



CDSP General Meeting

February 4, 2021 9:15 a.m.

Via Zoom

In attendance: Julie Best, Lori Olsen, Ellen Abbot, Raquel Bird, Cristina Boudo, Leila Buckjune, Vickie Coghlin, Libby Cook, Amy Daniels, Stefanie Desai, David Dineen, Belinda Fang, Kristen Fiordalis, Gina Gromelski, Alex Hall, Crystal Hill, Ashley Hinchman, Beth Jacobs, Joan Kanlian, Carol Kennedy, Kelly LeSage, Kadi Lublin, Sarah Madson, Jill McCammon, Cristi Mohr, Jenn Moller, Beth Morgan, Jennifer Morici, Robin Nelson, Tiffany O'Connor, Amy O'Kane, Tara Ochman, Lori Olsen, Sara Parent, Catherine Piorkowski, Byrne Pozzi, Deb Ritchie, Jennifer Sherman, Katie Stein, Yesim Cil Sukhrani, Stacey Tie, Theresa Vogt, Joanna Walsh, Tara Wurm

Meeting called to order by Lori Olsen at 9:17 a.m.

Vote to approve the minutes of January 14th, 2020 by Lori Olsen. Passed unanimously.

Co-Chair Update:

- Reminder of the Appropriations Meeting with the Board of Finance on February 4, 2021 at 5:30 pm. The link will be sent following this meeting.
- 21/22 RC 28 Covid Expenses discussion will be held on February 5, 2021 at 8:30 am. RC 28 holds Covid-only Expenses. Determining what will be budgeted for next year in anticipation of a covid year.
- Reminder of the Facilities Meeting February 10, 2021 at 8:30 am.
- Meghan Bendish of Chartwells Food Service would like to talk with parents and to educate them on their food service options. She would also like to get parent feedback and is willing to attend PTO meetings. Her email is mbendish@darienps.org
- Questions/Feedback on BOE Public Hearing and Next Steps: Thank you to all the PTO's for the time and energy that was put into the PTO speeches for the public hearing. There was a highly unusual last minute cut added to the BOE add/cut list of the SESS facilitator initiative. Discussion from the floor: Generally, there was frustration and concern regarding how this last minute cut was added to the list. All PTO chairs and CDSP reps put time and effort into soliciting feedback from their respective parent communities and building administration. They found there was a lot of support for the SESS Facilitator change to Assistant Principals. There were two CDSP speeches that stated support for the initiative that felt ignored when this cut was added. It felt

like the last minute change might be lack of transparency on the part of some members of the BOE. How can the CDSP address this? Need to make sure parents who support the SESS facilitator change know that it is a possible cut from the budget. Reminder that we are always working towards consensus. We will never have 100% agreement on any subject, but we want to engage parents.

- CDSP Communications Chair/Exec Board changes for 21/22. We would like to add a Communications Chair to the CDSP executive board. We feel it would best serve our community to have a dedicated chair. Please let Jenn Morici know if you are interested in this position.

Officer Updates:

- *Nominating:* We are still looking for a CDSP rep from each school. We are still waiting on Ox Ridge, Holmes and Royle to add people to their slate. If you are interested in serving on the CDSP executive board please do not work on the nominating committee.
- *Special Projects:* Thank you to all schools who have been in touch about the new Diversity & Inclusion groups. Some wonderful conversations have been taking place at the building levels. At the community level, the YWCA will be holding a 14-day challenge for adults that will help explore our awareness of this topic. We ask that the PTO's share the YWCA challenge with their school communities. Please also share Diversity & Inclusion ideas across our different schools.
- *Community Outreach:* On February 10th, Chris Herron will be hosting a virtual event about substance abuse. We will also have special guests at our March meeting. The Darien Foundation, Music for Youth and the YWCA will all speak regarding PTO donations for the 21/22 school budgets. Darien Foundation was mistakenly left off our donations list last year. If your school has \$250 please consider donating this year even though it is outside of your budget.

School Updates:

- *MMS:* January 28th held a parent talk with the MMS Mental Health Team. Also held a budget talk with Dr. Addley that had over 100 registrants. Planning an MPA parent talk on the evening of March 30th about understanding the teenage brain.
- *Royle:* Acts of Kindness week – focusing on acts of kindness to teachers and staff, at home and in the community, and to ourselves. Will also hold a teacher appreciation breakfast at the same time. Diversity & Inclusion kicked off. Have some moms with work experience in this field. Pulling together classroom and library experiences for Black History Month. This week will be hosting a Kahoot Trivia night. Will hold a virtual family magician night at the end of February.
- *Ox Ridge:* Held a Hands-on Mad Science event the last week of January. Last Tuesday held a budget talk with Dr. Addley. Yesterday held a parent zoom on remote learning for success. Today is a staff encouragement breakfast with coffee, bagels and muffins. Will be screening the Social Dilemma in

partnership with Okay2Delay. Holding two author visits this month that align with Black History Month. Have six volunteers for the Diversity & Inclusion committee. International Passport night will be coming in the Spring.

- *DHS*: Held a parents meeting for 9-11th graders with Department Chairs to talk about electives. DHSPA is hosting a Special Education virtual coffee for 8th graders transitioning to 9th grade. Have teacher appreciation next week. Delivering gift cards from the Chamber of Commerce to teachers for Valentine's Day.

- *Tokeneke*: Held an appreciation lunch for staff at the end of January. Had a great turnout for the budget talk with Dr. Addley. Instead of a Pancake Breakfast, they will be posting recipes for people to try out at home. Participating in the Super Bowl drive for P2P. Planning to do a Kahoot night later this month. The Diversity & Inclusion committee will be hosting a read aloud for the book "The Paper Kingdom". The Principal will be hosting a book club.

- *Holmes*: The Dr. Addley budget session was well attended. Monday will be holding a Special Education coffee with the principal and Special Education department. The Diversity & Inclusion cooking club is very successful. The adult book club went well. Participating in the Super Bowl drive for P2P. Will be having a Valentine's Day breakfast treat for the teachers. Doing a Hands on Pottery project for Valentine's Day. Planning a community dinner and will be hosting a virtual book fair March 8th.

- *Hindley*: Budget meeting with Dr. Addley went well. Principal to hold a parent talk about executive functioning. She would also like to do one about Diversity that would align well with the Diversity & Inclusion committee. Instead of the Tall and Small dances there will now be virtual trivia nights. Will be installing a story walk in the next two months. Working on another virtual book fair.

New Business: Julie and Lori will organize another Elementary PTO meeting.

Next CDSP meeting: 3/11

Motion to adjourn at 10:47. Amy Daniels, first; Stacey Tie, second.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Kennedy, Secretary.