

# Bowman PTA Board Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2018

Bowman Conference Room

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## 7:00PM Sign-In & Introductions

In attendance: Gary Van Deurse, Katie Quick, Rebecca Fagan Gorospe, Lauren Avery, Anne Norman, Courtney Lauriat, Lisa Premerlani, Cindy Arens, Xi Sun, Brandy Hartford, Allison Stevens, Winnie Pong, Hien Nguyen, Karin Orenstein

Faculty Representatives: Jenny Corduck, Joshua Curhan, Martha Rogers

## 7:10PM PTA Business

- Treasurers Update
  - Have received a lot of fifth grade activities donations-they are in good shape
  - Funds for ACT is healthy
  - BOKS spent a fair amount of money to get set up
  - We are still waiting for final income amounts from the Bookfair-we made \$4900 plus whatever was sold online and 436 books were donated to the school
  - Spiritwear raised \$1070. New Lexington sweatshirts and tie-dye t-shirts were big sellers.
  - Membership dues are hovering around \$15,000, which is 101% of what we've budgeted
  - We are waiting for the settlement check from the timing company for the Adventure Run
  - Jenny has begun using her discretionary fund to purchase a coat rack and fund the GeoBee
  - We need to make a decision if we want to continue our partnership with Sagam. If we do want to, we should consider how we can make better connections and have the relationship become a more

meaningful part of the school. If not, we should look into supporting something else.

- We paid a bill to Swifty for printing going back 2 years. This will cause us to go over budget on printing for this year. As per our conversation at the last meeting, we will continue to encourage people to print at the LPS print shop and phase out our account at Swifty.
  - Treasurer expenses are higher than previous years because we ordered checks
  - PTA funded a mini-grant for Professional Development for Ms. Loof
  - We need to keep an eye on the budget for Teacher Appreciation for the remainder of the year as we already spent \$791 for the first day breakfast and \$410 for curriculum night dinner. Teacher Appreciation week this year will be aligned with National Teacher Appreciation week. The Teacher Appreciation lunch will likely be provided by parents as a pot-luck.
- Membership Update
    - There have been a handful of new memberships
    - We are ahead of budget but have raised 12% fewer dollars than last year and the number of memberships is lower. As of now 60% of families have joined and they continue to trickle in.
    - Rebecca created a new visual tracker which will be put in the hallway so people can see how many people have joined and how close we are to our goal
    - Our goal is to get to 70% or higher participation. We will continue to encourage memberships, but overall we are doing fine and memberships continue to trickle in
    - There are some new faculty memberships thanks to promotions by Joshua and Martha at a recent faculty meeting
    - Allison will send an email to those in MSA who have not purchased a membership yet and remind them that it is not too late.
- Principal Update
    - Conferences over the past month have gone well and it was great for teachers and parents to be able to meet
    - Thanks to the PTA for sponsoring two teams at the LEF Trivia Bee

- Recent “Lexington Learns Together” Professional Day was very successful. 27 Bowman staff presented, which was the largest group from any building. Jenny was very impressed with the professional learning community and proud of the staff who presented.
- Bowman recently hosted Dr. Anton and some representatives from her new school in California to observe our Dismantling Racism Curriculum. Bowman staff is showcasing the work we are doing around serious talk.
- The Dismantling Racism leadership team hosted a parent evening recently. Only 7 or 8 parents were present but they had a meaningful conversation. Jenny has been reflecting on why the group was so small and is thinking about how to encourage more parents to attend in the future. There will be another presentation in the spring and they will be more specific about what they’re sharing in order to encourage greater attendance.
- Staff has been re-thinking the format of data meetings in the building, which are grade level meetings where they discuss how kids are performing against local measures. They are typically very long meetings and there is an interest in making them shorter and more efficient.
- Bowman recently hosted trainers from Teacher’s College at Columbia University. The trainer met with grade level teams to focus on the writing curriculum. This was hands-on learning in the classroom for teachers followed by valuable debrief and discussion.
- On November 27 there will be a School Committee meeting in Boston. Metco host families have been invited to attend.
- On Nov 28 (evening) and November 29 (during the Principal coffee), the Special Education Dept will give a talk about how to navigate questions from kids about students with differences
- Jenny has advocated for additional sections for fourth and fifth grade for next year (5 of each).
- Fourth grade-Mr. Bruff’s class has recently been divided into current fourth grade classes during Mr. Bruff’s medical leave. Jenny was very impressed with the staff and the thoughtfulness of how students were placed. Parents expressed concern about students transitioning back to Mr. Bruff’s class upon his return. For the most part, students have been flexible and transitioned well.

- Update on Developing a PTA Survey
  - Anne Norman shared a preliminary survey that she created
  - Purpose of the survey: What events do we want to keep doing? Which ones do we want to cut? How can we increase participation and volunteerism?
  - Suggested changes:
    - Which events did you participate *in the past two year?*
    - Add optional email address for those who are willing to volunteer
    - Add question asking “Are you a PTA member? If not, why?”
    - Include a question about a fundraiser. What kind of fundraiser would you be interested in attending? Family friendly, weekday/weekend, parent only, auction?
    - Choose top 3 or 5 favorite activities. Least favorite 3 activities.
    - Ask which events your family participated in?
      - Pop up window for those who participated: Would you like to see this activity continue? Yes, No?
    - Do you volunteer for BBY, library, room parent?
    - Would you be willing to learn more about volunteering for any of these activities? If we do ask about volunteering, need to elicit their contact information to follow-up.
    - Would you be willing to volunteer 1-3 hours? Do you volunteer? If not, why not? Options: time, lack of interest, don’t know, doesn’t align with interests
    - Similar question about what the barriers are that prevent people from coming to PTA events. Time, communication, lack of interest (parent/kid)
    - Is there something we are not offering that would make you attend? Volunteer?
  - Once completed, survey should be sent out via multiple avenues- from Jenny, room parents, and MSA
- Geography Bee Volunteers
  - Volunteers are needed to be timekeepers/judge. You cannot volunteer if your child is participating.

- PTA versus PTO
  - We are looking into whether we should become a PTO instead of a PTA. Many Lexington schools have disbanded from being part of the National PTA. The PTA is great for schools looking for resources/programming/fundraising advice, etc., but we do not use any of it. We also do not need their insurance because we have our own.
  - We currently pay \$1000/year to be a member of the PTA. A “Deluxe” member of the PTO is \$149/year. If we disband as a PTA, we would become a PTO. There are rules to follow in order to disband, which include meetings, giving members 30-days notice, a 2/3 majority vote, contacting the PTA 20 days prior to meeting, meeting with a PTA rep, and working to set up a new affiliation as a PTO.
  - We decided to move forward to learn more about the process. Gary will purchase the guide which highlights what steps need to be taken.

## **8:15PM Any other business**

- Composting-4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders started composting this week and did awesome.
- We have a permit for the raffle for spaghetti dinner and class basket raffles
- The daytime PTA meeting has evolved and will be in collaboration with Principal coffees.

## **8:30PM Adjourn**

## **Next PTA Meeting**

January 29, 2019

## **Upcoming Events**

- Families in Need
- Math Nights