

Central PTO Board Minutes
Friday, November 7, 2014
Skokie School Community Room

Present: Cynthia Cata (Chairperson), Casey Russell (Vice Chair-Communications/Technology), Karen Hawkins (Treasurer), Janet Beatty (Secretary), Erika Kreisa (Co-President Skokie/Washburne PTO), Shannon Preda (President Crow Island PTO), Georgie Geraghty (President Hubbard Woods PTO), Irene Zmudka (President Greeley PTO), Trisha Kocanda (Superintendent), Nancy Fehrenbach (FAN Liaison), Bill Meuer (School Board), Guests: Maureen Miller (Director of Technology), Lonnie Stonitsch (FAN Director), Susan Rooney (FAN Asst. Director)

The meeting was called to order at 9:01am.

President's Welcome – Cynthia Cata

Cynthia welcomed guests Lonnie Stonitsch and Susan Rooney from FAN and Maureen Miller, District 36 Director of Technology to the meeting.

FAN – Lonnie Stonitsch and Susan Rooney, guests

Susan started by thanking us for having them and for the collaboration between FAN and District 36.

Lonnie shared that this is FAN's 32nd year. She handed out a schedule with all of the upcoming speakers. It's a very "robust" schedule. She also passed around a signup to join the listserv.

FAN is seeing unprecedented growth. Over 14,000 people have attended their events. Speakers and topics are relevant to what all Districts are interested in. Evanston Township High School joined in last year.

All District schools have liaisons to keep conversations open and aligned with schools interests.

FAN is currently trying to normalize funding by asking each school to pay \$3/student. This amount then allows the schools to offset any additional donations for sponsorship. Donations are adjusted for lower income districts. The cost for high schools is \$5/student. This has been an attractive

model. These payments are not mandatory.

Financially, support is key. They are grateful for the sponsors they have who give annually. Because of the generosity of so many they are looking at the possibility of finding actual office space (rather than someone's home). They are also looking at possibly having a paid Executive Director and, down the line, a Development Coordinator.

Lonnie said that she is able to section off some seats for popular programs if you know you'd have a lot of interest from your schools.

Georgie Geraghty commented that because of the strong programming FAN does, Hubbard Woods has dropped most of their own programming.

Approval of Minutes – Janet Beatty

Minutes from the October 3, 2014 meeting were approved.

Superintendent Report – Trisha Kocanda

Trisha introduced Maureen Miller, Director of Technology. Maureen has done a great job in her new role with all of the District's new technology initiatives.

Trisha is happy to report that an agreement with the teachers has been reached after 13 months of negotiations. It was a collaborative process giving long-term stability and value to the teachers with cost limits.

PARCC assessment will replace the ISAT. The district is still uncertain as to what this will look like. There are concerns with 3rd graders as it is a long test, 13 hours, and requires a lot of keyboarding skills. Because of the time it takes, the STAR test will not be given.

Trisha thanked the PTO Presidents for hosting her as she continues to gather information from staff, students and parents for her entry plan. She has questions she will ask the parents; What do you dream about for the schools? What does Progressive Ed look like to you? Are we a high performing school or are we serving high performing kids? Trisha is beginning to see trends and is hoping to share her themes in January.

Special Report – Maureen Miller, Director of Technology

Maureen recently spoke at Greeley on digital citizenship and shared some handouts. Maureen explained that her approach to technology is student and learning centered.

She is working to align the technology with the schools mission and vision and is always preparing for the unknown. Technology is constantly changing.

Policies and restrictions are in place for improper use of the technology. Meraki, a mobile device management system will soon be installed. Unapproved apps that are downloaded would result in the iPad being remotely locked.

There was a discussion amongst the group regarding the recent “sexting” incident at Washburne. The school is committed to ongoing education for the students and parents.

School Board Report – Bill Meuer

The board is grateful that the contracts are done. The faculty has been great. Trisha helped solve many issues. The teachers felt heard and morale is high.

Maureen Miller gave a great presentation at the last board meeting. She has the insight and effort to make the Mobile Initiative successful.

Everyone should continue to follow along with the finances (i.e. Tax Levy, Tax Relief Plan)

Alison Hawley discussed the assessments and is bothered by the amount of time they take for 3rd graders. These assessments put pressure on both the kids and the parents. The board is interested in following up on these assessments.

Enrollment remains the same.

Next board meeting is on November 18, 2014.

President's Report – Cynthia Cata

There will be an amendment made to the By-Laws allowing for e-checks.

Cynthia asked the PTO Presidents where they are with putting their schools budgets on their websites. Everyone seems to be moving forward.

Our By-Laws need to be reviewed. This will be on our December agenda. In January we will begin discussing Infosnap.

Ms. Parhad, from the Winnetka Library, is retiring after 26 years. There is a party for her next Saturday. Cynthia brought this to everyone's attention in case PTO's would like to let their parents know so kids/families can attend or send notes of thanks.

Treasurer's Report – Karen Hawkins

Our information has been turned in for the audit.

The Central PTO budget is posted on the website.

We received \$15,000.00 from Infosnap – a higher amount than was expected. There will be no need to go back to the schools for extra funds.

Vice- Chair, Communications/Technology – Casey Russell

The minutes and budget are on the website.

Crow Island Report – Shannon Preda

Go To School for parents is next week.

Planning for the 75th is ramping up. Sub groups have been meeting.

Their PTO funded \$2,000.00 for classroom library books. They also funded some tech needs (i.e. Apple TV's, projectors, ipad keyboards).

Budget information will be up on their site this week.

They've dropped some of their fundraisers and will replace them with the Shoparoo fundraising app. This will roll out next week.

They continue to work on an alternative recess plan for indoor recess days.

They have activity carts and will be run by parent volunteers.

Skokie/Washburne PTO – Erika Kreisa

They are waiting until January to post their budget. They are having discussions about transparency.

Their financial appeal went toward 75 wireless keyboards.

The 1st Annual parent party was great but not well attended. Kelly Tess and

Cathy Rosen were both there. They're looking at possibly having it at an earlier date next year.

They received \$200.00 from the SWANCC (Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County). Skokie/Washburne will use this money for new bins and signage. With the help of Washburne science teachers, they will start composting. Skokie will continue with recycling.

Parents are volunteering at lunch to help kids with the separating of their garbage (recycle vs. trash).

Amy Hillardes, Skokie lunch program coordinator, will be surveying parents about moving to a 5-day a week lunch program.

Hubbard Woods Report – Georgie Geraghty

Their lunch program is going well. They have increased their orders and teachers are ordering as well. Using Kiddos, there are no health concerns and no parents are involved.

Their budget should be online.

Their 100th anniversary is next year. Not much has been planned.

There is interest in having a coding class or club, possibly during the lunch period. They're looking at how the PTO can support this.

Greeley Report – Irene Zmudka

From their one time donation campaign, they have collected \$10,000.00 from 95 families.

Dream Green is coming along. They should break ground over Spring Break and finish before the end of the year.

Author, Debbie Miller, was at school on Oct. 24th.

Danielle Black is coming to speak on kids and anxiety.

Yoga Bash started in November. They do 4 sessions in K.W.

With their recycling program, the district provides the bins and parents help with sorting trash during lunch.

The meeting concluded at 10:38 am.

Next meeting: December 5th, 9:00am, Skokie Curriculum Room

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Beatty
Secretary