

PTO Meeting Agenda & MINUTES: January 17, 2019

Groveland PTO Meeting Norms:

- ❖ Start and end on time.
- ❖ Foster an environment of respect and listening.
- ❖ Offer your opinion and welcome challenging viewpoints while assuming positive intent.
- ❖ Expect and accept non-closure.

1. Welcome and Ice breaker activity (6:00-6:05)

Thank you for coming! Please share your name and ages of children, as well as one topic you're interested in discussing. *Please take a post-it and jot down a few reasons you chose Groveland for your child.*

ATTENDEES

Sarah Murphy(PTO), Karl Talcott(PTO), Heather Allison(PTO), Kerry Furtney(PTO), Charlotte Hanley-Jacobson(PTO), Becky Pederson(GPES Principal), Marta Hanson(GPES 3rd Gr), Jackie Turner(SPPS), (Jayne Williams SPPS), David Weigratz, Stephanie Stegman, Adeel Ahmad, Sarah Craig, Marjorie Bequette, Doug Gaplicki, Erin Jude, Sarah Anderson, Jessica Helgen, Shaun Walsh (St. Paul Community Ed), Hrithik Govardhan

Introductions by Sarah, thanks to the SPPS people who made time to attend and talk with us; Let's intro selves while sharing "Why/how did you arrive at Groveland?"

Some examples were:

- Neighbors who attended
- Heard good things once moved into the neighborhood
- Started looking at and wanting a different school, but once placed at GPES, really loved the sense of community

2. Vote to Approve November Meeting Minutes and Today's Meeting Agenda (6:05-6:10)

November meeting minutes are available at:

<https://www.spps.org/Page/35621>

MOTIONS TO APPROVE NOVEMBER MINUTES:

Motioned: Marjorie Bequette, Seconded: Heather Allison

MOTION TO APPROVE 01/17/19 PTO MEETING AGENDA

Motioned: Hrithik ... Seconded: Sarah Murphy

3. SPPS Chief Operations Officer Jackie Turner (6:15-6:45)

Discussion about enrollment parameters and realities for GPES and districtwide, and ways we can work to grow Groveland enrollment

SM: We asked Ms. Turner and Ms. Williams to be here to discuss our ideas about improving enrollment as we've seen loss of personnel/staff due to numbers declining, and want to hear directly from the District about the background issues and find out how we as parents can be involved.

JT: This school is doing better at retaining students relative to a few years ago, used to have only 2 sections of K, so now up to 3. Recognize that we'd like to raise it to 4, although school not designed to handle that in older grades. "Ideal" enrollment is 529, (not actual capacity, but that would be too much strain).

BP: Facilities does an inventory, and they've studied this in depth

JT: Operationally is what we're talking about; "Target Enrollment Capacity". Currently at about 440 (incl. Pre-K)

SM: We'd love to see 3 sections throughout

BP: There were 4 K's for a number of years, then there's been a lot of movement to other schools as they get older. If we got to the ideal number, our programming would improve.

JT: How projections work: birthrates, population - a number is projected, and then we look at potential K enrollment and divide that number amongst all of the available K classrooms district-wide. Allocations will usually not match the requests exactly. If we know that a school is wanting to grow, that can be noted and accommodated, with the caveat that once that has been accounted for, the actual enrollment growth has to start to match.

Suggestions:

1. Work the Pre-K families, try and make them into Groveland families with the relationship building, particularly with the Pre-K teacher. Schools who've done this have seen growth through that means. A script for phone call follow-up is a way that the district can help out.
2. Try to convince teachers to agree to accept larger class sizes. Budget constraints at current funding levels basically paint the district into the corner of being as efficient as possible to keep most classrooms at or above max levels.

BP: Retention rates (ours is at 82%) cannot usually be adequately made up for by new families, as there just aren't enough that move into the area.

Marj: K vs 12th grade - What do the numbers look like district-wide?

JT: As a district, about 75% retention. Target is 80%

BP: Capitol Hill drains off about 5 kids (at K-1st age). Tapping into that Pre-K potential pool is still a good idea, before people make a specific choice about going to a specialty school.

JT: If the Pre-K program in your school is at half-day, that keeps the numbers up in your potential K pool, (although data shows that full-day is better for kids). You have that advantage of double the Pre-K numbers due to the half-day program here.

Dan: What is the ideal strategy? Number of sections?

JT: Taking kids at all grade levels would be best, for next year trying to get 1st grade to a 3rd section might be the best.

(Some more side discussion about really wanting to get back to 4 K sections so as to boost the numbers for older grades, given the attrition rates.)

SM: Is using the multi-age classroom approach a good way to straddle the numbers and work towards a larger goal?

JT: Yes, and there's also a public perception, no matter what's actually happening, that it's a way that schools are having G&T programming.

4. Ms. Shaun Walsh, Community Education Program Director (6:45-7:00)

Learn about community ed programming and provide parent feedback

We service about 10,000 students with various programs districtwide - Community Ed is just one component of that.

At GPES, the numbers have fallen, and so offerings had to be cut since those classes were losing money. 95% of attendees are from the host school. For the past 10 years we've tried to do just about anything, to see what works. It looks like other opportunities

have filled in the gaps at GPES, this year we didn't meet minimum numbers for any of the offerings. We are trying to work with Becky and our staff to figure out what other kinds of enrichment opportunities we could offer. For example, at Nokomis, we offer 4-day summer programming.

Doug: What's the best way to get communication to parents about programming?

SW: The flyers work everywhere else, we were understaffed enough this year that we couldn't help promote at the Open House.

Marj: The catalog didn't indicate that there would be anything offered here, and it seems that there could be a bias towards offering programs at more affluent schools, the message seems to be that Community Ed. is discontinuing programming here as the school is less affluent, (comparing to schools included in the catalog where there is significant programming). We feel that the fact of lower applicant numbers is less a result of people's interest, but more attributable to less notification and little to no inclusion in the catalog, hence it seems that there's a specific effort by the Community Ed. Department to withdraw its' efforts at GPES.

SW: The catalog messaging seems like a mistake, and we can try to rectify that; even so, for the past 3 years, we haven't met minimum numbers.

Adeel: I also noticed the racial makeup leaning, and what can we do to get another crack at it?

SW: We should continue to work with parents, school, try to do some surveying to see what people would be interested in.

Marta: The lack of paper flyers makes some of the announcements a surprise...

Erin: What is the crossover with the Parks & Rec programs? It seems like some of the same offerings?

SW: We're not always aware of what they're offering, and sometimes even the school principals aren't either within their building.

SM: What capacity is there for creating partnerships with parent volunteers, figure out how to make sure that the word is properly out...

SW: Would like to reach out and figure out how to approach this in the future.

5. SPPS Equity Innovation Grant Opportunity (7:00-7:05) - Heather Allison

<https://www.spps.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&ModuleInstanceID=92950&ViewID=7b97f7ed-8e5e-4120-848f-a8b4987d588f&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=91611&PageID=36001>

Brainstorm ideas for projects for our school.

The District is taking applications; info is sparse, an idea can be acted on if we apply and put together a presentation that includes a breakout session; we'd like to go forward with the grant proposal, anyone interested in helping move this into reality should get ahold of me.

6. Past and Upcoming PTO Events (7:05-7:10)

- A. Parent Social Hour - Lake Monster Brewery, Friday, December 7th nñ - Fun time, about 50 people!
- B. PTO "Town Hall" listening session, Wednesday, January 9th, 4:00-5:00 - Some new faces, a good chat, had about 10 people come by, some good sharing about the mixed-age classrooms.
- C. Artist and Writer's Fair, Thursday, January 24th--Parent volunteers needed! Please see online Signup. - Paul Nelson (Gr. 5) needs alot of help with setup on the day of the event (1/24).
- D. PTO Ice Skating Party at Groveland rink- Friday, February 8th, 4-6:00 - A fun event, last year there were alot of kids and parents.
- E. National African American Parent Involvement Day - Monday, February 11th - Ms. Hanson, 3rd Grade Teacher - (Ms. Hanson, Gr. 3) Exciting note on the 1-day residency and performance possibility which is pending. It would be nice to have a community art project, maybe a "hand mural" (trace and bespoke decoration, and include parents for a community-themed display for the cafeteria)
- F. Upcoming PTO Meeting topics: February 21,
 - Groveland building concerns, visit from SPPS Facilities; March 14, - They will look at a list and come and talk to us about it.
 - Discussion of pedestrian safety near the school - What can we (PTO) do to address potential traffic concerns
- G. Girls on the Run--volunteers?

This is a program we'd love to add to GPES, it's a 2-day/week program, looking for coaches - probably too short of a timeline to get it in place for this spring, but we should make a push for this for next school year. (Side Note: Sarah has had conversations with a few different program coordinators of Girls on the Run at other elementary

schools, and this is a fantastic program that has scholarship funds available to help qualifying families defray costs and can be a meaningful and empowering for involved students and volunteers.)

7. Fundraising Chairs Report - Heather Allison, Charlotte Hanley-Jacobson, Jen Schlueter (7:10-7:15)

A. Direct Drive

HA: Even though the Direct Drive campaign is technically over, it's never too late to contribute, every little bit helps (not closed); and we're about \$800 year over year

B. Carnival update

CH-J - The small but mighty team of volunteers is busy getting the plan together, if you'd like to help out with specific game or logistical planning, please contact Charlotte.

C. Apex Fun Run fundraiser and leadership lessons February 25-March 8 (Run is Friday, March 8)

-Questions about Apex?

HA: This is about the 4th year of this program which has a private group of young people come in and run the program (marketing, promotion, themed days, discussion topics, run-day administration) and helps GPES raise funds through pledges to the runners/students.

8. Principal's Report - Ms. Pedersen (7:15-7:20)

Available for questions immediately afterwards

9. Parent Comments - This is an open time to share ideas or questions. May follow up at the next meeting. (7:20-7:30)

Doug: Referendum passed, what now?

HA/BP: Put the budget back to levels that mean that cuts will not continue at the rate they had. Also, a big chunk is going to the Strategic Plan, as outlined on the District website.

10. Motion to Adjourn meeting, vote to adjourn meeting

MOTIONED: Sarah Murphy, SECONDED: Karl Talcott

**Please join us for the next PTO Meeting on Thursday, February 21st, 6-7:30
Events and Programs Sponsored by Groveland PTO**

- ❖ Kindergarten/Pre-K Back-to-School Coffee Hour
- ❖ New Family/Kindergarten Pizza Party and Orientation
- ❖ Movie Nights
- ❖ Enrichments (Residencies) for All Classrooms K-5th Grade

- ❖ Author Visit
- ❖ 5th Grade Picnic
- ❖ Classroom Villages/Room Parents (Community-building events and communication network for all classrooms)
- ❖ Open Houses
- ❖ National African American Parent Involvement Day (NAAPID)
- ❖ Safety Patrol
- ❖ Artists and Writers/Science Fair
- ❖ Student Leadership Team
- ❖ Year-End All-School Picnic
- ❖ Classroom Teacher Grants
- ❖ Specialist Teacher Grants
- ❖ School Library Fund
- ❖ Groveland Garden
- ❖ Midwest Food Connection Residency

Volunteer Opportunities

- ❖ Artist and Writer's Fair planning team
- ❖ Pandamonium! Groveland Carnival
- ❖ Apex Fun Run volunteers
- ❖ Yearbook
- ❖ Volunteer Coordinator/Online Volunteer Sign-up
- ❖ Girls on the Run Coach
- ❖ National African American Family Involvement Day Coordinator
- ❖ Lost and Found
- ❖ Talent Show/Open Mic Night Coordinator
- ❖ Teacher Appreciation Week and Conferences Meal Planning
- ❖ Equity and Inclusion -Co-Chairs
- ❖ Groveland Tour Guide (for prospective family tours)

Please email [Groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com](mailto:groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com) for more information about volunteering!

Questions and suggestions are always welcome. Please contact PTO leadership--we'd love to hear from you!

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Karl Talcott, Vice President groveland.pto.vicepres@gmail.com

Kerry Furtney and Talia Sheldon-Desjardins, Treasurers groveland.pto.treasurer@gmail.com

Heather Allison, Charlotte Hanley-Jacobson, and Jen Schlueter, Fundraising Chairs

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