think about attending events.

Principal's Report - Rebecca Pedersen

Process and timeline for class size and enrollment projections.

-the number of students is important in understanding the SPPS budget. Across the district, there were about 500 fewer students than in the projections last year. Title I budget is expected to decrease overall but isn't determined yet.

-last year and this year, we will see a reduction in the overall district budget

-there will be community meetings about the budget which are a great way to learn about the process. Watch the district website for details.

-Groveland will get a budget around or just after spring break and we will discuss it at the April PTO meeting.

-Groveland right now has a 440 K-5 enrollment with 40 more counted in PK. Becky anticipates being about 10 students lower than that for next year. Now that the maximum and minimum class sizes are more defined by contract, the district plans for the classes based on this and it is possible we may have 3 kindergartens next year. People who apply on time should still get their first choice of Groveland. A question was asked about split classrooms but we will look over the

enrollment numbers more closely with the budget and determine this. For example, they may try to make next year's 3rd grade three full classes.

-question about the \$85/pupil funding that was returned from the district to schools last June. Groveland used that to fund the music teacher. Parents expressed appreciation of the wonderful music program this year. This funding (\$85/pupil) was a one-time promise and could be reduced in the coming year's budget.

-Some discussion of Horace Mann and Highland Elementary, both of which will expand their enrollment this coming year. How will this affect Groveland in future years?

DCD class

-the original plan was to have two classrooms. Right now most of the participants are K-1 aged and it's a lower number because there is just one teacher here, licensed in DCD. The search for the additional DCD teacher is ongoing. This is a hard position to find because of the few teachers licensed in this area.

Thanks to FOG for going above and beyond, especially for the field trip budget supplement. The Apex Run went really well this year too.

How can parents be proactive about advocating for our 2017-18 Budget?

-Facebook group, Minnesota Alliance for Progressive Public Schools has plans to advocate at the state level for funding.

-Kathryn is organizing parents (and volunteers beyond Groveland parents) to work on specific actions to connect with legislators. Letter campaigns, op-ed writing, storytelling, and more.

-Like the FB page and also let Kathryn know if you'd like to get emails (kathrynwegner@gmail.com).

-At the next meeting, we may plan collective Groveland action once we know the budget for this coming year. Please come to the next meeting to make sure that we can work best together. We have historically presented at the Board, as a Groveland community and as a SPPS community.

Committee Planning for next year:

Volunteering is a great way to learn more about Groveland and support the community!

There are open positions for next year:

-Equity and Inclusion Committee needs leaders for next year

-PTO VP for next year

-Celebrate Groveland chair position is open. The fundraiser can change, but we need to keep some sort of a major fundraiser.

-There are many other opportunities to be involved. Please look at the committee list online and see all the ways you might be able to be part of our community support.

Please contact Neha groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com if you want to nominate yourself or others.

PTO's Environmental Thought:

What do you do when you are about to wash a water bottle or a glass and it still has water in it? If your answer is to pour it down the drain, then perhaps you might consider using it to water your plants. Pour it right into the plants or save the water in a watering can for later use.

PTO's Community Building Challenge:

Hang a blank sheet of paper on one of your walls. Then every night record acts of kindness each family members did for someone that day. Encourage them to show kindness towards everyone including fellow classmates they do not know well. Make it a game by creating goals/challenges for the week/month/year. Fill it up and put up another. Make it fun.

Parent question about new fundraising ideas?

Can we start coffee sales at school events? There are resources on the school website about how to bring new fundraising ideas to FOG. There are ways to do this online or you can talk to Christine or Heather as well.

Parent question about new building projects?

The next project in the works would be the building entrance, which was discussed with SPPS staff last year as part of the Facility Master Plan. The architect would be likely to draw up several sets of plans for discussion with the Groveland community in future years. The timeline for that is determined at the district level.

There are smaller projects that happen in an ongoing way sometimes with short notice -- for instance, work over the summer to reorganize storage spaces to meet new code for fire safety. The inside doors in the building were just redone as well. Information about facilities site specific information (such as water testing information) is available online at <http://staff.spps.org/Page/29522>

Join us for the next PTO Meeting on Monday April 17th from 6-7:30pm