



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

**CDSP General Meeting
September 8, 2022 10 a.m.
At the Darien Library**

In person: Joanna Walsh, Lori Olson, Jessica Levey, Sara Goertel, Libby Cook, Byrne Pozzi, Deb Ritchie, Diane Urban, Katrina O'Conner, Leila Buckjune, Catherine Yates, Lauren Stephens, Victoria Coghlin, Diane Urban, Amy Zerbe, Katrina O'Connor, Adrienne Kelly, Jen Morici, Dawn MacDonald, Amy Reid, Jess Newhouse, Kadi Lublin, Caitlin Cahill, Antoinette Cowles, Kristen Smith, Lauren Stevens, Catherine Yates, Christina Kreiz, Meghan Thornton, Shannon Keefe.

Meeting called to order by Joanna Walsh at 10:11 a.m.

Vote to approve Deb Ritchie (Co-chair) & Libby Cook (Treasurer) to the CDSP Board. Motion to approve by Joanna Walsh. Sara Goertel, First; Megan Thornton, Second. Passed unanimously.

Joanna Walsh introduced herself and welcomed the members.

Vote to approve the minutes from June 2022. Motion to approve by Joanna Walsh. Megan Thornton, First, Lori Olsen, Second. Passed unanimously.

Co-Chair Updates:

Start of School

Food Services change of payment system: Megan, from food services, sent an email on Friday before school but very few people received it. All the money from k12 was automatically transferred to my school bucks. CDSP has asked for redundancy of information from the administration.

MMS cafeteria is a little crowded but the administration is aware and keeping an eye on the issue. Rich Rudl expects food services to eventually make a profit which can be used for capital improvements.

Bus issues: Ox Ridge struggling. School dismissal manager for elementary school was not working for all schools. CDSP will address shortening bus radius as our parent body has safety concerns. CDSP added this to the special projects list.

Co-teachers have started in the 5th grade classrooms. ELA is 90 minutes long, there is always a second SpEd teacher co-teaching with the teacher. 1 or 2 classes in each elementary school will participate in the co-teaching trial. The classes are determined by the number of students with PPT objectives and needs. CDSP will ask administration to communicate these details to parents.

From the floor:

CDSP to address information migrating from Aspen to AtoZ for the directory consistently at all schools in the district as answers from principals vary.

Mental Health

The state of Connecticut has mandated a new mental health role; Dr. Addley has proposed a new position for the district that will provide a holistic look at the district for programs at school, professional development for teachers and incorporate directives from the state. Lori will send a link and time stamp of the BOE presentation pertaining to this new role.

Mental Health Task force is the town-wide initiative. They met over the summer and met with experts in the field. Untimely death plan is being created with sub-committees. Deb and Joanna will sit on the committees to listen and disseminate information to PTO's as a resource to our parent body.

Insurance:

Joanna and Lori met with Rich Rudl and Sheila Flynn to discuss insurance requirements for school events. We now have a list of companies and people who are current, or expired, but were approved. Vendors can buy insurance for the day and pass the cost on to the PTO; this information will be sent to our PTO co-chairs. Joanna working with Sheila on individual issues.

CDSP co-chairs will send Information on facilities form, approved vendors directly to enrichment chairs and PTO co-chairs.

Animals, except for service animals and crustaceans, are no longer permitted to visit our schools; per our insurance policy.

Fieldtrip:

Joanna will send a list of approved field trips, from Chris Tranberg. CDSP co-chairs will discuss MMS field trips directly with Chris Tranberg and Dr. Rodriguez. MMS is also looking for ideas for team bonding that is inclusive, affordable and not onerous on teachers.

At the elementary school level there are 2 Field Trips, not including 1 shared experience (visit to station house), allowed per grade.

Officer Updates:

Libby Cook (Treasurer)

Libby has sent out COI's to all co-chairs; they are due back, signed, by end of the month. Please collect and return in one batch. CDSP dues are coming up, \$675 (increased last year), Libby will email treasurers directly. Each school is allowed 5 tax free events per calendar year. An event can last up to 24 hours; tickets can be sold as long as needed. Each school should email Libby the 5 tax free events for this calendar year. Teacher and aide gifts in [diagram](#) that explains monetary regulations.

Lori Olson (Nominating/Special Projects)

CDSP is looking for a budget co-chair. Lori will be handling all special projects and will begin with understanding how raffles can operate through our PTO's.

Diane Urban (DEI)

Diane will facilitate community outreach donations, but programs will contact treasurers directly for funds. Diane met with the new Parent Awareness coordinator at YWCA, will attend meetings and

disseminate information to the PTO committees. The district DEI webpage is now up; September 19th is the next district meeting and the first monthly DEI chair meeting is September 20th.

Katrina O'Connor (Special Ed)

Katrina has scheduled the first chair meeting for September 12, 2022.

Sara Goertel (Budget)

Sara is looking for a budget co-chair. Last year the Board of Education budgeted 75% for excessive cost, which was the majority of our surplus that is being returned to the town. This year the budgeted percentage decreased, which will likely impact our budget this year.

Byrne Pozzi (Communication)

The first project for communications is to update the CDSP website and Byrne is currently looking for someone familiar with WordPress to assist with the project. Information blurbs detailing CDSP and PTO's will be sent to co-chairs for their newsletters.

School Updates:

Hindley:

The PTO is getting ready for their back to school Bash on September 16th as well as planning their cocktail party on October 8th.

Holmes:

Holmes PTO has hosted two back to school coffees with the principal that were well attended. They are finishing preparations for their Back to School picnic.

Ox Ridge:

The first week in the new building was great but they are still missing a playground and kitchen. Possible tours for parents. Ribbon cutting ceremony for a soft opening will take place on Saturday, September 10th at 10am; everyone is invited. The PTO is planning Sunday Funday at Highland Farms on September 18th..

Tokeneke:

Tokeneke PTO hosted a back to school ice cream truck and back to school bash. PTO is working on the Pumpkin Carnival.

Royle:

Welcome family coffee is Friday, September 9th. Back to school picnic is on September 18th and the PTO kick off meeting is scheduled for September 20th and the Walk-a-thon, which is their big fundraiser, is scheduled for September 30th.

MMS:

The sixth grade welcome drinks are scheduled for September 16th. This year they are holding in-person spirit wear sales to see if this increases sales. The first instance will be at the open house. School directory running into some trouble gaining access to Aspen information. Lunch was an issue the first

week, but it has been addressed with Karolyn and she is working on improving the schedule. Everyone feels the students and staff need a week or two to make this transition smoother. MPA trying to create a shared calendar on their website so people can merge personal calendar with school calendar. If anyone has experience or knowledge, the team would appreciate assistance.

DHS:

School orientation with spirit wear sale was very successful. The newly formed spirit committee welcomed the students on the first day with balloons. The PTO plans to hold a spirit wear sale at Open House on 9/15 at 7pm. The direct appeal fundraiser was just launched. The PTO is planning a DHS PA meeting to help parents meet their DHS team. Staff and teachers from within the building will talk to parents about resources and the physical building on 9/19 at 9:30am.

New Business:

No new business from the floor.

Motion to adjourn at 11:26 pm by Joanna Walsh. Lori Olsen, First; Leila Buckjune, Second.

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Levey, CDSP Secretary