

PTO Open Meeting, Nov. 12th, 2014 - 8-9am

Attendees - Cindy Elliott, Cynthia Wood, Curt Frueh, Ginger Salmon, Dianna Byers, Jodie Lowe, Diane Quinn, Anna Moraglia, Debbie Webber, Andrew Lightsey, Maggie Barker, Heathir Speet, Trish Moody, Cyndi Klein, Jill Goodrich, Carter Herndon

CMS / school-wide announcements (Anna M.) - We've communicated about the superintendent situation. At the school level we are going to keep doing what we do best and not let things going on outside of our school affect us. Thank you to PTO for professional development money. We've had people already attend conferences and more are going in the spring. I remind them to do early bird reg.

Heathir - there is a new form on the PTO website for teachers to fill out with regards to conferences, grade level reps please mention to your team. It's a pdf form, they can fill it all in electronically.

Ginger - one of the main conferences is local, in Atlanta, so all the money might not be spent - if we can know early we can possibly allow more people to attend.

Joy helped Anna M. set up a professional development webinar which was helpful, we'll try to do more. And teachers can get Montessori renewal credit for it.

Lottery season is coming soon. We will have open house events starting Dec 4, there will be one in Jan and one in Feb. The lottery schedule is very aggressive this year, there is only a 2 week turn around after applications are in. Please remind people with younger siblings that they must go through the lottery - they are not guaranteed a spot if they don't. MAP testing is going on through month of Dec, it starts the day we get back from Thanksgiving break. Dibels will be in January. Debbie W. will write up a blurb for the e-bulletin on testing and Anna M. will write a blurb on the lottery for younger siblings.

Grade level updates:

Curt - we had 3 classes at MTOS last week. Conferences are finished. The next set of trips will be 6th grade trips which we hope to book early. We can't take cms transportation, so we are limited where we can go. We have gone to Washington DC in the past because we can take Amtrak. Melinda has been a great help in her new role as an instructional facilitator - she's tutoring students who need extra support based on the first round of MAP testing. It's good to have a consistent, effective instructional facilitator for Upper EI.

Cindy E. - Candace is working hard with her ensembles and looking forward to winter village.

Maggie - this is a nice lull period because conferences and first quarter are over, and testing is not happening. We went to Imaginon to see a dance performance, the bus ride was the

most exciting part of the trip for many of the children. We are getting ready for Thanksgiving celebrations and Winter Village. Ms. Carey and Ms. Amber are doing great.

Diane - We are in a great place too, with lots of teaching and minimal interruptions. We had a fire safety presentation which was very informative and important for the kids to hear each year. We have also been enjoying Ms. Melinda's help, she's been great in conversations connecting reading to spelling. We're working on figuring out what we can do with our hallway and the noise level. Is there a way to safely dampen the noise? Ginger - We could put acoustical tiles in the ceiling, but are there other funds besides PTO funds for this? Anna M. - would have to get approval for that, and will look into the funding. Ginger can get a budget for this, it's her line of work, she will get a price. The kids aren't even being that loud, there's just a big echo in the hallway that amplifies sound.

Andrew - carpool update. We have put together a memo with reminders for parents - courtesy and safety reminders. The buses have improved, they are now on time. But there are critical times - field trips or the beginning of the year or winter village - when we might need parent volunteers to help. The biggest issue at winter village is driveways being blocked and people parking inappropriately. Could we put up cones in the driveways on Haven with a sign that said "don't block driveway" or yard signs? And can we also put a reminder out via e-vulletin right before the event? Cynthia will write it up and Heathir will work on signs. Last week's field trips went well because teachers emailed parents directly the day before. Cynthia - we will send a hard copy home, and attach it to e-bulletin and website. Maggie - for Winter Village, could all Upper El families park at St Ann's (assuming they give approval) - that way they are close when they are leaving? Heathir will contact St. Ann's for permission.

Cindy - concerns from staff on morning duty, people are still dropping their children off and walking them to class. And we need make sure that walkers are truly walking and not parking nearby. There is not an official CMS policy on a walking zone.

From a carpool standpoint the mornings have improved. The buses have also improved, but there is still one bus that is coming late in the morning. It took much longer this year for buses to be on time. Dianna would be happy to hand out information with rules in the morning to people walking their children to school. Cynthia will add information on walkers to the handout going home. Voting day was a disaster with carpool and with people in and out of the school - not good from a safety standpoint. Anna M. will investigate the possibility of moving the voting site.

Heathir - we are also working on getting the carpool sign revamped.

Heathir - did all teachers receive an email about how much money they got from invest? No, so Heathir will contact Joy about that.

The parent-family directory is supposed to be done, will happen soon. The teacher website portals are ready to go, Heathir sent a form for everyone to fill out. A Montessori Monitor newsletter is coming out in mid-November. Jodie - set up a new twitter account, "parkroadnews." We can transfer transportation over to this one. Cynthia - we can probably merge the accounts - PRMcares doesn't need it's own twitter.

Recent events - we had a spirit night at Buca di Beppo, and a gardening event for the school's front entrance. Ms. Charlotte worked most of Saturday with 10 volunteers. We will need to do at least one more session to finish the work. Heathir is going to send a photo of the current space in e-bulletin and maybe send out drawings so people know what is going on there. We'll try for a Sunday afternoon next time to get more participation.

We have another spirit night on November 19th - at Toys and Co and Park Road Soda Shoppe. The yearbook will be on sale for 4 weeks in January. There will be an automated system for parents or teachers to upload candid photos. The Snowflake Dance will be February 6th - we will start meeting for that in December. Please let Heathir know if you have ideas or feedback for that. The Green Marathon starts in March, and then we will have the International Spring Picnic.

Heathir - our school's CMS wiki site is very outdated. We are not allowed to edit the site, so we'd love to direct people to PTO site. Who has access to this site? We would love to sit with someone and update it. Cindy - support people don't have a webpage on PTO site? Heathir - they are included in their classroom page.

Cynthia - we have PRMCares ambassadors, but if teachers and students need more information, Cynthia will be happy to come in and speak.

Jill - there's a "Montessori parent advisory council" that's starting up again, it includes 2 representatives from each Montessori school. if you have any concerns please let us know - Bill Aheron and Jill Goodrich are PRM reps. Big talk is high school. Bill and I are trying to push more universal Montessori standards - right now there's too much inconsistency. We've seen Sedgfield grow but we want to keep building it. There is another survey coming out that will go in the e-bulletin. PRM is very active but some other schools are newer and we need everyone's feedback. The group meets once a month, it's a closed meeting, with administrators and two reps from each school - so there are 10 parents in total and the magnet director and her assistant. The intent is to educate non-Montessorians what it means to be a Montessori community. PRM is the only school with 100% trained Montessori teachers.

Debbie W. - credits and graduation requirements are the issues with the high school. Diane - we need someone to translate Montessori to fit the state curriculum.

There are other montessori high schools in the country that we can look at to make sure it's done properly. The new elementary school is struggling because they don't have many Montessori trained teachers. Jill - ask me any questions and I'll try to get answers. Jodie - the survey is going out in the e-bulletin today. Maggie - filtering through the teachers will get more responses.