

LAUREL PTO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 10, 2004
Location: Laurel Conference Room
Submitted By: Lexi Bisbee
Attendees: Shari Conrad, Kirsten Keith, Jeannie Cole, Karen Iyer, Lexi Bisbee, Jen Novak, Paula Hughes, Christie Tonsfeldt, Julie Roth, Kristen Owen, Nancy Hendry

Jen convened this meeting at 8:47 AM.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the Oct. 13 Executive Board PTO meeting. The motion was approved by all members present.

Ken Ranella: Guest Speaker

District Superintendent, Ken Ranella, attended the meeting and updated the board on a few important projects.

Arbors:

Ken reported that heavy construction on this project is scheduled to begin on Nov. 11 (a school holiday). With construction occurring at both Laurel and Oak Knoll simultaneously for cost-saving purposes, Ken told the board to expect the project to take at least 60 days.

A/C for Jan Byrne's Classroom:

Ken reported that the district has investigated the situation and has come up with three options.

1. Install A/C. Projected cost is \$15-16K due to refurbishment requirements to retrofit classroom. This will also have associated higher operating costs, and the district isn't certain that the room has a cooling problem: they believe the real problem is circulation.
2. Install a "whole house" fan. Projected cost is \$7K. This would really address the circulation problem. There will still be associated operating costs. These will not be as high as A/C (or even a portable A/C unit that was also mentioned).
3. Open a wall and install a new door and window. Cost is unknown at this time. However, there would be no operating costs.

The district has not come to a conclusion at this time. They are leaning toward the fan. Ken stated that this is not a PTO project; the district will resolve it. He assured the board that there is money for this project, and the oversight committee will select the best option and move on it in the next couple of months.

Portable Classrooms:

Ken reported that the district is in the process of selecting an architect to begin construction of a new pod of classrooms. This project will address the classroom

shortage created by class-size reduction and eliminate the high cost of portable classroom rental. Ken is planning on construction starting in the fall after completion of a facility plan, designs, and a funding plan. After construction is completed, the district plans to redo the field in the 2nd grade yard.

Kindergarten Study:

Ken discussed a current district initiative to study the length of the kindergarten day. Oak Knoll is running a pilot full-day program this year, and the district, along with teacher and parent input, is trying to determine the best practice to use at both Oak Knoll and Laurel. Ken expects to have recommendations from the School Board in March.

Principal's Report:

Nancy began her report with great feedback on the Galileo program. She said it was enthusiastically received by the staff and teachers. The program was well organized and easy for Laurel staff to work with.

School Wish List:

Nancy described exciting projects that she is working on with Gary Reikes and Marla Dahlby for playground, recess, and P.E. programs. Her wish list item is two extra counselors for four days a week to run these programs.

A motion was made to approve payment for two additional Reikes councilors for the 1st Grade playground. The motion was passed unanimously by all board members present.

Jeannie Ritchie Grants:

Nancy reported that Laurel received 8 of the 16 grants in the district, out of a total of 20 applications! Only one Laurel application got turned down.

1st Grade Playground:

Nancy discussed an issue that has arisen with parents coming to the playground at lunch. She reiterated the rules that are printed in the school directory, highlighting that the lunch recess is considered class time and is guided by staff, and all visitors must sign in and respect the authority of the yard-duty staff just as a visitor would respect the authority of a teacher in the classroom. These rules have been developed by Nancy in conjunction with her staff. The top priorities of the rules are children's safety, meeting education code, and considering recess as a learning environment. If a parent has any concerns about what is happening on the yard at lunch, they need to talk to their teacher and/or Nancy. She promises that they can work together to resolve any problems. This is not a PTO issue.

Teacher's Report:

Kristen Owen told the board that the teachers are setting grade-level wish list priorities at their next staff meeting. Jen gave Kristen a rough estimate of \$20K to fund wish list

items. The board agreed to review the teachers' priorities over e-mail and have recommendations at the December board meeting.

Kristen also reported positive feedback on the Galileo program. She also told the board that she was going to a Kindergarten Conference in Anaheim to help gather more information for the school board to make its recommendation about the length of day. Lastly, she discussed the interest in providing sponsored hot lunches to free-lunch students. Nancy said that this should not be a PTO function. Christie will follow up with the Hot Lunch Committee to see if they can find a way for parents to sponsor other children.

Treasurer's Report:

Christie passed out four handouts: 1) PTO YTD Budget, 2) Account Balances, 3) Cash Flow, and 4) Register Report.

Revenue:

Looking at the YTD Budget handout, Christie highlighted that we have received \$60K from Membership. The Book Fair profit still needs to be finalized, but she expects it to be between \$5-6K. The \$1500 Westfield donation will be used to establish the new Community Support Fund. School Souvenirs is doing great compared to its projected budget, and Hot Food is just a pass-through category: even though it currently shows revenue, this will zero out.

Expenditures:

Christie highlighted that she paid Laurel \$2500 for Assemblies and \$5985 for Field Trip Buses. On the budget, she established a new line item called the Community Support Fund, which is now separate from the Early Birds. She also put the PTO start-up costs under the PTO Council Dues line item.

Christie also noted that we opened a money market account for PTO funds, and we are now earning a higher rate of interest.

A motion was made to ratify PTO expenditures since the October Board Meeting with checks #1506-1525. The motion was passed unanimously by all board members present.

Committee Reports:

Caring & Sharing:

This committee provided Jen with guidelines for using money from the new Community Support Fund. The board will review these via e-mail.

Luttiken's Lunches:

In order to implement a bag lunch program from Luttiken's, the PTO requires a committee chair, a board liaison, and publicity. Andrea Ralston volunteered to run the committee. However, the board is concerned about the scope of the project, because it

would require parent volunteers each delivery day to sort and distribute the lunches. No board member felt they had the time available to volunteer to be a liaison to this committee and to get it up and running this school year. The board recommends that this be addressed in conjunction with Hot Lunch for next year.

School Beautification:

Kimberley Wainscote, the chair of this committee, spoke about the work day coming up on November 20th. She said she needs more people, and she will work with Shari to publicize it even more.

December Staff Luncheon:

Shari is working on getting this luncheon ready. She is currently getting volunteers to provide the food. She is also working with the Staff Appreciation Committee to coordinate holiday gifts from that committee and the board.

Suggestion Box:

1. Put a net between the basketball hoop in the 2nd Grade yard and the parking lot. Shari will work with Marla to research this.
2. Trapping Gophers: Kimberley Wainscote is research the cost of new, humane gopher traps.
3. Laurel-Encinal Bus: The pilot program is currently receiving great feedback. Liability on the bus is a Menlo Park city issue, not a PTO or district issue.

Survey Results:

Karen reported that she got 86 replies. All the responses were almost evenly split (i.e. day vs. night). The upshot is it is hard to do something that works/appeals to everyone in the community. 46 respondents said they would be more likely to attend if there was a speaker on a hot topic.

December General Meeting:

The board decided that we should try to get a speaker to talk on one of three areas: district priorities, differentiated education, or conflict resolution. Jen will ask Ken if he can come back and speak on district priorities. If he is unable, we will look at the other possibilities. This meeting will take place on Dec. 2nd in the morning.

New Business:

1. Laurel/Encinal Joint Boards Holiday Brunch is scheduled for Dec. 1st.
2. An updated calendar was sent out.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:18. The motion was approved unanimously by all board members present.