

St. Leo the Great Parent-Teacher Organization's Executive Board Meeting

September 2, 2009

Meeting Purpose:

2009-2010 Budget approval, Event Status and planning, General Business

Board Members Present:

Larry McGrail, Jennifer Conroy, Kim Pham, Mary Knapp, Teresa Ketron, Suzanne Dowd, David DiPippa, Cynthia Washington, Deborah Ball, Melissa Baker

Guests:

Kathy Johnson, Evan Bolster, LaVerne McGrail, Tom McGovern, Katie Blanchard, Pam Morrison, Silvia Molina Neves, Nancy Wiegand, Mizuho Akiba, Coleen MacKay, Michelle McSoley, Karen Crossin, William Schouviller, Jean Johnson, Virginia Cronin

Minutes:

Welcome, Opening Prayer. Larry called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm and welcomed all present. He requested all attendees sign in. He introduced the Board members, He led the group in an Opening Prayer.

Principal's Remarks. Mr. DiPippa thanked the PTO Board for successfully completing the huge task of getting the mailer out to school families. He welcomed new Board members and thanked them in advance for their time and effort. He said that we have lots to accomplish this year.

July Minutes Discussion. Larry asked Board members for questions, concerns and/or comments on the July Minutes.

Mr. DiPippa noted that the National Junior Honor Society cannot help watch children during the Volunteer Luncheon (page 2).

--Tom McGovern has agreed to chair the Golf Tournament (page 3).

Motion was passed to approve the July Minutes.

Teresa asked whether she should work directly with Mr. Hedderson to post the minutes on the school web page. Mr. DiPippa responded that in past years the notes are typed, reviewed and edited and then Mr. DiPippa forwarded them to Mr. Hedderson for electronic posting.

Suzanne asked whether she should follow the same procedure for special events.

Review, Approve Budget. Larry asked for questions, comments, concerns.

--Page 1. Kathy Johnson said that the projected costs for the new school year directory are reasonable.

-- Page 2. No money was included for the Golf Tournament since the tournament may be to be moved to the Fall to avoid conflicts with the Auction. Kim said the money from the Tournament goes directly to technology funds, i.e., ActivBoards.

-- Page 3. Hemlock refers to the school bus costs (In past years it was Hemlock, but now it will be held at Madiera).

Question: Why are Art and Technology Fund on Page 2 and not Page 3?

Larry: Page 3 are specific programs funded

Q: Who determines programs for funding?

Larry: We went with last year's programs. We don't know of anything new. The PTO is in good shape—we will not go broke if something new comes up during the year. If the program idea is more than \$100.00, then the Board votes on whether to fund it or not.

Q: How can parents propose a program for consideration?

Mr. DiPippa: Via e-mail to Principal or request for a PTO agenda item, for example, Fairfax High School requested funding for their end-of-year graduation party last year.

Q: Are items left blank those that are not yet proposed?

-- Yes

Q: What about the Listening Library?

-- Mrs. Ball: The renewal will be \$52.00, due in January.

Motion to approve the budget passed.

Open Positions. Mizuho Akiba, Coleen MacKay and Nancy Wiegand have offered to share the Volunteer Coordinator position.

Larry said he would like to see the position evolve into a Volunteer Committee.

-- First duty for Mizuho, Coleen and Nancy will be to sort through the volunteer forms collected at the Open House.

-- We need to research on-line programs or software similar to the Auction software to track volunteer hours (last year we had to go back to using sign-in sheets)

-- An incentive program is being discussed with Fr. Whitestone to encourage parent volunteers with positive reinforcement, i.e., Dinner for 2 or Family

Q -- Is the Parent Participation Program mandatory?

Larry: It is an encouraged obligation with suggested hours, but not a requirement.

Q -- Have you gotten any feedback on the PPP?

Mr. DiPippa: Last year we had a great need for new volunteers because it seemed that the same people were volunteering over and over. We looked at other schools of about the same size to learn how many hours were needed. Our tracking software last year didn't work out very well. We hope to be able to track hours better so that we'll have a better idea of our needs and then be able to craft a better policy next year.

-- We have notebooks from last year for events so now we have some historical documentation of how many volunteers are needed, duties, etc.

Comment: Volunteers who run Clubs—hope that will be counted.

Larry: Don't want to exclude any sort of volunteer help/work

-- Tom McGovern has volunteered to run the Golf Tournament this year.

-- Evan Bolster has volunteered (with wife) to run the Haunted House at Family Fun Night this year. Plus the Quiz Bowl.

Comment: Make sure to coordinate with Mrs. White

-- Still need a Family Fun Night Chair.

Directory Status. Kathy will get checks to Kim. She is sorting the forms and will update the spread sheets. She is looking at different vendors, i.e., Kinkos. She will request a reminder be put in the Newsletter. She is shooting for the beginning of October.

Q – Will Kathy contact new families?

Kathy: Will try if she finds blanks

Suzanne: Offered to cross check with the new families list

Fundraising Events. Suzanne emphasized that these events are to promote school spirit. She will check the calendar and put together dates and possible restaurant partners.

Larry said this would be an agenda item for the next PTO meeting.

New Friends/Old Friends. Sept. 14 in the Parish Hall.

Comment – The same friends seem to talk amongst themselves and it can make the new feel even more left out. Could we have volunteers introduce New/Old?

Comment – Could we have “old” families sponsor new families?

Larry: We called new families before the Open House to welcome them and offer to answer questions.

Q – Could we send an e-vite?

Q – could we use different colored name tags for New/Old?

Larry: In June we could ask if “old” families would like to mentor new families

Welcome Back Sock Hop. LaVerne: Like to try for a Friday or Saturday night toward the end of September. A DJ will be donated by the Clinch family—a multi-disc CD player. Julie has a contact with the Knights of Columbus to set up a system. Also set up an I-pod dock for requests. Idea is for people to show up, take their shoes off and dance. No fundraiser. 7-9 pm may be too late. Saturday after the 5 pm mass might be good. Shuffle class tables to get people to mingle. Stop at 8:30 pm and everyone helps clean up.

Mr. DiPippa: Need more discussion. Seems like a Family Fun Night. What is the objective? Needs to be well organized and structured.

Kim: May be best to fall under Room Mom

Cynthia: Caution re: time. Kids get restless and then start to run around.

Q – What’s the best way to facilitate getting to know one another?

Mr. DiPippa: Worried about liability without structure. Need more detail.

Maybe look at later in the year

Q – What about a Welcome Back Bar-B-Q? Next year, of course.

Q – What about the Parish Picnic?

Larry: Let’s table this idea and talk more about it at our next meeting. Maybe we can plan something for early December.

Family Fun Night. Comment: Need to control distribution of the soda bottle prizes to avoid spills/messes, etc.

Golf Tournament. With regard to the idea to move it to the Fall—are there serious objections/concerns?

Tom: Spring is the beginning of the year for sponsors, and Fall is the end of the year.

--Best time is April/May with the highest interest level. In the Fall we only have about 6 weeks to deal with families.

-- A Thursday before a long weekend is the best time.

-- If St. Leo's moves to the Fall season, everyone else would have already had theirs (in the Spring).

Q – Have you ever run one in the Fall for comparison?

Mr. DiPippa: We need good organization.

Tom: Need to think of daylight—more in May.

Larry: Need to talk more.

Tom: Need to reserve a course. The sponsors are where you make money; you just break even with the golfers. Having a Happy Hour during the Winter time frame for potential/past sponsors to show them the school and what the Tournament supports seems to encourage sponsors.

Q – What drives the Auction timing?

Larry: We need to have a smaller meeting to talk and come back to the PTO.

Spring Fun Run/Family Carnival. Pam said that lots of volunteers are needed to make it work. Need permits to close streets. Need to decide if cost effective.

Larry: One idea is to have the run in the morning and the carnival in the afternoon.

Sylvia: May not work to combine the two events. How big do we want the carnival to be? We don't want just another Family Fun Night in the Spring. Make it a St. Leo's community event. Need to decide what our objective is. (Passed out a booklet titled, Fabulously Fun School Carnival Ideas)

Q – Would it compete with the Auction in the Spring?

Larry: This would be a daytime event for families—a different audience than the Auction. It would be volunteer intensive. Might ask the Board/Volunteer Coordinators to review the volunteer sign-ups and get a count and see what interest there might be.

Sylvia: Found a company that can bring Casino Night to you, but it costs money.

Larry: A Casino Night might fill some of the dead zone in Winter.

Mr. DiPippa: What about Bingo.

Larry: Topics for the next meeting.

By-Laws Modifications. Larry: Would like to propose some changes. For example, the President's term runs for one year, but I've made a commitment for two years. A Board Member at Large is not even mentioned, but Suzanne filled that role last year. We need to set up procedures to do this. Offered to do a first reading of proposed changes at our next meeting.

Comment – Other schools have positions lined up to succeed incumbents in the next year, a “rotation” of sorts.

PTO Policies and Procedures. Mr. DiPippa: The Diocesan PTO has provided information. We need to set up a repository. Information about “How To” for every sort of activity or event.

--Larry: One of my goals for this year is to set this up and take advantage of technology.

Planning for Next Meeting. Larry: Wants to encourage issues to be brought forth, aired out and resolved/addressed.

Mr. DiPippa: Thanks to everyone for coming. Any agenda items can be sent/forwarded to him for consideration.

Adjourn. 9:03 pm