

Bowman PTA Board Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2018

Bowman Conference Room

8:45 AM Sign-In, Welcome & Introductions

In attendance: Katie Quick, Gary Van Deurse, Courtney Lauriat, Jaclyn Anderson, Tish Apstein, Winnie Pong, Melinda Nasardinov, Michelle Andronaco, Alison Stevens, Lisa Premerlani, Hien Nguyen, Karin Ornstein, Hsias (Brandy) Hartford, Sisi Zhuang, Elaine Read, Elizabeth Gibby-Homnick, Stephanie Roberts, Rita Dulgarian, Seri Latiff, Sucharita Otta, Jing Yang

Principal Corduck joined briefly to introduce herself and welcome everyone. She feels very strongly in endorsing parent involvement and highly supports participation and partnering with the PTA. She recognizes that school work cannot be done without parent support and she offers herself as a resource for parents. She feels very strongly about communication between the school and home and is looking forward to tightening up avenues of communication. She has been spending a lot of time in classrooms to learn about the school and it is a privilege being part of the classrooms and seeing the work teachers are doing with students.

Beth Glick also stopped in for a few minutes to introduce herself and welcome everyone.

8:55AM What are your questions?

- **Q:** How is the President position appointed? Is there a vote?

A: Technically you are voted in but historically there has only been one person who is willing to do it.

- **Q:** Are PTA dues paid annually or is it a lifetime membership?

A: Dues are paid annually and are intended as a fundraiser for the PTA. We give people the option to contribute in the form of their membership dues at whatever level they are comfortable with each year. One person suggested that we have a level of membership for grandparents with a special "grandparent" swag item as many grandparents like to support their grandkids' schools. There was a consensus that this is a great idea and perhaps something we can look into for next year.

- **Q:** This is a lot of information-is there a PTA website?

A: Yes! Please take a look at bowmanpta.org which is full of information about our PTA including a calendar of events as well as email addresses for contact people for different events. There was a suggestion to put Principal Corduck's twitter feed either on the Bowman homepage or on the PTA homepage as Clarke does. There was also a suggestion to include photos on the PTA website to help people match names/faces as those names are invisible to people who aren't on the PTA.

- **Q:** Does the PTA coordinate or share ideas with the PTAs from other Lexington schools?

A: Yes. The PTA Co-Presidents meet monthly and share ideas with other presidents, members of the School Committee, and the Superintendent.

9:10AM Overview of What the PTA Does

- The PTA makes purchases for the school. In the past the PTA has paid for purchases for the classroom such as rugs. There was a time when the school needed them and we bought them, but we don't normally make purchases such as this anymore. The PTA also used to have to buy supplies, but these costs are generally much less now. We do still buy recess equipment but mostly we are paying for programs and giving money to teachers in the form of stipends and mini-grants. Every teacher gets \$200-\$250 each year to make purchases for their classrooms.
- The PTA is a 501c3 organization and a member of the National PTA.
- The Structure of the PTA is as follows: 2 Co-Presidents act as lead facilitators. There is also an Executive Board that oversees programs and parent coordinators who work on individual events and activities.
- Communication: Discussion about communication and the My School Anywhere (MSA) weekly emails. The PTA publishes a directory but you have to opt in to be included and to get the weekly emails. You don't have to be a PTA member to be in MSA. As long as you are in it then you will get emails from the PTA. However, if you do not include your own information, you will not receive the PTA emails.

Treasurer Overview:

- The PTA spends approximately \$60,000/year in the form of supplies, reimbursements for teachers, purchasing extra technology outside of town budget, putting on programs aligned with Curriculum (ACT), and community events.
- The PTA supports many things at the school. There are some fundraisers as well as some community-based activities that are not meant to raise money (eg science fair) and other events that help us put on the programming that we do. We have tried to move away from asking kids to sell cookies, gift wrap, etc. and our primary form of fundraising is now through membership.
- Thank you notes from students/staff were passed around as examples of the impact the PTA has on the school.

Membership Overview

- Membership is the largest source of revenue for the PTA. There are multiple levels for families to participate. Part of the cost of membership goes to the National PTA but the rest goes to support the work of the school.
- We have had a positive response to the different membership levels since they were introduced a few years ago. The levels encourage people to participate at whatever level is comfortable for them.
- We are on-track with last year's membership at this time in the school year. 40% of families have joined so far this year. Last year ended at 70% of families. If you join by the end of this month you will be guaranteed swag items. After that, swag will be given out if available but is not guaranteed.
- Membership is the main source of raising funds. All PTA events are open to everyone regardless of membership. If you want to join but it's a financial burden discuss with Principal Corduck and you can become a member confidentially.
- Please contact Alison Stevens at vpmembership@bowmanpta.org if you have ideas/suggestions of how membership can be more enticing. She is always open to new ideas that people have seen work at other schools/preschools. One person suggested that we make it more visible how the money is being spent. Communication is an ongoing issue and the PTA/Principal Corduck will be working together to better communicate with families.

Programming Overview/How You Can Get Involved

- **Auction**-Last year the PTA broke even, but most years we don't. The way we've bridged the gap is to have a parent auction every other year. The auction typically raises around \$25,000 and helps keep the PTA going. We are looking for 3-4 parent volunteers to organize this event this year. The event is open to creative ideas-a casino night has been suggested, or anything else the team wants to put together. We have a lot of history for the fundraising element and what has/has not worked in the past, so there is a lot of support for people who are interested in getting involved.
- **Staff Appreciation**: Typically a breakfast at the beginning of the school year, potluck-style lunch at the end of the school year, and a couple other appreciation events in the spring. Looking for 1-2 parent volunteers to help with the planning. This is another opportunity to get creative and come up with new ideas, and past volunteers are available to support you with what they've done in the past.
- **Room parents**-3-4/classroom. There are a variety of different roles each parent takes on. There was a brief discussion of an overview of how funds are raised and spent in the classroom for parents who are new to the school. Being a room parent is often an entry-point of volunteering for many people who want to take on bigger roles in the future.
- **Passport to the World**-Looking for parent volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer talk with Beth Glick. Will probably start planning in October.
- **New ideas**-The PTA is open to any new program ideas that people have. We have to work with the school to make sure it fits, but parents often bring forth ideas and make things happen. For example, parents have created a Green Team at Bowman with the

goal of producing zero waste. The initiatives have begun with composting/recycling at PTA events. At this year's school picnic the Green Team set up a zero waste station, had compostable food ware available, and encouraged families to bring their own reusable plates and water bottles. Other schools in the district have implemented varying degrees of food waste management in the cafeteria. The Green Team is working with Principal Corduck on implementing cafeteria composting at Bowman this year with 4/5 graders during lunchtime. They will be looking for parent volunteers to help monitor those waste stations. The district has a contract with Black Earth Composting (commercial contractor) who picks up from the school weekly. If you sign up with Black Earth mention the Bowman PTA and they will donate \$10 to our PTA. There is a "Race to Compost" going on now with Black Earth-if Bowman is the first school to get 50 families signed up then Black Earth will give us two compost bins and liners.

9:45AM Adjourn

Next PTA meetings:

October 24, 7:00pm

October 25, 8:45am

Today's meeting was not a typical meeting as they are usually more of a working meeting. Anyone is welcome at future meetings and we encourage people to attend.