

Notes from our January 19 meeting are pasted below. Lots of opportunities to be involved, and all community members are welcome to be involved, and come to upcoming PTO meetings.

January 19 meeting

Location: GPE Library

Date: 1/19/17

Time: 6-7:30

Attendance: 12

Welcome

Review and approve minutes

Updates from last time:

- Library position is filled, volunteering now possible. Please contact Elizabeth Lake (ealake@hotmail.com or 651-690-0930) if interested.
- School Board election: Janelle Foster won the open seat.

Committees overview

These notes highlight what was discussed at the meeting. The updates are available through the Panda Paws on a regular basis, to try to keep the school informed and to encourage committees to share lots of information.

- Classroom Villages update: figuring out timing for the annual skating party, either on the NAAPID Day or on a Saturday. Also planning Poetry Night for grades 1 and 3, where children share their poetry written in class -- other grades are encouraged to do so as well.
- Equity and Inclusion group: parents got a nice report on the African drumming group. Group is looking for new leadership. Contact groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com if interested. Thanks to Sarah and Daniel Atunah-Jay for all their work as founders and leaders of this group.
- NAAPID: Cecile Lewis will be doing a unity quilt project at Groveland for the day. Volunteers needed to help set up at 1:30 (contact Ms. Bunnell at krisann.bunnell@spps.org) and to possibly support the quilt (contact Sarah Atunah-Jay (satunahjay@gmail.com)).
- Library: contact Elizabeth Lake to volunteer.
- Lunch Buddies: still open and volunteer opportunities are available. <http://signup.com/go/BgSWNP>
- Directory: existing structure is for every family to verify their data each year. We could change the procedure, so that new families would need to log in and provide data, but returning families could let it stay the same from year to year OR update it if they so choose. Families would still get an email telling them what their data is every year and reminding them they can change their information. Those present voted (majority) to approve this change.

Principal's Report

School Continuous Improvement Plan (SCIP):

https://mis.spps.org/scip15/viewOnly.cfm?school_num=476&school_year=15-16

Every school in Saint Paul Public Schools has a plan and they are updated continually. It contains links to data from MDE, test scores and more. It includes strategies and plans for reading and math improvement, developed by staff.

Staffing update: we now have the library position filled. Also, temporarily, we have a SPPS retired clerk who has returned as a part time clerk in the office. The position will be permanently filled soon. There is an open special education position for DCD still; it's been hard to fill because of the limited licensed candidates. There continue to be staff on leave in the building so there are long and short term subs.

PTO/FOG information

There is a description of the roles of PTO and FOG on the Groveland website (<http://groveland.spps.org/domain/4154>). Please use and share this with other Groveland families who are interested in how these two organizations support our school. There are many links and opportunities here so please explore it. Also please provide feedback to Neha Lang (groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com) if you have additions or find outdated information.

The group had a discussion of marketing of the school. In response to a parent question, the SCIP does not include a marketing plan. The staff does have a committee that pays attention to these things (including school choice fair, tour, brochures, and more).

Discussion continued: Could someone blog about the school, about something like the 2nd grade African drumming event. The website has more capability than before but teacher time is still limited. Yard signs should be available soon through the spirit wear project. What are the high volume ways that we can use to help more families know about how great Groveland is? If we did a blog, we could encourage the teachers who might already be disposed to do it (last year art and science both did blogs for parents). The Facebook page is another good resource that more people should follow.

FOG

Thanks to all for all the support.

Direct Drive has raised \$8000, which is great but below our goal of \$10000

Celebrate Groveland raised \$15,000, which is slightly below our goal of \$16,000, but is great given the lower attendance.

You can still join gatherings and give to Groveland through the rest of the year.

Davanni's Night raised over \$300 this year.

Apex Fun Run is Feb 27-March 10 with the run itself on March 9.

FOG is getting corporate sponsorships for the event and is working with the student leadership team.

Support available for kids to make video asks for social media for the Fun Run. Contact Christine (cmelchert@gmail.com) to learn more. If you would like to volunteer for your student's race, please email: friendsofgroveleand@gmail.com

There will be volunteer opportunities on 3/9. Contact Christine.

Goal (as projected by Apex) is \$11-13K for this year. Last year we raised \$23,000.

There are open positions for next year, including chair of Celebrate Groveland.

Book fair chair: Sarah Murphy will run it next year.

Box tops are due next week. This will get shared through Panda Paws and also through an email to the directory.

Announcements

School supply kits: this fall, we tried out using a service to provide full kits for those who chose to purchase them. We need a parent volunteer to support this project. Please volunteer by 1/29 to support Tracy Van Natta to continue this program. Contact Tracy (tracy.van.natta@spps.org) or Neha (groveland.pto.pres@gmail.com) if you are interested.

News and Events

Prospective parent open house is next Thursday evening, 1/26. Committee chairs have the opportunity to share at the event at a table. It overlaps with the Artist and Writer's Fair evening.

If you are interested in being a greeter, please contact Ms Goulet at LORI.GOULET@spps.org.

NAAPID (National African-American Parent Involvement Day) is on 2/13. It's open to all families. There will be many school-wide and classrooms specific events that day. It's a great day to visit the school.

School Board has approved a study for implementation of the change in school start times for 2018. There are significant questions about budget and execution still to be answered. Groveland would shift to a significantly earlier start time with this plan.

SPPS School Board meetings are always open.

Superintendent survey open through 1/23: <http://www.spps.org/Domain/12446>

Information about upcoming meetings and more is at <http://www.spps.org/superintendentsearch>

Review of Past Events

School Choice fair was on 1/7. Many staff and two parents (Neha and Marjorie) worked at the booth. There were lots of prospective parents there interested in Groveland and in the Open House.

Parent comments

Jessica MacDonald: there are challenges with clearing the stairs on the west side of the school.

Ms Pedersen's response: We have one custodian at Groveland. The sidewalks are divided between city and school responsibility. The custodian works hard to keep things clear but there are choices that have to be made to match the budget and time provided. If parents are interested in advocating more for this, connect with Jessica at jmcdonald321@gmail.com .

Kathryn Wegner: Groveland Unite for Public Schools speaking as a parent, educator, and professor is interested in organizing parents at Groveland to come together to advocate for the good of public education. Goal would be to mobilize parents to take action quickly, making phone calls, twitter action, protesting, and more - when needed. Contact Kathryn to learn more at kathrynwegner@gmail.com .

Environmental and community building thoughts

Encourage students: don't use more paper towels than are needed in the bathrooms; it saves the planet and saves Groveland's budget.

Encourage kids to meet new people regularly at school. Do the same as a parent.