

Chickering PTO Executive Board Meeting January 28th, 2011

The Dover PTO Executive Board met at the Chickering School beginning at 10:00 am on Friday, January 28th, 2011. This meeting followed the PTO General meeting. These meetings were originally scheduled for January 21st but were postponed due to a school snow day. In attendance were Megan Field, Anne Nolen, Missy Gramer, Suzanne Nystrom, Amy Caffrey, Barb Dawley, Siobhan Doherty, Kristin Brophy, Mary Yanke, Gina Doyle, Beth Webb and Pam LoDato. Pam LoDato, Secretary, recorded the minutes.

Approval of the Minutes

The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the December 17th, 2010 PTO Executive Board meeting. Ms. Anne Nolen, Co-President, asked for any corrections to the minutes. Ms. Mary Yanke indicated that the PTO earned \$150 from author book sales versus the \$50 stated in the minutes. A motion for approval of the minutes, with the one amendment, was proposed:

VOTE:

To approve the December 17th, 2010 Dover PTO Executive Board meeting minutes, as amended.

The motion was seconded and approved by all of the board members present.

Co-Presidents' Report

Ms. Megan Fields spoke about the January curriculum enrichment activities including the NECN weatherman, a unit on electricity and the Wingmaster program. Information is out to parents on Books from the Heart.

Ms. Anne Nolan suggested the board discuss the PTO mission statement and what role the community wants the PTO to play. Ms. Nolen asked that the board members come prepared to discuss this at the next meeting. The PTO continues to look for more ways to engage volunteers. One suggestion was to create a kindergarten volunteer liaison who could work on educating new parents on the many volunteer opportunities and ways to help the school. Ms. Gramer suggested a kindergarten mentor program. Another idea was grade level social gatherings at a casual place like the Legion. Siobhan Daugherty will talk to parents about new ways to broaden volunteer outreach. Ms. Gramer and Ms. Doyle will develop a plan to educate the kindergarten parents over this coming summer.

Vice Presidents' Report

Ms. Gramer presented a plan to fund a total of \$5,319 of the grant proposals submitted by the teachers. As was reported at the last meeting, Requests were received for a

total of \$13,660. The grant budget is \$5,000. Requests were made for technology items such as ipods which can record voices, history books, black jack chairs, music program supplements and braille books. The PTO will fund some items now and other items will be likely funded by DSEF and other school budget sources.

Ms Gramer put forward a motion for approval of grant proposals, totaling \$5,319.

VOTE:

To approve the funding of grant proposals totaling \$5,319.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Nolen and approved by all present.

Ms. Gramer and Ms. Doyle reported that they went to the town of Dover and requested a change in the bylaw which forbids the use of any alcohol on public property. The amendment would allow the PTO to ask the town for individual waivers for fundraising events held at the schools. The PTO would still have to get permission for such events from the school committee and the District administration and get a one time liquor license. Pine Hill always holds its auction on school property with alcoholic beverages. The change would need the support of the Warrants Committee and be approved at Town Meeting. Ms. Doyle and Ms. Gramer believe that holding the auction in Dover at Chickering would result in better community attendance as well as lower the event cost.

Ms. Nolen suggested doing a buy a brick or tile fundraiser at the next auction. Many felt that identifying capital items, such as new playground equipment, would also be helpful. The committee will also consider making a video message for the auction. Expanding participation at the auction will be important to the planning efforts.

Community Report

The PTO speaker series in January featured a personal chef and a personal trainer but only had a small attendance. Ms. Kristin Brophy thought that the communication for the event could have been improved. The March speaker topic will be on kids, screen time and consumerism and be co-sponsored with the DMA. Ms. Brophy also researched the screening of the film **Race to Nowhere**. This documentary is 1 hour and 40 minutes long. It was suggested that this event be open to the Regional school community. There is a \$500 deposit required to get the DVD, which is refunded upon its return. Tickets would be sold for \$10 with the proceeds of the first 50 sold going to the movie producers. Once 100 tickets are sold, the PTO can keep 30% of the proceeds and when over 150 tickets are sold, 50% goes to the PTO. Finally, fifth grade student council will not be picking a Chickering community service project this year.

Fundraising Report

Ms. Suzanne Nystrom reported that the 2010-11 check writing campaign is close to completion. To date, \$31,700 has been raised plus there is another \$2,500 in

outstanding gift matches. The participation rate is at 32.5%. Two years ago the final participation rate was 42% and \$37,000 was raised. The second letter with an envelope has been sent out. To encourage participation, two donated Red Sox monster tickets will be offered as a raffle prize, with all donors getting one raffle entry. This special incentive will be communicated by e-mail and backpack. Ms. Nystrom suggested that PTO board members let their friends and neighbors know about the ticket raffle as a way to raise the participation rate. The check writing campaign is more challenging in a tax year with a successful auction, such as 2010. There are also a wide range of fundraising events throughout the year in which many parents participate. All donors will receive a thank-you letter and tax receipt in the next month.

Plans continue for the Wizard visit on April 9th. The sub committees are hard at work. Five teachers have volunteered to play. Classes will be submitting Chickering team names and then the whole school will choose a name by ballot. PTO volunteers include Kate Gately as the team captain and Annie Bauman for publicity.

Treasurer's Report

Ms. Barbara Dawley announced that the PTO is on track for the budget. The instrument storage has arrived so a check will be issued in payment. There is still significant money left in the budget for the individual teachers to spend. Dr. Nugent will be asked to remind the teachers to spend their allotted funds. Money must be spent within the school year.

Curriculum Enrichment Report

Ms. Mary Yanke said that several well known author visits are occurring. Brian Lies will be with the second grade and Jacquelyn Davis, who wrote the Lemonade Wars, will present to the fifth grade. Ms. Yanke said the committee is considering extending the length of time the best received authors spend at Chickering. This model will more closely resemble an artist in residence program. Ms. Yanke has been successful in getting some grant money from Dover and state cultural councils but school committee must approve any grant money accepted by the school. Another spring assembly program is under consideration. There is an EPIC Brass music group that is very engaging and could dovetail with the school band program.

Other PTO Business

There will be a meeting of the website committee on February 16th and all interested parents will be invited to attend. There is a particular need for volunteers with backgrounds in marketing and technology. Currently the PTO does not have the capability to collect usage information on the website. It is important to consider how the PTO website works with the Region and Chickering websites. The next PTO Executive Board meeting is on Friday, February 11th.