

**PTA Meeting minutes**  
**January 18, 2011**

Minutes taken by PTA Secretary Holly Boime.

Attendees signed in: Anya King, Holly Boime, Anne Myrthue, Diane Jacobs, David Rees, Constance San Juan, Denise Dekker, Lynda Poole, Jean Hansen, Karla Martin, Elizabeth Connolly

Meeting called to order at 6:37 p.m. PTA President, Karl Zirbes, was sick and so Vice-president, Anne Myrthue, led the meeting.

**PTA President Update**

An Atkinson Green Team committee may be forming as part of a larger Eco-School Network which will be having an informational meeting, Tuesday, January 25, 2011, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Jean Hansen will attend and is looking for two or more people to attend, possibly from the Outdoor Learning Garden (OLG.)

**Principal Update: Debbie Armendariz**

There will be an informational coffee with the Principal on Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> in the cafeteria after school starts. The Principal will provide information about planning and programming for next year pertaining to programming requirements and prioritizing programming. This will be an informational meeting only; no input will be taken at this time. If you are unable to attend you can find this information in the "School Works".

**Homework Club: Teacher Lilian Sarlos**

A homework club will begin in February on Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school from 3-4 p.m. The club will be open to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Teachers will nominate students partly based on student assessment and identifying students who need additional homework support. The homework club will have about 20 students in all; teachers will submit two names per class to participate in the program. Susan Timms will supervise the homework session; the elected students will come to the sessions supplied with homework from their classroom teacher. The goal is to have each homework club student paired with a parent, university student, or other person from the community. If a parent would like to volunteer you may bring your 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, or 5<sup>th</sup> grade son or daughter who is not participating in the program if that child can occupy him or herself during the tutoring session. Younger children should not be brought to the homework club. There are benefits to volunteering in this program such as having the opportunity to significantly impact one child in a positive way and seeing firsthand the range of academic student skills at Atkinson. Training for homework club helpers will be provided. Someone else suggested that Franklin High School (FHS) students could participate. Volunteers working on the Art and Science Fair already have a teacher/school contact with FHS that could be utilized to get volunteers for this program

**Financial Update: Treasurer Constance San Juan**

Four new members joined the PTA in December. The Pastini fundraiser earned \$438.71. The Burgerville fundraiser is scheduled for January 25<sup>th</sup>. The note card sales earned \$740. The Chinook book fundraiser earned \$1,376 and e-script \$21. The OLG is the only PTA subcommittee that carries over money from year to year. The OLG will have its own separate account. The new afterschool language program brought in \$12,000.

**Auction: Jean Hansen/Karla Marten**

They distributed a flyer, Cruisin' for our kids (please see attached), with information about the upcoming auction. They reviewed the information on the flyer. There will be live music, light jazz, with possibly dancing. Please donate wine or champagne if able. In keeping with the "Love Boat" theme there will be a champagne toast at the auction. The goal is to earn at least \$30,000 at this year's auction. Please consider donating parties, lessons, etc.

### **Spanish speakers needed**

Spanish speaking volunteers are needed to help in the school office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, in the mornings at school opening because Spanish speaking office staff is not there at those times to help Spanish speaking families needing office assistance. So if you can speak Spanish, even at a minimal level, your help would be appreciated.

### **DISCUSSION TOPIC/S**

#### **Lunar New Year: Janet Cowal**

Professor Janet Cowal with the Department of Applied Linguistics at Portland State University (PSU) and parent of a graduated Atkinson student presented a slide show about the Lunar New Year. She and her students helped to organize this event, now in its 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year. Why celebrate? It's a chance to celebrate diversity and language culture learning, to outreach to non-dominant voices in our community and to increase family participation. In the Vietnamese/Chinese tradition there is dancing, paper firecrackers, yo-yos, and lanterns. There is a photo booth where one can get your picture taken with costumes. About four hundred people come to the event. This event is multilingual. There is fun and encouragement backstage. The Atkinson drum group participates and there is dance and singing performances. One of Janet's students has put together a video of the event and can make it available to Atkinson. There is also finger food. Ms. Heron also will be teaching some Chinese songs after getting some help with pronunciation.

Help is needed. There will be lunchtime dance rehearsals in the time frame from 12-12:45 p.m. PSU students will be directing the rehearsals but parent help is needed to manage the students. A Chinese artist has been hired to teach Chinese watercolors to students. Help is needed to assist in the classrooms with the watercolor art. Red envelopes, a Vietnamese and Chinese tradition, will be given to all Atkinson students. Help is needed with filling the envelopes with coins. And help is needed the night of the event, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8:30 p.m., with set up, clean up, serving food, kid herding, and running booths. If you'd like to volunteer you can e-mail Janet, cowalj@pdx.edu, and she will pass on your name to her PSU student coordinator.

#### **Stories of Place:**

##### Outdoor classroom art project: Artist Diane Jacobs

This is a school-wide project; every child at Atkinson makes a tile. A LOEWS grant was given to Atkinson for \$5,000. For completing this project there's a schedule for all the classes. The three neighborhood kindergarten classes will be doing animal tracks and the Spanish immersion kindergarten class will be doing a different project. By the end of the summer the two interior walls of the outdoor classroom will be completed. The Welcome Tree wall will be done next fall. There will be a community day to glaze/paint tile with food and a celebration. One can look on the school website for the school calendar. Lead classroom parents are needed to recruit other parents to help in the classrooms with the tiling project.

Write Night: PSU Professor Janet Cowal

Write night is scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>. This is the story part of the “Stories of PLACE” project. The process is as important as the output. There will be room for “stories” on language such as poems, myths, legends, and stories. There will be a writing workshop at Write Night with help from PSU students who will also have writing prompts to encourage writing about nature. Kids and adults will be writing. There will be envelopes around the school where one can submit writing possibly to appear on the welcome wall. And on the welcome wall there will be “welcome” in various languages. Participants are encouraged to provide how their native language or their ancestors’ language says welcome.

A new multicultural work day is scheduled for February 12 with donated coffee and food.

PTA Vice-President, Ann Myhrue, adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Snacks, drinks and conversation followed after the meeting.