

**COUNCIL OF DARIEN SCHOOL PARENTS
MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2018 GENERAL MEETING**

Beth Lane opened the meeting at 9:35 am.

Julie Best made a motion to approve the December CDSP General Meeting Minutes. Wendy Hopper seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously with no abstentions.

Beth and Wendy thanked everyone for their hard work in preparing speeches for the Board of Education Public Hearing.

OX RIDGE SPEAKER OPPORTUNITIES

Elizabeth Hole welcomed and encouraged attendance at tonight's "Screen Time" presentation, which is sponsored by Parent Awareness.

Additionally, the Ox Ridge PTO Co-Chairs shared an opportunity to co-sponsor a speaker who teaches parents how to protect children from pesticides and BPA. If interested in co-sponsoring, please contact Elizabeth.

BUDGET UPDATE

Budget Chair, Shelly Skoglund forwarded the following message: Thank you to all who helped in the speech writing process! The BoE will vote on the budget on February 13th. The BoF public hearing is on March 13th (details to come regarding CDSP preparation).

CDSP BUDGET UPDATE

Accounting costs will be slightly higher than expected this year. Changes will be made to lower the costs next year.

CO-CHAIR UPDATE

Wendy and Beth explained the Escalation Pathways document, which is a written version of CDSP's current chain of escalation.

RECESS DISCUSSION

Many parents from all five elementary schools have expressed concerns regarding the duration and quality of recess, including the very limited outdoor time.

Dr. Brenner briefly explained the challenges of balancing extended recess with instructional time and length of the school day, and answered questions regarding the process of pursuing changes.

Next steps:

1. Dr. Brenner will communicate to principals to look for opportunities for more outdoor time during the school day whenever possible.
2. CDSP elementary chairs and reps will compile and prioritize a list of objectives (short term and long term) and questions to be asked.

MMS TRAFFIC DISCUSSION

Many MMS parents are frustrated with the traffic congestion during morning drop-off time period, specifically between 7:15 and 7:50.

Dr. Brenner explained that he and Darien's Chief of Police have observed the MMS traffic and brainstormed. Also, traffic studies have been completed, and adding or moving exit points have been considered.

Long term solutions and short term strategies to alleviate the problem were discussed, including communication strategies to clarify the drop-off and pick-up procedures to drivers. Visual aides, such as a video or map were suggested.

Next step: Present the MMS traffic issue to the BoE Facilities Committee to consider solutions that could be included in the Master Plan.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Library Committee is in the research phase, exploring the benefits of library commons, and is in the process of creating a vision statement.

Curricular initiatives are embedded in the unstructured makerspaces.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Wendy presented an overview of SEL Support models, and explained the district's goals for SEL as well as the current support systems in the Darien elementary schools, MMS and DHS.

NEW BUSINESS - DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC V. PRIVATE (PARENT/PTO) FUNDING

PTO financial records show the PTOs' significant support to the schools, but the general public is largely unaware of the extent of parents' contributions.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10.

Respectfully submitted by Tiffany O'Connor, CDSP Secretary.