



Council of Darien School Parents P.O. Box 2643, Darien, CT 06820

CDSP General Meeting Minutes

35 Leroy Ave.

November 1, 2018

In attendance: Julie Best, Sara Parent, Catherine Piorkowski, Anne Fox, Shelly Sheridan, Stacey Tie, Beth Lane, Kate Mastellone, Justine Mullin, Hope Barton, Alex Hall, Alyson Johnson, Jennifer Sherman, Ann Gallagher, Mia Mihopoulos, Amy Daniels, Doreen Godfrey, Hallie Palen, Brigitte Mansourian, Lori Olson, Tiffany O'Connor, Jennifer Woodbury, Cristi Mohr, Leila Buckjune, Michele Treacy, Shelly Skogland, Amy Zerbe, Tara Ochman, Jill McCammon, Christa McNamara, Kadi Lublin, Joanna Walsh

Meeting called to order by Sara Parent at 9:34.

Vote to improve minutes from October 4, 2018. Vote to approve by Stacey Tie, Seconded by Beth Lane.

School Updates

- *Tokeneke*: Pumpkin Carnival was a big success. PTO is co-sponsoring the movie "Like" at the Library. This event is open to all schools if other PTOs want to blast information about it.
- *Holmes*: Coffee for special education took place. Although attendance was low it was very useful for those who attended.
- *DHS*: PTO is putting on event November 2 to support students/parents in special education about how to advocate for your services. PSAT moved to Saturday. Tiffany brought copy of Parent Orientation Guide. Specifically, she mentioned that there is a list of student clubs included that students and parents should know about.
- *Middlesex*: Successful Failures was a very successful PTO event. The next speaker will address monitoring technology/social media. Hallie brought up the overlap of having the same speakers at different schools. Should we try to coordinate co-sponsoring events more district wide.
- *Ox Ridge*: Large fundraiser on Friday was successful. The auction included a 'sleep under' at the school, which was huge success
- *Hindley*: Book fair was successful; there was an issue with having a new Scholastic representative and tax was being charged. PTO is also considering programming around screen time.
- *Royle*: Casino Royle was huge success; Bingo night is coming on Nov 9. Youth Asset will present at next PTO meeting.

Tara Ochman, Chair of BOE, spoke after school update. She explained what the responsibility of the BOE is. They have the ability to hire and fire the superintendent. It is important for parents need to follow the Chain of Communication. (Specifically, for parents to have concerns about class.) The BOE has a judicially role occasionally; for example, if a staff member is fired the

staff member can go to court--if it does the BOE can make final decision. Chain of Communication will be examined by district/BOE. Idea is that district will blast once finalized. Tara asked the PTOs to consider blasting the Chain of Communication in Wires.

Co-chair Updates

Personel updates:

The Superintendent focus groups went really well; feedback from participants was that the group running the focus groups was excellent'.

Replacement for Marc Marin has still not hired; his work is being parceled out to other staff and a consultant may be hired.

AC/Electrical project: This is moving along as planned. Expect further discussion at the board level.

Update on Elementary PTO Meeting: November 27th is next meeting. The focus of these meetings is to share resources and best practices.

Newsletters/school blasts timing: MMS moved their blast to Sunday night. This has been well-received. Perhaps other PTOs might consider the timing of their blast.

Questions for the Group:

- Preparedness for MMS: Are there concerns that children are not as prepared for MMS as they should be? The group provided feedback that problems have more to do with communicating expectations over the summer-- particularly between elementary and MMS; MMS and high school.
- What do you know about differentiated learning and 'teaching up' in classroom?
- As with preparedness, parents are not always aware of specifics. PTOs can turn key information from BOE. Parents can attend curriculum meetings. Would it be possible to tape curriculum meetings?
- What feedback have you heard about less healthy options in the lunchroom?
- Feedback, in general, is that there is some frustration about less healthy options, costs of meals, quality of foods. Should we have director of food services come to a CDSP meeting or have some other kind of programming to educate parents—including nutritional information, menus, prepay?

CDSP Rep Role Discussion

Does it make sense for Reps to have voting rights? Historically the budget was discussed over many nights so it was a lot of work for co-chairs to go to each meeting. They would alternate with budget reps. Now that the budget discussion is primarily a one day even, we may want to redefine the role. This could be a good 'training ground' for people interested in a co-chair role. The possibility of setting up a working group was discussed.

Officer Updates

Community Outreach: Thriving Youth Task Force and Human Resource Planning Commission are main focus at this time. Shelley is working on coordinating a meeting and will be a resource to PTO on these issues.

Special Education: Last meeting of subcommittee was held on Oct 31. One outcome was that if building administration/staff is going to speak at elementary level coffees, the SESS facilitators will send out invites to case managers who will turn key the information to parents.

New Business

Reminder: When creating school calendars, please be specific in how you label events (IE; Tokeneke book fair instead of Book Fair.)

Motion to adjourn at 10:53 by Shelley Sheridan; Beth Lane seconded.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Piorkowski, CDSP Secretary.