

Central PTO Board Minutes
Friday, October 3, 2014
Skokie School Curriculum Room

Present: Cynthia Cata (Chairperson), Casey Russell (Vice Chair-Communications/Technology), Karen Hawkins (Treasurer), Janet Beatty (Secretary), Neilly Hallerman (Co-President Skokie/Washburne PTO), Shannon Preda (President Crow Island PTO), Jen Hayes (Vice-President Hubbard Woods PTO), Irene Zmudka (President Greeley PTO), Trisha Kocanda (Superintendent), Nancy Fehrenbach (FAN Liaison), Bill Meuer (School Board)

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am.

President's Welcome – Cynthia Cata

Cynthia welcomed Bill Meuer to the meeting and introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes – Janet Beatty

Minutes from the September 12, 2014 meeting were approved.

FAN – Nancy Fehrenbach

Nancy highlighted all of the upcoming FAN speakers.

A follow up to Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's presentation will take place on October 14th in Evanston.

Lawrence Steinberg, an authority on adolescence will speak on November 3rd with a follow up presentation on November 4th.

Andrew Soloman will be back on October 23rd to speak on depression.

William Deresiewicz will be at New Trier, on November 14th, with his presentation "Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life"

Superintendent Report – Trisha Kocanda

Go To School nights are over and preparations for conferences have begun. Conferences are earlier this year because of the testing schedule.

Work continues with the Mobile Device Initiative. Logistics, distribution, training and staff development are ongoing. There will be a parent technology "boot camp" on October 25th for all of New Trier Township.

On October 30th, a program called Raising Digital Natives will be held at Skokie School. A morning session for elementary aged children will take place at 9:00am and one for middle school aged children at 11:00am. Linda Yonke will speak between the two sessions on the upcoming referendum.

There are 4 available seats on the school board. Currently, there are 11 interested individuals, 2 are past board members. Interviews have begun and a recommended slate will be announced next month.

Trisha has continued to get “out and about”, meeting with all of the schools and the Board. She will meet with students in grades 5 – 8 next week.

The low math scores on the ISAT test results were unusual. This is due, in part, to the change over to the Common Core. This is only one test and the administration looks at trends and patterns of all tests and grade levels. A new test, the PARCC, will be administered in the spring to replace the ISAT.

The personnel files of former teacher Bill Bricker have been located and will be accessible, to those who wish to view them, next week. The District does have safe guards and training in place regarding these situations.

School Board Report – Bill Meuer

Bill shared how happy the Board is to have Trisha as Superintendent. She has done a fabulous job launching the school year so far.

On the budget, there is work being done regarding the \$2 million tax abatement from the 2013 Tax levy. There is \$30 million set aside to repay debt by 2017.

Alison Hawley, Beth Martin, and Dr. Hager gave reports.

The budget was approved for the coming year. Amendments will be made after teacher negotiations are done. They are going well.

Next meeting is October 21st.

President's Report – Cynthia Cata

Cynthia continued the discussion of having transparency with each schools PTO budget. She recommends that everyone post a basic budget on their website along with meeting minutes and meeting dates.

She also recommended that the PTO's spend down any excess/reserve money they might have.

If parents have a request for an item to be purchased by the school, they should be directed to the Principal.

Treasurer's Report – Karen Hawkins

Karen is going thru the "boxes", getting ready to give the necessary documents to the auditors next week.

Karen asked the question regarding paid dues as they relate to PTO Board members. She believes that Board members must have paid dues over the last 2 years. Cynthia will look at the By-Laws to confirm this. In the meantime, Karen will check to make sure all Board members are current.

Vice- Chair, Communications/Technology – Casey Russell

No report

Skokie/Washburne PTO – Neilly Hallerman

Neilly reminded everyone that the Skokie/Washburne PTO sponsored parent party will take place on October 25th at the Crow Island Woods. It will be low key and casual. Remind parents to sign up.

Hubbard Woods Report – Jen Hayes

No report

Greely Report – Irene Zmudka

They are working on organizing indoor recess activities, rather than show movies.

They launched their one-time donation plea of \$100 to the Greeley community in place of smaller donations thru the school year. They received \$6,700 with 65 families participating.

Irene shared with the Central PTO the letter and budget they sent out to parents.

They launched their Directory Spot APP for Greeley. Paper directories will be out next week.

They had a Dream Green meeting with the District and architects this morning (Karen York and Kim Ronan will be attending on behalf of PTO)

Irene offered a fundraiser idea to the group thru a past teacher who now works at Kate Spade.

Crow Island Report – Shannon Preda

Runathon will be held today. It is postponed until the afternoon because of the morning rain.

Crow Island is also working on an indoor recess plan. They will have a certain number of kids per class go to the resource center to do activities. This will be parent volunteered. They will start the program on December 1st and run it until the weather is better.

There are a few items on the teacher's wish list for technology pieces and swings for the 1st grade playground.

Recently, UV film was put on the foyer windows to keep some of the heat out. Also there is new furniture there and this will help prevent fading.

Donations that have been received online have been good. About a 65-75% response with only 1 complaint.

Lonnie Stonitsch from FAN will be at our next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10:05 am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Beatty
Secretary