

## Avoca PTC General Membership Meeting Final

A Meeting of the General Membership of the Avoca 37 Parent Teacher Council was held on Wednesday, October 8, 2014 at 7:00PM at Marie Murphy School, Wilmette, IL. A speaker hired from Haven for Youth gave a presentation on recognizing signs of depression, anxiety, and other common childhood mental health issues.

- I. **WELCOME:** President Kathy Stein opened the meeting at 7:35PM and the secretary recorded the minutes. A quorum of PTC members was present. (Eight voting members are required and 17 were present.)

**Attendees:** (2 guests present)

**Administration:** Matthew Palcer (Principal –Marie Murphy)

**Introductions:** Members and guests introduced themselves.

- II. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved as written.

- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the September 17, 2014 meeting were approved as distributed.

### IV. ELECTION TO FILL VACANCY

The President introduced the candidate. The secretary read Article VIII Section 7 in the PTC Bylaws concerning filling of vacancies, The President announced that the Executive Board selected a candidate for the vacant Director of Volunteers Avoca PTC Executive Board position, Matt Coatar. **Upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, Matt Coatar was elected as Director of Volunteers.**

### V. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A. **President's Report:** (Kathy Stein)

1. Thanked recent volunteers for picture day, Family Action Network, gift wrap,
2. Seeking volunteers for Halloween parties & Movie Night.
3. Suggested using cloud storage of photos for PTC promotion. Will check with current yearbook committee. Need to check current registration verbiage for PTC distribution of picture use.

B. **Treasurer's Report** Brian Egan presented the treasurers report and filed a copy for audit. Monthly net revenue showed a loss. Income came from membership dues & gift wrap fundraiser. Expenses included gifts to team leaders and invoice for AW playground equipment.

PTC Account as of September 30, 2014

September Receipt totals:	\$ 12, 834.86
September Disbursement totals:	\$ 13, 119.89

Checking Account Balance:	\$ 30,054.54
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Money Market Account Reserves:	\$ 46,058.00
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Managed Programs	\$ 3,464.78
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Total Asset Balance:	\$ 79,577.42
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C. **Secretary's Report (Correspondence)** Denise Kamberis Kingwill read 1 thank you note.

D. **Vice President at Marie Murphy** (Shalung Youla)

1. Majority of room fees collected with a projected income over \$4000. Money is spent on 3 parties & end of year teacher appreciation gift.
  - a. Budget approximately \$400 per party. Leaves 6-7% of total fund for staff/teacher gifts. Plan to consider type & amount of gift cards closer to end of year.
2. 8 volunteers signed up for daytime Halloween party on 10/31. Preceded by faculty vs student volleyball game. Working with Arbor's Lisa Jurik to provide food. Parents set up, pass treats & clear.
3. Reviewed Student Council hosted Halloween Dance details.
  - a. Students are encouraged to wear appropriate costumes, event is chaperoned by teachers, gym is set up with DJ, MPR is set up for games, ping pong, etc. Admission fee & food costs TBD. Partially a fundraiser. Students are discouraged from leaving the event early.

- b. Dance is on 10/17 because of no school previous Friday, 10/24 and Halloween is the following Friday.
- 4. VP working to communicate consistently throughout the year.
  - a. Email sent through school secretary in August to introduce room parents & self.
  - b. Week prior to parties will send email to parents with information on event.
- E. **Director of Community Relations** (read by president on behalf of Amy Shinohara)
  - 1. Avoca West Principal-Parent Book Club
    - a. AW parents have received invitation from Ms. Hutchinson to participate in book club.
    - b. First book chosen is Carol Dweck's *Mindset*. Discussions will be held in November & December. Contact Ms. Hutchinson if you plan to participate.
  - 2. Families in Need
    - a. Received a huge response. Committee is working with administration to better define what a family in need is and how to identify those families.
  - 3. Sharon Formicola reported FAN event last month had 13-15 Avoca parents sit in reserved block for Sept event. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot event also attended by AW parents. Access videos of programs on [www.familyactionnetwork.net](http://www.familyactionnetwork.net)
  - 4. Upcoming speakers
    - a. 10/14 Harnessing the Power of Parents through Community Schools: A Case Study from Chicago's North Suburbs in Evanston
    - b. 10/23 Andrew Solomon, PhD, "Depression, Too, is a Thing with Feathers" at New Trier
    - c. 11/3 & 4 Lawrence Steinberg "Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence" and "You and Your Adolescent: A Practical Workshop for Parents" at New Trier
- F. **Director of Fundraising** (Colleen Rosenthal)
  - 1. Book Fair committee is hosting a used book drive for Bernie's Book Bank at AW 10/9-10/29. MM also works with Bernie's books annually holding book drives several times a year.
  - 2. Looking into setting up fundraising party at Sweet Tomatoes in Glenview.
- G. **Director of Membership** (Stephen Starr)
  - 1. Of 470 total, 237 families, 48 AW staff, and 32 MM staff joined the PTC.
  - 2. \$6800 dues collected, 7 families donated additional funds, contacted families who joined more than once. Possible confusion between signing up online and paying at open house events.
  - 3. Friendly reminder sent to staff members who wrote IOU's at the Back to School Luncheon.

## VI. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- A. **Innisbrook** (Stephen Starr)
  - a. Finished with promotion but online ordering is available year round.
  - b. 131 sales raised \$10,326, but short of goal of \$15,000.
  - c. Orders should arrive by end of month. MM & preschool can pick up orders from the office.
  - d. Students win prizes for top 3 sellers (\$50, \$25 & \$25 gift cards) and raffle of Spirit Wear for every one that participated. Class that sells most will get a snack. Winners announced at Halloween spirit assembly. Only one of 5 golden tickets returned for a free roll of gift wrap. The ticket for a Target gift card was not returned.
  - e. Seeking a chair for next year's committee.
- B. **Health & Wellness** Birthday Treats at Avoca West (Louise Dechovitz)
  - a. Survey showed the majority of AW parents approve reducing number or type of special treats while the staff strongly favors eliminating all food at parties.
  - b. Committee is still gathering information. AW Teacher Liaison will send survey to staff to gather more responses.
  - c. Distribution of treats at MM is not formal, frequent or disruptive.
- C. **Picture Day** (Louise Dechovitz)
  - a. Thanked Picture Day Volunteers from Avoca West & Marie Murphy for a smoothly run event

- i) Cece Beneda, Juan Cruz, Eva Rios, Sonya Won, Louise Dechovitz, Maria Costas, Kim Johnson, Jamie Taylor, Shireen Virani, Jessica LeFebvre, Kamal Julka, Jennifer Buck, Wilma Rivera, Lauren Kinney and Colleen Rosenthal.
- 2. Teachers were able to sign-up electronically. In the future, K-3<sup>rd</sup> grades may need first preference on times.

**D. Movie Night** (Stephanie Rick)

- a. Marcella Grossman & Stephanie are co-chairing 11/7 event. AW doors open at 6:30, movie starts -8:00PM.
- b. 3<sup>rd</sup> graders voted from a selection of 5 movies & picked Mr. Peabody & Sherman.
- c. Addressed the concern of running out of popcorn, considering renting machine & popping prior to the event. Parent offered to donate the popcorn supplies.
- d. May have to limit number of attendees at the door for safety concerns.
- e. Adjusting the system for selling pizza.

**E. Avoca West Book Fair** (read by President on behalf of Heather Hester)

- a. Fair runs 10/20-23, set up is 10/17, Flyers went up on 10/13 advertised on website & blast
- b. Vendor is Anderson Books
- c. Committee used sign-up genius online for volunteers, but still need more help.
- d. Procured the Latte Ladies Thursday from 4-6PM without using PTC funds.

**F. Intercultural Night** (Lourdes Cornelius)

- a. Intercultural dinner/festival community building event on 11/21 at Marie Murphy, 6-7PM dinner and talent show at 7-9PM. Next committee meeting 10/20
- b. Display tables assigned to a country headed by a parent ambassador. Currently have 18 countries represented with over 30 families participating. Student & parent volunteers will explain food, tables will be decorated with ethnically relevant items.
- c. First talent show rehearsals held on different days at each school. Children requested to offer acts representing culturally diverse talent, but any performance is acceptable. Acts may be required to pair up. Members expressed concern that pairing may cause social issues. Talent will be scheduled lowest to highest grade.
- d. Rehearsals advertised at Avoca West by school announcements, posters, blasts & room parents. At Marie Murphy, will use the TV screen, work with allied arts teachers and create online form. Idea to group by continent.
- e. Discussion of solutions if there are too many students. If not enough children sign up, committee may bring in outside groups.

**G. Directory** (Lourdes Cornelius)

- a. Sold ads almost doubling last year's total. Files are in second review.
- b. Including two addresses for student with multiple homes. Plan to coordinate with district to list two emails for all families.
- c. On target for distribution by end of October.

(1 member left)

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Student Directories**

- a. Discussion of giving out directories to every family or only distribute to families who pay dues that may encourage more membership. May be logistically difficult this year.
- b. Explained how distribution changed from receiving a directory upon payment of dues to recent policy of giving directories to each family listed in the directory and all staff.
- c. Cost of directory is \$3.85 per copy and dues are \$20 per family or faculty member.

**By general consent, it was decided to distribute copies of the 2014-15 Student Directory to all families who have students listed and all staff regardless of membership status.**

- d. Discussion of other ways to encourage membership and of need to remind community of the benefits of PTC membership.

(2 members left)

**By general consent, it was decided to postpone the discussion on distributing a copy of the 2015-16 Student Directory only to dues paying PTC members until a future meeting.**

**B. Teachers' Holiday Gifts**

- a. Members are concerned with uneven distribution of holiday and year end gifts to teachers and staff. The issue was discussed in December 2012 – February 2013 with no resolution.
  - b. Review of current processes.
    - i. The PTC gives checks to all teams at both schools at the beginning of the school year for classroom use. Optional class fees (\$20 at AW, \$25 at MM) collected at Open Houses are often confused with the \$20 annual PTC dues.
    - ii. Avoca West class fee is used exclusively for gifts. Class party food and items are donated. Gifts are given before winter break, at Teacher Appreciation in May and at the end of school in June. Room parents decide how to spend the money. No consistency in distribution of gifts to classroom teachers, other faculty and support staff. Collected amounts differ. Room parents communicate their actions with fellow classroom parents. Parents may choose to supplement core/encore/specials teacher with additional gifts. Money is never given to the PTC.
    - iii. Marie Murphy room fees are collected by room parents and given to the Marie Murphy Vice President. The fee pays for three daytime parties. Unspent money is given to 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers & all staff members in the form of gift cards at the end of the school year in June. 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers are not included but are given a gift by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade committee. Parents are unfamiliar with how the fee is broken up and how/when the gift is given. The gift amount is not equally distributed and core teachers receive more than others. The amount also varies annually depending on class size and the amount of participation by families.
  - c. The gift money received by staff at both AW and MM is from voluntary room parent fees. Through informal conversation, it appears teachers at AW receive larger and more frequent gifts from room parents.
  - d. Discussed possible solutions for MM
    - i. Request MM parents donate food for parties and use the collected money for gifts only.
    - ii. Communicate to MM parents the breakdown of the room fee; teachers do not receive winter holiday or teacher appreciation gifts from collected funds
- (1 member left)
- iii. Gift equal amounts to core teachers, fine arts teachers, resource teachers, etc. Since the PTC holds the money collected for gifts, it appears unfavorable to give different amounts.
  - iv. Consider that if systemic gift giving causes a rift, perhaps it should be discontinued and handled the same way as AW.
- e. Money has been collected so it is not possible to change the fee structure this year. Communicate with MM parents about the process and offer them an opportunity to provide a personal gift. Communicate discussion to the teachers so that they are aware of the reasons for any inconsistencies.
  - f. Discussed ways to streamline gift giving. Idea of the PTC paying for all food at both schools so all the money donated in room fees goes toward teacher gifts.

**By general consent, it was decided to distribute Marie Murphy gift monies equitably amongst teachers and staff, to inform parents of the exact breakdown of distribution of room fees and timing of gift giving before the winter holiday and to procure donations for future Marie Murphy party food items to increase amount used for gifts this year.**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT: Jenny Wilson moved to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded and upon a voice vote, with all members voting aye, the motion was carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:06PM.**

Next PTC General Membership meeting is **November 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:15PM** at Avoca West School immediately following the 6:30PM Avoca West Report Card Informational meeting.

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Denise Kamberis Kingwill  
Avoca 37 PTC Secretary

Approved on \_11/12/2014\_ as  
Distributed: \_\_DMK\_\_\_\_  
Corrected: \_\_\_\_\_