

Champlain PTO Retreat - June 10, 2009

83 Caroline Street, Burlington

Present:

Principal: Leslie Colomb

Parents: Jessica Nordhaus, Jenny Breckenridge, Mary Riley, Karen Hunt, Patrick Halladay, Valerie Wood-Lewis, Melissa McConnell, Cathy Rahill, Gwen Causer, Leslie Noble, Lisa Lillibridge, Lillian Dean, Ann Mason, Dawn Moskowitz, Karen Flynn, Erin Hanley, Laurie Harrison, Scott Harrison, Chris Allen, Parm Padgett

Proceedings:

I. On behalf of the PTO, Jessica thanked all for a great year. Participants celebrated by enjoying a pot-luck dinner.

II. Mission & Vision

The existing by-laws and mission were reviewed and discussion centered around whether they were current enough to cover the present needs of the teachers, staff, and parents. Among the items the PTO is committed to supporting are field trips, volunteer coordination, teacher gifts such as mini-grants, and fundraisers. In discussing these items, the question was posed as to "What do the teachers want?" and as such, "is the PTO filling that role?" Additionally, does the mission support aftercare? Will this change next year when the aftercare programs are combined? In working with the teachers, how can we successfully coordinate between the teachers and PTO? Ways to accomplish this include looking at Magnet schools and the way they work, having representatives from 5th grade students, as well as utilizing the class parents and isolating specific skills of the class parents. How can the PTO properly assess the needs of the teachers? A needs assessment could be compiled which would help to assess the needs of the teachers. Also, how can the PTO help the teachers accomplish what they need to do without giving the teachers more work?

After brainstorming, it was decided to prioritize the order of the items listed as well as to quantify how much the PTO does contribute.

Leslie will attempt to meet with the teachers in August.

It is the role for the PTO to provide for the parents who cannot.

Parent workshops will help bridge the gap.

The PTO needs to be inclusive to all, including those who can't drive, take the bus, etc.

Having smaller events like grade-specific events will help teachers get to better know all families, as well as to be less overwhelming for all.

The PTO and Leslie will continue to research over the summer.

The relationship with the PTO and the greater community was also explored. There was concern that there are no former Champlain parents on the PTO. The possibility of partnering with the PTO's of the students who have moved on was raised (ex. Edmunds Middle School).

The Parent Involvement Coordinator position is still open. This paid position is focused on bringing in more families who have barriers preventing them from being involved with Champlain, as well as supporting literacy in schools.

Karen presented the year-end treasurer's report. The PTO still has some outstanding receipts due but the year ended with a positive balance. Year-end gifts were given to the retiring librarians.

Fundraisers were briefly discussed, such as discontinuing the wrapping paper sale, as well as possibly having a Tag Sale.

Mary will coordinate a rest-stop fundraiser.

A Director to compile the student directory is needed.

Upcoming events early in the 2009-10 school year are Art Hop and Applefest. Early preparations are being made.

The Musical:

Teachers strongly felt the musical was too much of an undertaking for all. A more age-appropriate musical would be better, with the possibly of afterschool programs assisting, IF someone steps forward to spearhead the production. This has not happened yet.

In Summary:

The PTO will work to assess the needs of the teachers to determine how to more effectively serve the teachers and parents alike.

Leslie will meet with the teachers over the summer, if possible.

Patrick and Kathy will put together a needs-assessment document.

The Parent Involvement Coordinator position, when filled, will be a liaison between parents and teachers.

Art Hop, Applefest, and Fundraising are in the early planning phases for the upcoming 2009-10 school year.

The next PTO meeting will be August 26, 2009 at Champlain Elementary School from 6-8 p.m.