

Oak Knoll PTO
Minutes of the PTO Executive Board
December 9, 2009

Present:

2009/2010 Executive Board Members:

Phil Ekedahl, President	Valerie Ambwani, Parliamentarian
Carolyn Bowsher, Vice-President	Carolyn Heller, Resources Chair
Mark Baker, Treasurer	Karen Wang, Communications Chair
Allison Chao, Financial Secretary	David Ackerman, Principal
Sheri Simmons, Auditor	
Maria Clemo, Vice Principal	
Linda Cotter, Teacher Rep	

Guests: Jennie Lang, Christy Ericson, and Bronte Abraham

Absent: Monica Bosch (Secretary) and Maria Hilton (District Board Liaison)

I. President Phil Ekedahl called the meeting to order at 8:12 am.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Allison Chao

- A. Approval of the November 18, 2009 Executive Board Meeting Minutes
- B. Sheri Simmons moved to approve the meeting minutes and Mark Baker seconded.
- C. Unanimous “Ayes”. Motion passed as carried.

III. Appreciating Our Differences (AOD) Committee – Bronte Abraham

Leslie Cornog is chairing the AOD committee. AOD Week will occur the week of Feb 8th.

A. **Parent Education:** This year, the parent education component will be a combined focus with both teachers and parents. Karen Grites will be the speaker and her topic will focus on the role of sociability and its impact on academics. The speaker event will be held Tuesday Feb 9, 2010. This event will have both simulations and hands on activities.

B. **Classroom Program:** Still considering programming topics/themes. Once a topic is chosen, volunteer needs will be assessed. Apart from AOD, David Ackerman and the staff will be focusing on bullying in the spring.

Book Fair Update – Jennie Lang & Christy Ericson

A. **Sales results.**

Total sales: \$41,364.85 (equivalent to last year which was about \$40k)

Profit/cash proceeds: \$8,273

Spent \$5600.00 of cash proceeds to complete Teacher Wish List items (curriculum books only).

Profit share options: 25% in book credit (\$4700.00) or take cash of \$2638.

Total expenses: \$1500.00

B. **Quality of Experience:** Kepler’s vs Scholastic.

Operationally we had the same number of cashiers as last year with Scholastic. Experienced some problems with the registers being online versus off line with Scholastic.

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Scholastic books are less expensive to buy but they have restrictions on what books one can purchase with profit share credits. Our reading teachers can't obtain all the books they require for their programs through Scholastic. Kepler's provides greater flexibility and a wider selection of inventory. Biggest differences between Kepler's and Scholastic were quality of books and customer service staff.

C. Discussion regarding Profit Share Options.

It was decided that we would take the Kepler's book credit versus cash.

IV. Finance Update – Mark Baker

Cash: \$238K in the bank with \$198K available .

PTO membership revenue: \$164K. Mark feels comfortable that we will achieve the \$170k budget goal that was set for the year.

Noteworthy Art: \$15K revenue. Exceeded budget.

After school sports: \$16K revenue. Exceeded budget.

We are under budget on every expenditure to-date. Forecast going forward indicates we are on track with no foreseeable issues at this time.

Field Trips: Expenditures of \$14K so far. Total planned for the year \$46K which will be split by grade level. Grade levels have been taking advantage of their available funds. Outdoor Education comes out of a different account than Field Trips because they are overnight trips.

Balclutha Trip: Only expense incurred is for the bus. This accounts for the \$1100 over budget in field trip category.

Mark provided a copy of the P&L comparison and the balance sheet for review. No issues to date.

V. 2008-2009 Audit – Sheri Simmons

The books have been audited for the six-month period 2/1/09-7/31/09. Transition of auditors occurred in August between Sheri Simmons and Kathy Koenig (last year's auditor). Sheri distributed copies of the audit reports for the board to review. For this period, Sheri certified that the ledger, checking and savings accounts are all in order. Activity for this six-month period was a net transfer of \$69K from savings.

Total available cash balance of \$20K (as of 7/31/09).

Next audit will be for the period 8/1/09-1/31/10 to be reported on in March or April 2010.

No motion needed to approve the report.

VI. Review of PTO Bylaws – Valerie Ambwani

One job of the Parliamentarian is to review the bylaws with the Board. Valerie has email copies to everyone and requested we all look them over especially those laws relevant to our position. She has asked that all feedback be provided by the January meeting.

Points made regarding the current Bylaws:

Membership fees: Should we consider changing or waiving the membership fee? Oak Knoll families pay \$5.00. Encinal and Laurel pay a fee of \$20.00. In order to improve communications with our parents, Karen Wang stated that we would be changing the membership form to more

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clearly state that the membership fee is \$5.00 and any funds received beyond that will be considered a donation to the PTO.

The bylaws currently state we are required to hold 3 General meetings per year. At present we only have two slated. We need to change the bylaws or increase the # of general membership meetings we hold during the school year. Ideas for other meetings were discussed. Valerie is in favor of more communication to the parents. Carolyn Bowsher mentioned that we should have an evening meeting. Phil will arrange to have this happen.

Valerie mentioned that we should mention that one of the goals is to fundraise for the school. We should think about ideas and decide what we want to do.

Quorum for membership meetings is 15. Simple majority vote is needed at a Board meeting. Treasurer's report says "written" report and Valerie suggested that electronic reports should be acceptable and a change made to the bylaws so that it does not always have to be written.

Auditor needs to submit the auditor's report 120 days after the 6 month report period ends and we are doing that.

Communications Chair is required to survey the membership according to the Bylaws. Do we want Site Council to just handle this and take it out of the PTO Bylaws? More discussion needed.

Phil mentioned that we should survey parents about the PTO activities we sponsor (Fall Fair, Spring Picnic, Special Friends Day, etc.). What do they attend? Why do they attend? What do they think of the PTO Committees we currently have? Maybe do a Survey Monkey to assess feedback. Maybe we need to look at traditions and get feedback to make sure there is still interest in the traditional activities each year.

For nominations for next year's board, nominations can be made from the floor. Maximum term is two years but two members cannot serve two consecutive terms at the same time.

Any PTO member can attend a PTO Board meeting but just cannot vote.

In late February, Nominating Committee should start looking for candidates.

PTO Board can spend up to \$15K without any kind of vote. President can designate up to \$1K for programs w/out getting any approval.

Have to deposit money within 30 days. For any new policies, we are guided by the School Board.

VII. Oak Knoll School Update – David Ackerman and Maria Clemo

A. School Board Meeting Summary:

Increased enrollment and the Districts ability to support these increases continues be of concern. Oak Knoll is almost at 740 students.

Data provided by the Demographer's report was discussed. Some of the options being considered are: opening up the O'Connor campus, redrawing district lines and enlarging Laurel by installing three portable units as well as allowing Oak Knoll to increase student population to 763 in order to reduce the pressure on Encinal.

Spanish immersion at O'Connor was discussed. Providing such a program is costly. One of the challenges is predicting the future of home sales and who moves in and out of the community.

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Research on student success rates (poor versus affluent) was discussed and the impact of large versus small school environments. Study found that small schools do not make a difference unless it's in a poor community but with affluent communities, the size of the school does not matter.

David says he hasn't received complaints about Oak Knoll being too large. He also mentioned that the effect of not opening O'Connor and putting portables on Laurel will be that class sizes will increase to 26-27 students in the 4th/5th grades.

Pollster was hired to evaluate the success of putting a parcel tax on the next ballot for our school district. District will need to raise revenue some how since the current projections of future revenue will remain flat but our student population continues to increase especially in the elementary schools. Ken Ranella anticipates he will have to hire 15 more teachers at the middle school. A campaign for the parcel tax will occur in the spring.

B. Oak Knoll School Update :

Construction Update: We are still on track. Most of the roof is on. Multi is scheduled for an April 1st completion date which will be a push. The eight classroom section of the new buildings will definitely meet the deadline. The Multi building has two classrooms in it but it will be a tight deadline. Science Fair is scheduled late and Special Friends scheduled late in hopes that the Multi building will be completed to be used for these events in the spring.

Discussion on the car pick-up line started and if it can be improved. David noted that 85 students were late to school on December 8th. Next school year, there is a possibility of changing to one dismissal time to improve this or changing bad behavior of parents.

Carolyn Heller mentioned the 9-1-1 incident of a 5th grade child who had an allergic reaction and administered her Epi-pen to herself. Maria mentioned that the incident was discussed and changes will be made in the future to help with this. Possible increase in nursing services will be considered in the future.

Monica Bosch is heading up the Disaster Preparedness area. Improvements are being done and several completed this school year.

VIII. Site Council and PTO Council updates – Carolyn Bowsher

Carolyn Bowsher talked about the need to involve the Tinsley kids in the after-school programs.

Ms. Chan needs 4 volunteers a day and is only getting two a day. Carolyn will put something in the Otter Weekly asking for more parent volunteers for her class.

At Laurel, they still haven't caught the driver of the car that killed the 6 yr old first grader and are having a vigil there the week of December 7th.

Encinal's PTO president is facing a lawsuit brought on by a father who was barred from coaching at the school this year.

The MPAEF is looking for volunteers to help with their phone-a-thon fundraiser in January and February. The Computer History Museum is confirmed for the venue of the auction. Projections show that they are on track to hit their numbers from two years ago.

The Hillview Caring & Sharing Committee is looking to help needy families in our area who require help with meeting basic needs.

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The PTO Council discussed whether or not to charge families who can afford to pay for after-school programs to help fund scholarships for other families at that school who cannot. Oak Knoll incorporates 5% of the receipts into our scholarship fund for our students.

Ken Ranella spoke about the need to generate support for the parcel tax. He also discussed the idea of changing the school calendar to include a week at Thanksgiving.

MA High School is considering changing the bell schedule to start later. This is based on the research presented in Po Bronson's book Nurture Shock, suggesting that children do not get enough sleep. This would impact other programs at the school.

D&O Liability insurance – The Oak Knoll PTO Board is not insured for lawsuits. Mark will look at current insurance coverage to see what Oak Knoll currently has for the Board.

All four schools may standardize on using Paypal for collecting monies (Membership, school events, etc.).

IX. Future Capital Expenditures – Phil Ekedahl & David Ackerman

An estimated \$50K in capital expenditures for replacing aging laptops may be coming due in 2011. It is anticipated that the District will be requesting the PTO to pick up this expense. Additional expenses anticipated are \$8K for a new scoreboard in the Multi, the new projector and the Kindergarten lunch table area shading.

X. New Business

We are re-evaluating the photography supplier for Picture Day.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Minutes taken by Allison Chao and edited by Monica Bosch.

Respectfully submitted on December 31, 2009

Monica Bosch
PTO Secretary