

Roberts Elementary PTO Board Meeting

Friday September 4, 2015

8:10 a.m. Roberts Cafe

In attendance: Marthe Anderson, Arghavan Banan, Helen Belgrove, Kelly Brumleve, Lori Bullwinkel, Virginia Camerlo, Gabriela Casol, Summer Dawson, Liz Ehrhart, Vanessa Engel, Trealla Epps, Piper Flowers, Kelli Frank, Lara Frazier, Griselda Garcia, Martha Gau, Isabella Hawkins, Erika Henderson, Renae Holman, Camille Jenman, Kevin Jensen, Michael Javle, Isabel Khan, Jaesun Kang, Jieun Kim, Birgitte Kleftakis, Chloe Krane, Elangovan Krishnan, Meiyee Ku, Goi Madden, Denise Metry, Wendy Miller, Sook Miller, Mehrnaz Molaei, Dina Mohamed, Lauren Montesi, Prashant Murti, Alton Nash, Kara Niles, Kirsten Osther, Thanyaporn Phoolpol, Amanda Reyes, Christine Robins, Donna Scudder, Jansi Sethuraj, Megan Stewart, Rocio Suayfeta, Dina Taaffe, Ryan Taatle, Jennifer Thornton, Valerie Thurmond, Valerie Thompson, Devyn Wolens, Sharon Yam, Neda Zafarianian

Meeting Called to Order	Camille Jenman
School Report	Trealla Epps
Treasurer's Report	Lara Frazier
Culture of Giving Campaign	Renae Holman/Prashant Murti
International Festival	Helen Belgrove/Isabel Khan
SPARK Committee Report	Jennifer Thornton
PTO website	Camille Jenman
Room Parent/Tuesday Folder Volunteers	Camille/Liz Ehrhart
Nominating& Budget Committees	Camille Jenman
Box Top & Rewards	Vanessa Engel
International Garden	Lori Bullwinkel
PTO Sponsored Staff Appreciation Lunch	Martha Gau/Goi Madden
Recognition of Volunteers	Camille Jenman
Any Other Business	Camille Jenman
Adjourn	Camille Jenman

Meeting Called to Order **Camille Jenman**

8:10

Camille introduced the current PTO board.

School Report **Trealla Epps**

Ms. Epps asked that we pause for a moment in honor of Deputy Constable Goforth who lost his life earlier this week and is being memorialized throughout our city today. Curriculum night next Tues/Thurs beginning at 6pm (not 6:30pm as previously printed). This is a kid-free event with the same format as previous years. Grades K-2 Tues night and Grades 3-5 Thurs night.

VIPS 75 licenses have been copied in the Roberts school office but there have not been an equal number of online registrations completed. Every Roberts parent interested in volunteering must reregister every year.

Class sizes - 2 new classes were opened by Mrs. Graves at the end of last school year. The staff and children all seem very happy with "normal" class sizes (not over 22). 5th grade does not have a 1 teacher to 22 student cap. Roberts historically receives a large influx of students again in October so current teachers have been informed to anticipate this increase.

Dismissal procedures - risk management team coming week of September 14th to assess the current procedure for approximately one week. Then there will be an in-house safety meeting which includes staff and safety officers. An open parent meeting will follow the last week of September or first week of October so that Roberts parents may be involved in the discussions about how can we ease the congestion and keep our children safe during drop-off and dismissal. Additional goals would be that the carpool line is not backed up & walk-up parents can get in & out quickly during dismissal.

Ms. Epps has conducted observations of all classrooms multiples times already. Her feedback is that the kids are happy.

Ms. Epps thanked everyone for their patience with her email correspondence since her communications have been delayed.

For Curriculum Night the School doors will be opened at 5:45pm. Ms. Epps will host a quick presentation in the cafeteria lasting approximately 15-20 min then parents will proceed to the classrooms.

Question from a parent: Is Roberts at risk for losing magnet status this school year?

Answer from Ms. Epps: Ms. Epps has a meeting with HISD next week to review the current student body numbers and is hoping the numbers of magnet students attending Roberts has increased with the addition of the two new classrooms.

Question from another parent: Will there be a meeting to discuss the new Math Technique?

Answer: Ms. Epps needs more time to review the current available data resulting from the implementation of this new technique prior to hosting a meeting for discussion with parents.

Treasurer's Report

Lara Frazier

Treasurer is a two year position. Lara is beginning her 2nd year and thus states she is feeling more knowledgeable in this role. There are copies of the PTO budget on the tables. The budget displays where we are today vs. for the year. Current proposal is to spend and raise \$135k this school year

Spending examples include- hospitality coffee, hospitality prior to meetings, and each returning teacher has a \$200 spending Budget, each new teacher has a budget of \$400 reimbursable with funds raised by the PTO

Another example of spending was the gardening & landscaping around the school which was done just prior to the first day of this school year.

There were some unexpected expenses during the summer including:

- 1) Ice machine broke - cost \$3500 for a new one
- 2) Carpet cleaning – done throughout campus to prepare for new school year

Culture of Giving Campaign

Rena Holman/Prashant Murti

Goal is 100% participation – new feature is ability to donate online this year via robertspto.org website. A lot of corporations will match donations - so Rena suggests parents asking their employer for a match and then filling out paperwork which will be sent home in the Tuesday Folders. Donations may be paid by cash, check or online using a credit card. Credit Card

Company does get a percentage of each transaction paid via credit card. Parents should return matching form from employer along with the letter from Tuesday folder. Campaign goes through 25th of September. Renae will be hanging the "thermometer" banner which demonstrates how close we are to our collection goal/100% participation today. All classes receiving 100% participation gets \$100 funding for class to use. The 1st class to reach 100% participation gets t-shirts as well.

International Festival

Helen Belgrove/Isabel Khan

Held Oct 16th 3-6pm

Every Friday after drop off there will be prep meetings (after PTO meeting on Oct 2). This year's theme is "Around the World". Classroom presentations are encouraged the week of festival as an opportunity to expose our students to other culture, values, foods, etc.... Committee Chairs are requesting additional help beyond those volunteers who will be representing a country at a table. Notify chairpersons if you know of any performers (10 min max performance). There will be more information going home in Tuesday folders. Besides the tables representing various countries there will be a chalk-drawing competition, parade of traditional costumes day of event, traditional dances, and the students complete a passport by answering questions about various countries. The classroom that turns in the most completed passports gets a prize.

SPARK Committee Report

Jennifer Thornton

City of Houston helps Roberts raise money to update the school playground area, and in return the park is kept open to the public on weekends/after school. Current playground 18 years old 10 years ago stage & adult fitness equipment was added.

150 hours have been spent assessing needs/wants by classes & neighbors. The committee visited 30+ other schools & parks over the summer in order to come up with a design proposal. This is a big project. Playground piece anticipated to cost \$500,000. This cost includes moving playground items/equipment around for better flow. Our community has changed a lot since last Spark update 18 years ago. Fundraising signs which can be placed in the front yard in exchange for a \$100 donation. Block captains will be soliciting door to door. Corporate matching is also being sought. Fun run will be held in November on a Friday morning for all Roberts's students to raise money for their own playground. Roberts is not a Title 1 school, so committee is seeking grant money b/c we are not a priority based on need. Corp sponsorships needed by December. Timeline - 1 year to complete park so money raised by December for permitting in Dec/Jan for building beginning in May to be done by Aug 1st. Committee is also seeking in-kind donations (dump truck, stones/pavers)

PTO Website

Camille Jenman

New Roberts PTO website vs. run by HISD

Features: Online CC donations, Online form completion, Corporate Sponsors featured, ability to enter student directory info, Sign-up to volunteer online, Meeting minutes, News posts, calendar and school store items.

Goal is to shift from paper forms to online data entry

Room Parent/Tuesday Folder Volunteers

Camille /Liz Ehrhart

All but 4 classrooms have Room Parents volunteers. The teachers of those 4 classes will discuss their needs in the classroom during Curriculum Night.

PTO is in need of more of Tues folder volunteers. Time commitment is 15-20 min on a Tues.

During curriculum night teachers will announce if their class still needs a Tues. folder volunteer

Nominating & Budget Committees**Camille Jenman**

Job of this committee is to set budget for following school year

Decide where to spend extra funds at end of year

Please inform Camille if you would be interested in joining Budget Committee

Being involved on this committee is a great way to understand our budget better

Nominating Committee - starts assembling Jan/Feb to recommend and nominate following school year's Board members

Box Top & Rewards**Vanessa Engel**

Randall's, Kroger, Target, etc...link to our school for donations based on spending of our families

Shoparoo – take picture of your receipt, it is uploaded & Shoparoo donates money to school

Goal: Extra funds to our school - campaign for Box Top collections occur twice a year. First one will be held in October. Second campaign will be in the Spring of 2016

Box Top forms will be sent home in Tuesday folders for 2 weeks this campaign

1 drawing will be held and anyone who brings x number of box tops will be entered into this drawing for a prize

The school earns \$.10 per boxtop

Affinity programs – read more under fundraising tab on PTO website

Other eligible stores include Office depot for certain items and Pottery Barn Kids for backpacks

International Garden**Lori Bullwinkel**

Community vegetable gardens

18 beds and an herb garden

Committee installed new sprinklers & put down weed cloth over the summer

5th grade will be gardening herbs

3-5th grade will participate in fall planting & harvesting while K-2nd grades do spring planting & harvesting

Time commitment is approximately 30 min during one school day when each class needs a volunteer to talk to the kids about benefits of gardening, walk them out to the garden, help the students plant seeds in the garden, help harvest, etc....

The school provides the seeds, materials, etc...

Contact Lori if interested in this volunteer opportunity

PTO Sponsored Staff Appreciation Lunch**Martha Gau/Goi Madden**

This lunch includes all staff including crossing guards

Sign-up genius will be coming out soon for parents to sign up for food/drinks/set-up & clean-up

Recognition of Volunteers**Camille Jenman**

Alyson Rooney is to be commended for her work on school supplies - huge undertaking

Eman El Shareif - manages both websites, set up whole new PTO website, works throughout the year on both of the school's websites. All "Robertsinfoservices" emails are directed to Eman so she deserves recognition

Arghavan Banan & Wendy Miller- work room moms - need more help any time you can offer.

Consider volunteering in the workroom as it is a great way to get involved

Chau & Jodi - coffees/hospitality - very appreciative

Any Other Business**Camille Jenman**

PTO is looking for someone with experience using Adobe Design to help with layout of online Roberts's directory

Finnegan counseling session to begin when this meeting is adjourned. Topic: "Worry & Anxiety in Kids"

Sat Sept 26th is Community Night which is a fun event for Roberts's families and friends to enjoy food, a movie, and popcorn/treats

PTO is looking for a CPA to help file tax returns on behalf of our organization - looking for pro bono CPA (Roberts parent) or else willing to pay for these services

Question from a parent: Is there a plan to put windows in the new temporary buildings?

Answer: The PTO has funded this action in the past so it may be a possibility

Adjourned

Camille Jenman

Meeting adjourned at 0902