

## **Champlain PTO Meeting - October 14, 2009**

### **Present:**

Principal: Leslie Colomb

Staff/Teachers: Matt Hadjun, Shannon Roesch

Parents: Jessica Nordhaus, Jenny Breckenridge, Mary Riley, Patrick Halladay, Karen Hunt, Roxanne Scully, Lisa Lillibridge, Sharon McConnell, David Tomlinson, Melissa McConnell, Silvia Jope, Isha Mohamed, Gwen Causer, Bridget Thomas, Dawn Moskowitz, Leonora Dodge, Diane Officer

### **Proceedings:**

#### **The following events were reviewed:**

Applesfest was reviewed. Roxanne reported that the Silent Auction was very successful and raised over \$6,000 this year. She and her committee will send "thank you" notes to the businesses who donated to the auction. Vivian, who was unable to attend the PTO meeting, passed on the message that the festival dinner and events also went well.

The K Open House and Curriculum Nights for grades 1-5 were also reviewed. Because the format for Curriculum Night was new this year, (2 45-minute sessions to accommodate parents of children in different classes), Leslie asked the teachers their opinions of the new format. The feedback was that for grades 1-3, the first session was much more crowded than the 2nd, although the 4-5 teams were both very crowded. The issue of quality, longer presentations in an open-house forum versus smaller, more condensed evenings to accommodate more parents was discussed, with the consensus being that more discussion will be required in the future before a determination will be made for next year. This will be put on a future agenda for a spring faculty meeting where a few parents could attend, possibly having polled other parents before the meeting.

Jenny reported that Picture Day, with Ambient Photography, went well. The pictures were beautiful and Champlain will continue to use the same company.

Walk to School Day was successful. Leslyn, who was unable to attend the meeting, passed on information that the day was a success. Pedestrian and bicycle training will be held at the school with Tammy. She has secured funds from the KidSafe Coalition for a scooter or bike coral. Contact Leslyn if interested in helping.

Gwen reported that the Schoolyard Workday was not well attended but they did put the flowers to bed for the season. Diane reported that they were inspired to work every Sunday from 1-3 for the remainder of the fall to continue to remove invasive species.

#### **Ongoing issues include the following:**

Silvia Jope introduced Isha Mohamed, the Americorp Member and Diversity Outreach Specialist who will be working with Silvia. She would like to create a parent resource center under the PTO board. She is seeking donations for parent guide books, which will be used under the honor system.

Roxanne reported on the fundraising efforts and endeavors. Kathy Rahill is gathering information for Chaplain t-shirts and sweatshirts. The estate planning services were purchased at the silent auction, per Jessica. Sharon reported that the Vermont Coffee Company club will soon be a regular fundraiser this year again. The next pizza sale will be Wednesday, Oct. 28, per Jenny.

Karen reported that the PTO account maintains a healthy balance and we are now officially raising funds for next year.

The School Directory is being compiled and will be completed shortly by Patrick.

Russell would like assistance with the Website. Please contact him if interested.

CTECH (Champlain Technology) chair: This position, which helps people get connected with technology, is currently vacant.

Gary Causer is now doing the weekly e-mail update. Please forward announcements to him if they need to be included.

Karen reported on the "mini-grants" program. They are available to fund larger projects like the science kits that were recently purchased. (This is a larger grant than the "classroom grants", whereby every teacher was eligible for a \$50 grant.) Karen would like to form a mini-grants committee, which would meet approximately 2 times per year to oversee this process, and would be comprised of members from the PTO, teachers, and administration. See Karen if interested.

### **Upcoming issues:**

Parent Workshops: Melissa reported that Wed. Nov 11 will be "Family Math Night". This will highlight the Bridges curriculum and be run by Penny Sterns. There will be 3 sessions: K-1, 2-3, 4-5, and will be at the following times: 5:30-6PM, 6:15-6:45, and 7-7:30 PM. Two to four volunteers will be needed, and this may be combined with a potluck dinner.

Future workshops include one in January by a representative from the Howard Center. More information will be available in the future.

The Musical. After MUCH deliberation and discussion by the PTO and staff, both at this meeting as well as in many prior PTO meetings, it was decided that there will not be a musical put on by the students at Champlain this year. Rather, a drama club will be offered in the after school session. The production had grown so large and all-emcompassing from a time-management and financial perspective for teachers, parents, and students alike that it was becoming too large for any one entity to manage. It is hoped that a one year break will help to offset this in the future. Additionally, there has been no parent willing to "step up" and take on this large-scale project. By taking a break from the school play this year, it is hoped that a smaller-scale production will be more manageable for all and as such, someone would be more likely and able to take this project on.

The Book Fair will be Dec. 1-4. Sharon McConnell and Mary Riley will be co-chairs.

The Clymer Street Haunted Forest will be on October 29 to benefit the Nancy Zahniser scholarship fund. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Katharine Montstream if interested.

The Addition Subtraction Ball will be November 7. Dave Tomlinson reported that proceeds will benefit Champlain Elementary and the Vermont Food Bank.