

PTO Meeting Minutes: January 18th, 2018

Present: Jen Schlueter, Charlotte Hanley-Jacobson, Heather Allison, Sarah Craig, Michael Arquin, Sarah Murphy, Kerry Furtney, Adeel Ahmad, Erin Kelsey, Regan Fox, Becky Pedersen, Diane Johnston, Neha Lang, Ben Lang, Sarah Hick, Elizabeth Lake, Jeff Sambs, Robert Clarksen, Shanna Sether-Clarksen, Marjorie Bequette, Michelle Hyatt

1. Welcome and Introductions.

2. Vote to Approve November Meeting Minutes and Approve Today's Meeting Agenda. November minutes are available at:

<https://www.spps.org/cms/lib/MN01910242/Centricity/Domain/4154/PTO%20Meeting%20Minutes%2011.13.17.pdf>

3. I pads in the Classroom--Michelle Hyatt, 2nd grade teacher

Seesaw--app Ms. Hyatt uses with the 2nd graders. Can be used in the classroom and also as a communication tool with parents. Can organize and post an activity she wants kids to do in class. Can provide information and directions. Can see photos of work kids did in class, recorded voices. Combines taking photos, writing component, voice. Seesaw is nice because it is safe place--all kids are on Ms. Hyatt's account. Security features--every post the kids create goes through Ms. Hyatt before being posted for class to see.

Can also communicate with parents using this tool. Parents can respond right away when see kids work.

Great way to explore social media, learn how to use it properly. Positive affirmation kids get from other kids responding to their work.

Question: Do all classes use this? Ms. Hyatt: it's kind of a trickle down, some teachers use it and some don't.

Question: Is there conscious leadership from district? Are there tech mentors in the school? Michelle: this year district has a subscription to Seesaw, are providing more training. District IT person has come out to the school a couple times to train teachers.

Ms. Johnston: If parents have time/are tech savvy, their classroom teacher might appreciate help with implementing Seesaw. It takes a lot of time to set it up and some teachers aren't as tech knowledgeable.

Question: Is district tracking use of iPads? Ms. Pedersen: They aren't tracking it, but they are offering more training this year. It's also a matter of training the children how to use the apps. Question of when do teachers have time to do it.

Ms. Lake (Library): SPPS has a digital library that has a lot of additional resources. Library Go cards--all students now have access to online library card. Additional resource being made available to kids. Culturegrams is a program we will now have access to. Encouraging librarians to use Culturegrams instead of reference books that may quickly become outdated. Instead put \$ into picture/chapter books that won't become outdated. 5th graders are learning about this and playing around with it now.

4. School Compact for Grades 3-5--Regan Fox, Title I Teacher

Compact is an agreement between parents, teachers, students, about how we are going to work together so everyone is achieving success. We are a Title I targeted assist school, only some students are getting services, Grades 3-5. We will be rewriting this compact each year, this spring we will be inviting parents to give their input.

This went home with all Title I students, and to teachers.

5. Update on Teacher Contract Negotiations--Diane Johnston and Jean Schaeffer--St. Paul Federation of Teachers Union Reps for Groveland

Bargaining has been going on, at the point where they're at mediation and not able to make an agreement. Organizing a rally next Tuesday night at the school board meeting. 5:00

At a standstill with mediation because district isn't meeting any proposals. Involves funding ELL, nurses, mental health issues, restorative justice. District won't move because they want teachers to agree to QComp. They have said they won't move on anything else until teachers accept QComp.

Question: what is school board saying? They have been very quiet and so has new superintendent.

Question: could it get to the point of a strike? Teachers: yes, they are talking about a strike.

Question: do you have a sense of timeline? Asked to sign a petition at last meeting,

Teachers (Tiger Team) wants district to ask companies to pay taxes for school, losing money. District doesn't want to participate with union on this and district isn't interested. Other cities have gone that route with success.

Question: what can parents do to support? Write school board and superintendent. Show up en masse at school board. In past this has helped.

Tiger Team has worked with union in past to spread word on social media.

Parent: I'm on Tiger Team, trying to use social media to connect parents and union. There is a Facebook page, SPFT Tiger Team.

Question: are parents going to speak? At last few meetings, parents, teachers, community members have spoken.

Do you have sister unions giving support? Last time we had support from Teamsters.

Parent actions: spread word among Groveland parents, go to rally, write to school board and superintendent.

Question: why does district want teachers to sign QComp. Not sure, possible funding source but there are lots of questions about reality because there is a long waiting list for QComp and no additional dollars that aren't already allocated to other districts.

6. Groveland Gear and New Fundraising Opportunities- Ben Lang and Adeel Ahmad

A. Ben Lang--Groveland Gear and New Online Store in the works

- Fall sale, brought in \$379 dollars, sold 97 items. Working on trying to bring that number up in future, trying to streamline online process. Hoping to get the word out about Groveland
- Online Shop--current shop, open only 2 weeks. Working on setting up a shop to be open year-round. This enables us to be more seasonal about what we sell to appeal to more families.
- Grovelandgear.com now there is a shop set up on shopify. Modern store. Sizing on every product. Everything printed on demand so no one holding inventory. Checkout looks normal. Shopify costs \$20/month. Shopify used by Toyota/Tesla down to mom and pop shops. Could be not just for gear, could use for other things, tickets, etc.

Question: does Shopify take a cut? Adeel: they take 2%.

Mr. Sambs: Groveland Gear adds a nice community feel to the school. Teachers appreciate the impact on the school.

Ms. Pedersen: new logo is on new brochures.

B. Adeel Ahmad: Thoughts on Fundraising and New Ideas

Passive income--donation ideas

- Facebook Donations--they took off 5% cut, now 100% goes to a nonprofit, makes it easier to donate.
- Amazon Associates--Amazon Smile we have used in past, you only get .5%. But if you use Amazon Associates, it's same thing but you get a link, we get 4-15%. Might be a good idea to have in email footers.

- Shutterfly/TinyPrints will give 13% to your organization
- Classroom Donations on Google Sheets--this idea worked well for Gingerbread houses in Mrs. Goulet's class.

Created google sheet--sent parents link, just add initials, privacy intact and get right stuff without waste. Could have a running donation sheet for teacher classroom needs

Interesting Ideas for future....

- School Bot --can get info from texting a number, e.g. bus schedule, lunch menu,
- Can also do real time translation in over 100 languages. Google Translate has advanced hugely in last six months.

Negligible cost

- Learn family communication preference--personalize how communicate with families, via text rather than email
- Bus tracking
- Automated newsletter (local events, parenting tips, school news)
- Automated lost and found cam
- Master Plan: Experiment at Groveland with new school tech/fundraising ideas, Local Tech Press, Word of mouth
- Student lessons--power of autonomy and entrepreneurship, Tech for good, How to break glass ceiling of school fundraising

7. Principal's Report- Ms. Pedersen

School Choice Fair is this Saturday for Pre-K and K

Pre-K teacher's aide is leaving, working on hiring a new aide for the class.

Mary Francis is with 5th grade to help deliver small group instruction

8. Past and Upcoming Events

- Addendum Books Fundraiser, December 5th, Parent Social at Bottle Rocket, December 6th
- School Choice Fair, January 20th, 9:30-2:00, Washington Technology High School, 1495 Rice St.
- Science Fair and Invention Convention, January 30th, 6-7:30

Volunteers needed! Please contact your child's teacher or Mr. Nelson at paul.nelson@spps.org to help children with projects during the school day prior to the fair. Please sign up to help with set-up and clean-up on the day of the fair at <http://signup.com/login/entry/87023855526748050>. Thank you!

- National African American Parent Involvement Day (NAAPID), February 12th

Parent volunteers are needed to help with planning this event. Please contact Ms. McCully kellimccully@spps.org or Mr. Gunsten charles.gunsten@spps.org to get involved.

- New SPPS Superintendent Joe Gothard is coming to Groveland! March 15th PTO Meeting, 6-7:30. Mark your calendars!

9. Science Discussion--Marty Davis, Supervisor for Science in St. Paul, in charge of all science in SPPS K-12

SPPS Science Mission: Students will think and act like scientists and engineers. Newish (engineering piece is new). We were 2nd state in country to add engineering as part of required curriculum in science. Engineering is part of K-12 work in addition to science. STEM for all students is goal in SPPS.

Elem Science curriculum:

Office of Teaching and Learning

<https://www.spps.org/otl>

Elementary Science

<https://www.spps.org/Page/23933>

Priority Benchmarks by Grade Level

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4yZZF7bjBI-TzVqVzBTYOR0ZzO/view>

What is state requiring and what are teachers doing under those benchmarks

Science Experiences Offered in SPPS:

- Core Math and Science/Engineering Courses, EiE(Engineering is Elementary), FOSS, Delta, CORI (connects literacy and science), Science Field Experiences, Target Funds field trips to zoo, all 3rd graders trip to Belwin nature center
- Additional STEM programming students can choose
- In school (mostly electives in middle and high school- Project Lead the Way and Gateway, program to increase # of engineering students graduating from college) and after school
- Specialized programs in St. Paul at specific schools--Aerospace, BioSMART, Environmental
- After School: Lego League (run through EDL), Robotics, Renewable Energy, Math Counts, Science Bowl, Science Fair, STEM camps...

Question: what does process for approving curriculum look like at district level? Mr. Davis: Elementary: last true Science adoption was in 1991 in district. We haven't pushed for adoption of new curriculum because there's nothing better, what have done is adding pieces as standards change. FOSS kits, added Delta kits (e.g. for soil learning) Continual review cycle done through their office with teacher input. 3M bought EiE kits for every school, paid for training for teachers, reading component integrated in reading series.

Question: how is it decided which after school programs are available at different schools? Mr. Davis: Depends on having staff or volunteers to run them.

Question: What kind of support is district giving teachers to teach these standards?

By law need to teach what state requires, how school decides to teach it is up to them, every year offer FOSS workshops, also do unwrapping of these workshops, done work around what benchmarks mean, what are resources, offer content workshops Question: How are science teachers evaluated in building? Many parents and teachers are concerned that our students aren't getting the science instruction that they need. What it comes down to is what is the execution and the support needed?

10. Motion to end meeting, vote to end meeting.

Please join us for the next PTO Meeting on Thursday, February 15th, 6:00-7:30

Groveland PTO Executive Committee

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Please contact us with questions or if you would like to get involved with Groveland PTO!