



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

**CDSP General Meeting
November 10, 2022, 10 a.m.
At the Board of Education**

In person: Joanna Walsh, Lori Olson, Jessica Levey, Sara Goertel, Libby Cook, Byrne Pozzi, Deb Ritchie, Adrienne Kelly, Amy Reid, Amy Zerbe, Antoinette Cowles, Caitlin Cahill, Cameron Sokolik, Caroline Comfort, Catherine Piorkowski, Catherine Yates, Courtney Galligan, Jen Morici, Lauren Stevens, Leila Buckjune, Meghan Thornoton, Kadi Lublin.

Meeting called to order by Joanna Walsh at 10:04 a.m.

Vote to approve the minutes from October 13, 2022. Motion to approve by Joanna Walsh. Adrienne Kelly, First; Antoinette Cowles, Second. Passed unanimously.

DAEG:

DAEG Co-chair Caroline Comfort provided an update and information on the Darien Advocates for the Education of the Gifted. This non-profit advocates for excellence in education and supports teachers through grants donated through families. After a program review in 2021, the district is implementing math acceleration at elementary schools and looking at the MMS schedule to avoid having students having to choose between IDEA or lunch. There are currently 210 families among the grades.

Co-Chair Updates:

BOE Meeting

Last night the BOE said goodbye to Tara Ochman and hello to Kadi Lublin. Duke Dineen remains Chair. The BOE also approved CDSP's Mark Brackett sponsorship. Barrett Bookstore will offer a slight discount on Brackett's book. Dr. Addley is confirming details on live streaming and recording options.

Chairs comment that it would be nice to have the capabilities of recording events, and offering them live and on zoom at the same time. Joanna and Deb will ask Dr. Addley but encouraged the PTOs to speak with their building principals as well.

Wires

The community section of the Wires and social media postings guidelines are implemented to keep our 501(3)c. DHS does not have a community section. Elementary schools feel the community section is a service to our parents. You can include anything that is a 501(c)3; no politics, no sponsorships, no alcohol, tobacco, no religion, no businesses (unless there is an event in your building, or they have an agreement with administration i.e., Darien After School). You can include information regarding a for-profit business if it's supporting your school fundraiser.

The chairs of the PTO should disseminate information to the Newsletter volunteers. Lori is creating a set of guidelines that Joanna and Deb will send to the co-chairs to pass along.

Mental Health Update

QPR (Question, persuade and refer) Ali Ramstack has asked us to add the invitation to the wire for parent training. This is the training the teachers participated in on the first day of school. The 19th of November is national Suicide Survivor Day; if you have been affected by suicide in this way, Noroton Presbyterian and the AASP will be holding an event.

Budget Season

Next BOE meeting will include a budget preview. BOE did not approve the budget calendar last night but will do so soon. Sara and Deb are creating a work plan calendar for Budget season. BOE passed the new teacher's contract. Over the course of 3 years 13.6% raise, extended maternity leave. Main goal of the negotiation was to attract new teachers to Darien with better pay that is more competitive with surrounding districts. Teachers who have been here a long time are paid well. 71 teachers left the district this past year; typically, it's 35. We have higher attrition than the surrounding districts.

Officer Updates:

Libby Cook (Treasurer):

- Libby will send an email to treasurers and co-chairs for pain points on tax season and general work so that they can streamline efforts in the future.
- Mark Brackett payments from individual schools will go to Libby so that she can cut one check from CDSP.
- Libby is also looking to create a Treasurer Book camp in the Spring for incoming treasurers.

Diane Urban (DEI):

- Third district DEI meeting on Monday
- Parent Awareness doesn't have a set schedule. They talked about resilience training, and they will have a movie screening on substance abuse. They are still looking for elementary based topics. Please pass any recommendations to Diane.

Byrne Pozzi (Communication)

- Working on an info series before budget season; 7-week info series blurbs to explain who CDSP is and what they can do. Byrne is going to send them weekly. There are corresponding Social Media posts.
- National Special Education Day will also have a blurb as well as Mark Brackett

Lori Olson (Nominating/Special Projects)

- Working on Wire guidelines

Katrina O'Connor (Special Ed)

- Getting ready for National Special Ed day on 12/1. All the school reps have met and created plans to thank all our teachers and staff.

Sara Goertel (Budget)

- 1/5/23 BOE meeting to highlight budget budget. 1/7/23 is Super Saturday
- We will need many people to be involved in speech writing; you don't have to give the speech.

School Updates:

Hindley:

- Book Fair and Cocktail Party is the highest amount we've ever done. Holiday Market is coming up 12/3 – 15 vendors. They will ask the other schools to advertise in their newsletters
- Syrup got taken away from pancakes and they were told it was a district decision based on feedback from parents.

Holmes:

- Also had principal coffee last Friday specific to SEL and Mark Brackett, which was well attended
- Monday is laser light show – kindness focus to the show
- Hosted a parent social before Halloween and had 100 people.

Ox Ridge:

- Traffic has gotten better. Still have a cold lunch.
- Dudley Stevens and spirit committee had a successful campaign
- Surplus of spirit wear t-shirts went to staff

Tokeneke:

- Pumpkin Carnival went well
- 2 belonging coffees have been well received and attended. Byrne and Diane are putting together a shared folder so everyone can access these resources.

Royle:

- Parent trivia night was a success
- Royle Cares Weed Beach cleanup also well attended
- All PTO meeting and the principal will speak of SEL and Mark Brackett

MMS:

- Tomorrow is all school social at Piedmont club, pizza truck and refreshments.
- Direct Appeal kicked off yesterday: suggested amount 100/125/150 MMS
- Principal coffee was a big success. Zoom link went out last minute so have more people in person

DHS:

- Battle of the Bands was a huge success. 9th grade parent coffee was a little light, but the students stood up and spoke about DHS.
- Upcoming alums coming back to speak about their experience at college
- Freshman parents' substance abuse program is coming 11/29

New Business: None

Motion to adjourn by Joanna Walsh at 11:25am. Meghan Thornton, first; Jen Morici Second. Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Levey, CDSP Secretary

