

**Roberts Elementary PTO Board Meeting**  
**Friday, January 11, 2013**  
**8:10 a.m. Roberts Cafe**

**In attendance:** Ali Pilcher, Aliya Walji, Alyson Rooney, Ana Kaplan, Cheryl Sorak, Courtney Tardy, Elizabeth Singleton, Esther Pastore, Jennifer Thornton, Kara Niles, Kelly Wehrer, Lana Boutwell, Lara Frazier, Natalie Smith, Nathan Somera, Paula Zurcher, Renae Holman Murti, Sheryl Barrett, Stephanie Walton, Vikram Shenoy, Valerie Thompson, Kirsty McCormack, Yvonne Segal, Maureen Glancy, Divina Eraham, Angelica Costillo, Maria Fernandez, Ann Heikkinen, David Heikkinen (29 People)

President, Jennifer Thornton, called the meeting at 8:10 am.

**School Report by Stephanie Walton** - We have begun the implementation of a new software tool – iStation. This is a reading tool used in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. It allows us to assess students' reading abilities, similar to the TPRI at the lower grades. It is a computer-based program and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of our readers. In addition to the assessment component, it is also a tool, which provides reading intervention for struggling students. In addition to being used at school, it can be accessed at home. Since we are in the early implementation stages, we are still figuring it out. We have hired a teacher to help those students who have been identified by the program as needing help. She will be pulling those students 60 – 90 minutes weekly to help students access the program online. We are also offering access to the program before school 3 days a week.

Valentine's Day parties are coming up. That is also probably be the same day as spring/class pictures. Valentine's Day will be a party day. So, if you remember the long lines at reception for the holiday parties, we may want to come early. The help eliminate some of the wait, we have set up another computer in reception and can pre-register you if you know you are coming. We apologize for the line and appreciate those of you who follow the rules. Thank you for your patience for these inconveniences. We are looking at all of these systems to make them better.

Regarding changes to entering and exiting from the school, what do we do with the doors when people are trying to get in for drop off? Since our teachers have to be in their classrooms at 7:55, to be able to allow fellow parents to enter the building during drop off time will take us being courteous to each other. If you are entering the building and see someone approaching, please hold the door open for him or her. I know that right now our students are on heightened alert. If you are dropping off, it should be to circle drive or by the attended area on School Street before 7:55. Any drop offs after that time should be in circle drive only.

Again, these are systems that we are continuing to improve. Everyone's safety is always critical.

**Carnival by Courtney Tardy** - Although we are not focusing on carnival until after the auction, we are looking for help with games, rides, book sale, t-shirt plus other areas. Looking around at the attendees here, it is our usual group of volunteers, so I ask you to think of your classroom parents who have said that they are interested in helping by may have limited time or availability. Most of the jobs for carnival are small. If you have a suggestion please let me know. The theme as not been set yet, our second grade classes are working on it. The date is Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Auction by Paula Zurcher** – Our auction is fast approaching and will be held on Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Rice University Grand Hall. Auction is our biggest fundraiser and provides for most of what the school needs and doesn't have money for. We are working on getting the catalog on-line and that information will be updated as we get closer to the event. Invitation will come out the week of Jan 27<sup>th</sup>. It will have ticket, reserved seating and sponsorship information. We are doing the gymnast factory again. The cost is \$35.00 per child and the time is 6:00 - 11:30. We have a band booked, “Nobody’s Fool”, who will play a variety of music, not just country/western. We are also trying to get a dancing group to come in and show us a few steps. We welcome any ideas or suggestions and are always looking for anything new to add.

There are still a lot of things to do, so if you have any free time and can help us with even the smallest task, please do.

I know a lot of you are thinking about parties, and we need them, so far we only have 4 committed. Please get your forms in. If you are not sure what to do, we have a lot of different ideas please talk with me. Of all the items to bid on, parties make the most money, last year alone they brought in almost \$40,000.00. Deadline to turn in your forms will be end of January.

Food is being provided by Lola Catering, wine is being donated by the Tardy family and beer is being donated by St. Arnold’s Brewery, thank you to those families. And thank you to everyone who worked on the cows. They look really great. They will be on display in mid-February.

**Treasurer’s Report by Alyson Rooney** – Recapping recent financial activities, some of the items appear to be either over budget or greatly under budget. Looking at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade field trip line item, it is over budget because we haven’t collected from the parents yet. Classroom supplies is over budget due to us having so many new teachers. Returning teaches receive \$200.00 and new teachers receive \$400.00. Staff appreciation appears to be low, but this may be because I misclassified the holiday gifts we gave out. Each staff member from crossing guards to Mrs. Graves received a \$50.00 gift card. This year our directory made money due to large donation. The 100% PTO campaign money will be discussed during the next Budget committee meeting in February. We are currently gathering ideas on how best to spend that money.

Special allocations are usually determined in March and anything left over usually goes to teacher training and technology updates. That is why we need committee member to spend your money so we have an idea of what we will have left over.

If you need a record of your committee account, just shoot me an e-mail and I can easily spend you a report.

John Thornton will be contacting you committee chairs shortly regarding putting together next year's budgets. Even if you are not heading up your committee next year, your input is very valuable.

**Tuesday Folders by Jennifer Thornton** – It has been decided that from here forward, all parents will get a front page. Red dots will still apply, so that they only get one, but due to the number of calls our administration is getting we feel this is best. All flyers will go home a least once and for our green dot families, they will not get repetitive flyers.

Committee member need to remember that the front page is your first option to getting your information the school community.

**Kindergarten Round Up by Jennifer Thornton** – We are not very good at getting the word out about our registration schedule to our zoned parents. We are trying to get our neighborhood kids to come to Roberts rather than a private school. The current schedule is on the calendar and will be discussed at the Tuesday meeting. We are planning on sending it to the local civic associations as well. Another reason is we want to get a handle on attendance as soon as possible. We want to have our classes at a steady 22 to prevent getting overflow for neighboring schools. We still need to be a magnet school, so there is a fine balance to maintain.

President Jennifer Thornton adjourned the meeting at 8:49 am. The next PTO Board meeting will be Friday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:15 a.m. in the Roberts Café.