

PTA Meeting

August 10, 2021

Attendance: Carolyn Bentley, Julie Chase, Mandy MacNeughton, Bridget Robertson, Lindsay Newman, Bethany Iannone, Amy Skorich, Whitney Brown, Erin May, Robin Salzman, Jeannie Noon, Allie Sandoval, Shannon May

Welcome/Introduction:

- New secretary - Carolyn Bentley, new family marathon coordinator - Amy Skorich, new platinum sponsor - Keith O'Hare (Real estate agent)
- F45 and Keith O'Hare are the current sponsors
- We usually get more sponsors for the silent auction

Principal Report - Erin May

- Delta COVID surge (Mr Arce is the school's COVID coordinator)
 - recap: probably will be WCPSS shifts in policy at the next board meeting (Thursday). At OCE, 93% of students in person.
 - trying to brainstorm as region and school team to come up with plans,
 - Trying to adjust small things with the goal of making a safer environment at school. Recent change: more spacing in cafeteria (lunch starting at 10:20); lunch is usually two grades at one time but moved to one grade at a time.
- Hiring for another administrator (assistant principal) - in process with interviews.
- Loss of more subs means there is currently a sub shortage, along with shortages of busses, bus drivers, special education teachers, etc. OCE is in good shape re: all this - OCE is currently 99% staffed.
- Lots of concerned parents have been calling, administration is trying to respond to all, and most are giving positive feedback re: changes.
- Bethany asked if there are plans to move schools to plan A, B, and C.
 - Board meeting on Thursday, there have been behind the scenes talks about mitigation plans, Lindsay Mahaffey (Wake County BoE District 8) visited OCE to see how schools are doing. Erin has not heard of alternate plans yet. Erin states that going forward with plan A is best for kids, but will remain flexible.
- Bethany asked what the school needs right now.
 - Would love volunteers but they are not currently allowed. Need subs (no teacher certification required, just an online class through wake county) - subbing is really the only way to physically help right now.
- It was brought up whether we should advertise for subs on the PTA page. Important to mention that you can choose to sub at only OCE. If there is a lack of subs, then IAs are pulled from their primary class to sub.
- All events are virtual now. Open house will be virtual for track 4. No indoor events are currently allowed. No parents are allowed in the building unless they are a sub. Not sure about the outdoor fun run yet, Erin hasn't asked yet as she wants to wait until after the surge if possible to ask. When we hear how traditional and high school sports will be conducted, that will likely guide outdoor events at the ES level too.

Treasurer Report - Julie Chase

- \$55K available in checking, \$40K for technology, \$15K accounted for already
- Technology: 135 chromebooks were ordered (separate from the main student order). Dr S was unsure if every kid would get one from WCPSS, so she wanted extras on hand at OCE. 85 of these extras were backordered, so they were cancelled. \$15K was spent on the extra chromebooks that we did receive, so now we have \$25K available to spend on technology. Lead teachers will talk with their teams and place a request for this spending (new smartboards is a leading ask right now).
- Mandy sent a request to the teachers as to what they would like to see re: school improvements. We have \$45K allotted for school improvements. Responses have been received from approx 30-40 teachers, who overwhelmingly want shade structures, improvements to the cottage area, stone pathways, trees, landscaping around cottages, benches for outside recess time (esp grades 2-3). Mandy and Erin will meet to discuss the requests (and divide them based on parents, WCPSS, and PTA responsibility).
 - Shade would definitely be within the budget, and a few benches won't cost much. Some items on the spreadsheet are WCPSS issues (ants, mice, etc), but as they are not safety issues, they don't get prioritized. New railings were recently put in at the cottages. Shade structures have come up before, and one issue is the height over playground equipment/structures. It may be too expensive to put them over the play structures, but they could go off to the side. \$20-40K was the approx cost when shade structures were researched a few years ago. Cottage beautification has been expressed as a desire among teachers and parents.

Apex Leadership - Whitney Brown

- Apex Leadership Fun Run wants a specific statement of our goal (our why statement) for the fundraiser.
 - Will revolve around campus beautification and the creation of outdoor classroom areas. For promotional material, need 1-2 specific things (shade structures and benches?) and then some less-specific things (outdoor classrooms, landscaping, etc.)
- Mike is the AL contact.
- Question: What might be allowed in terms of this event? Can we do all the huddles and the pep rally virtual? We will wait until the board has more guidelines related to this event, but the plan is to do this event in person with pep rallies in classrooms to keep students separated. Can switch to virtual if necessary. The thought is that since this is an outdoor event, it's more likely we can hold it in person. There is a scheduled rain date.
- Tracks 1 and 4: Aug 30 - Sept 10
- Tracks 2 and 3: Sept 13 - 24
- Question: Are we having the AL team come in for visits? "Official" is discretionary, they will wear masks and keep distance, it's only 3 people so we can make it safe. Other schools in our region are letting these people come in to the schools, so we are following that.
- If the event is outside, we will need volunteers to provide water, but cannot be parents.

Membership/Volunteer Coordinator - Lindsay Newman

- 202 members so far, most people are using cheddar up
- Last year OCE had 121 members
- Track 4 just got paperwork, so more memberships may be coming in.
- Teachers have not had an issue with amazon gift cards this year (officemax gift cards did not work well last year).
- Have a ton of volunteers - most are checking that they are up for anything.
- Erin - if you need volunteers, come ask for emails or we can create sign-ups or we can contact interested people.
- Once we can use volunteers, we will send a monthly email or ask the interested people.

Go Play Save Fundraiser - Bethany Iannone

- \$4K goal, over \$6 profit as of right now, track 4 books/forms went home last week, tracks 1 and 2 are dwindling down, track 3 is out right now, hopefully this fundraiser will wrap up next friday to jump into Fun Run.
- Question: Why are these events so close together? Apex Fun Run only has specific dates available, so we have to fit it in when we can, and it's nice to get money in the beginning of the year

Spirit Wear - Alison Alcaine

- Plenty ordered (over 200), will be delivered in Sept, will need volunteers to divvy up for distribution

Cultural Arts - Bethany Iannone

- Bethany went to some meetings to see what the options are for this year.
- Question: Can we hold some family events outdoors? All is on hold for now, but can think of combining CA with family events in the future when guidelines allow.
- Erin loves the idea of outdoor events with parents/families

Communications - Allie Sandoval

- Beacon sign-up: about 400 sign-ups, after track 4 open house, we will get more. More interaction on social media (facebook, instagram, etc). Erin asked if we should have teachers plug sign-ups in newsletters. Erin will send a blurb out. Other platforms are growing and the ability for parents to choose which platform to use will get more information out.

Staff Appreciation - Laurie Jendrasiak

- Since last meeting, there was the new principal celebration breakfast (panera, bagels, coffee)

Family Marathon - Amy Skorich

- Family marathon link will be live on Monday as Angela Johnson is out until Monday. Coach Roberts leaves town on Tuesday. The intro sheet for this event is ready to go, Mrs Burleson will send to all teachers to include in class newsletters.

- Registration will open Monday Aug 16 and close on Sept 1. Facebook feed will be set up for posts on achievements.
- K-2 running log (color in by quarter mile, super cute document). K-2 will complete 26 of the miles at home and finish the final 400 m at school in PE with Coach Roberts
- 3-5 will run 25.2 miles at home and then run one mile at school in PE (as one mile is a requirement)
- All who finish get a medal, \$5 sign up, the logs will be due in Oct, then Coach Roberts will complete the runs in PE as she can.
- Fun run miles will count for family marathon
- Make sure communication describes the difference between the family marathon and the AL fun run. Similar timing but will have to be clear with communication.
- Will include reflection questions for kids too.

Loyalty Cards - Beth Lavin

- All loyalty programs renew in August except amazon, need to communicate about relinking cards, we get over \$1000 per year from these programs
- Including the step-by-step instructions is useful

Other Discussion

- Murals right in front of the cottages facing Olive Chapel Road (part gift from 5th grade class, will be made by Ms Barlow and Ms Ferreira)
- Landscape and painting - perhaps advertise the option to donate time, trees, paint, etc to become a platinum sponsor. It doesn't work well to just have parents come in and do projects without a "CEO" or person in charge. We could partner with companies with expertise to oversee these projects (parents can do the work but we need someone running it who has expertise - paint type, landscape design, etc.)
- Regarding school improvements, the PreK team has requested some things for their outdoor area. Would like mulch replaced with rubber but this is too expensive, could we add a concrete path for tricycle riding around the play area or on one side? It would be nice if the school improvements have something for everyone.
- Water bottle fillers - need something for the cottages as the current water fountains don't work. Mandy will ask Erin about them.
- Landscape plan for cottage area: we have mockups of a potential plan from a few years ago.
- Next Meeting is Sept 14 at 11 am. Location TBA - Wake Zone, Kelly Road Park, and someone's back deck were all discussed as options but nothing decided.
- Need to advertise date, location, time, etc. for PTA meetings.