



CDSP General Meeting Minutes

35 Leroy Ave.

March 7, 2019

In attendance: Julie Best, Sara Parent, Catherine Piorkowski, Anne Fox. Stacey Tie, Beth Lane, Alex Hall, Jennifer Sherman, Ann Gallagher, Mia Mihopoulos, Amy Daniels, Lori Olson, Tiffany O'Connor, Leila Buckjune, Michele Treacy, Shelly Skoglund, Sarah Madson, Linda Straubel, Joanna Walsh, Jill McCammon, Kadi Lublin, Jayme Stevenson

Meeting called to order by Sara Parent at 9:33.

Vote to approve minutes from February 7, 2019 by Stacey Tie; seconded by Beth Lane

Co-chair Update

- *District news:* The Ox Ridge building committee has met twice, with an RFP due to go out on March 8th, The committee is discussing the pros and cons of delaying the build in order to possibly get a state funding grant. Ox Ridge has decided to blast an update; Amy Daniels suggested that the PTO put building information up on OX website so that other schools could link to that if they want to provide their communities with information.
- *Math Placement:* Placement into 6th grade math has changed from having a test that was administered at MMS to having multiple touchpoints including the math assessment test. Testing occurred at student's elementary schools this year in order have a less stressful environment and to get a better idea of student performance. The communication around this change was inconsistent. The communication shortfall has been communicated to administration.
- *Budget:* The budget is now in the hands of the Board of Finance. At this point, there is no strong messaging about what cuts there might be. For CDSP speech, the need for school psychologists and the link between those hires and Social Emotional Learning will be a focus. Any parent who has a specific story that they may want to share should reach out to our co-chairs; they may include them in the co-chair speech as examples and thus be able to protect the confidentiality of students.
- *Regionalization Bills:* Julie and Sara gave a brief update about speaking in front of the legislature regarding regionalization. Individuals who are interested in writing letters to town leaders and/or local politicians are still encouraged to do so. Also, there are

upcoming public forums (one with Carlo Leone and one with Terrie Wood) to be held in town. Jayme Stevenson shared that the COG has very little experience with educational matters; she did indicate that everything needs to be looked at in context with the move toward state-wide regionalization.

- *Executive Board:* The Nominating Chair (Beth Lane) will be reaching out to PTOs for assistance in filling the 2019-20 slate.
- *Informational Programming:* Julie and Sara spoke with administration about the increase we are seeing in working parents. They encouraged administration to make meetings available at different times and/or videotaping them. PTO chairs were encouraged to think about timing of their events as well; PTOs may also want to consider how many volunteers are needed to effectively run events.

League of Women Voters

- Shelly Skoglund and Clara Sartori came to introduce CDSP to the League of Women Voters. On March 28th the League will be host a town officials program that will include an informal meet and greet as well as a panel discussion. The League meets monthly and also hosts events such as candidates night. All were encouraged to visit the LWV website for more information: <http://lwv.darien.org/>

School Updates

- *Royle:* Having a volunteer fair.
- *DHS:* There is a lot of upcoming programming including: a collaborative effort with MMS to present Stress vs. Pressure, 100 Days to Walk, College Fair, and collaborative effort with SEPAC regarding what programs and supports are available to students at the college level. The DHS PTO gifted a speaker/media system for the cafeteria.
- *Tokeneke:* Amy asked about donating to The Depot. She was encouraged to work with Shelley Sheridan to see if The Depot is interested in presenting to CDSP.

Spending cap

- The elementary spending cap was created so all children have an equitable experience.
- In 2013, the spending cap was raised to \$110. Does this need to be raised again?
- Some elementary schools are spending slightly under cap and others are spending slightly over. The discrepancy seems to be driven by the cost of busing for field trips; some schools include busing in the cap spend and others ask the parents to contribute.
- There may be a need to look at busing and reexamine the number and kind of field trips.
- Next step: Bring to Elementary PTO meeting for further discussion.

Officer Update

- *Special Education:* Some elementary schools have or are planning to incorporate 'chill zones' into PTO sponsored events. Essentially, this is a room or space set off to the side that is quiet and has activities to engage children. This space is open to all students who may need to take a break from the main event.

No new business from the floor.

Motion to adjourn at 10:48. Stacey Tie, first; Julie Best, second.

Respectfully submitted by Catherine Piorkowski, Secretary.