

Atkinson PTA Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2009

Sanquinetta Higgins, Secretary

In attendance: Karla Zirbes, Kathy Kalous, Matt Fornec, Anne Myrthue, Heidi Stadler, Christine Klein, Elizabeth Connolly, Gabriela Goldfarb, LaRee Eby, Gail Calcagno, Wendy Miller, Laura Mason, Rachel Belcher, Sanquinetta Higgins, Denise Dekker, Sean Connolly, guest speaker Caroline Bleckmann

Meeting called to order at 6:35 PM by Karla Zirbes. Karla circulated info about PTA Yahoo group and previous meeting minutes for approval.

Principal's Update - Chris Gutierrez

Every Friday there is a tour of Atkinson from several stations in different grades to lunch. The tour goes to the music room, then PE/gym, then bookroom (which Atkinson parents were vital in funding), library and finally the Outdoor Learning Garden. Each tour consists of 3-4 groups, 6 members in each group. Immersion meeting follows after tour. What immersion looks like at Atkinson is talked about, what we are, what we are about, as well as further discussion and question/answer session. There are 7 slots for neighborhood students in the immersion program. There will be a meeting this Thursday with school officials about the principal choosing process and desired characteristics of principal. Many activities this coming Friday which include Multicultural assembly @ 1:30 PM. Univision may bring film crew! Tentative contract with district & teachers. Special board meeting being called with principals & teachers. Will know by middle of next week if contract is ratified.

Financial Update - Laura Mason

Couple checks came in for fundraisers-Clever Cycle came to 271.00 and Pizzacato was around 604.51. Mysterious donation for OLG of \$1000 for Stories of PLACE. Actual amount of written budget differs from actual bank monies. Auction tickets go on sale this week.

Event/Fundraising Update - Karla Zirbes for Angie Janson

Burgerville (26th & Powell, near Cleveland High) fundraiser is on 25th, we get 10% of sales from 5-8 PM that day. Lunar New Year-Needs a few extra people for serving food. Thursday the 23rd. Also some people for setup & teardown. Email Janet or let Karla know.

Outdoor Learning Garden Update - Denise Dekker

OLG is in the middle of the Stories of PLACE project. This will be done in 4 phases, educational tiles into wall, some circles, squares. All native aquatic life, birds, pollinators,

plants. The wattle & dab wall with brick/concrete wall. Welcome wall will have tiled tree with leaf and plant prints. 4th phase and inside of welcome wall will have educational tiling. We need to raise a lot of money & need more time to do this and get Atkinson community involved. January 22nd was Earth Fest. OLG is very proud to have had Metro educators involved. Many heirloom seeds ordered for OLG to be planted this week & next few weeks. Spring gardens to be planted soon. OLG is working on a blog and building community with folks interested in the gardens. Alicia was absent but has been working with OLG and starting Summer Institute-gardening program/day camp during Summer months for children. It will be sliding scale and bring in many environmental/gardening educators. To be sure this is not seen as childcare, children would write or dictate (for younger children) why they want to be involved in this program.

Executive Committee Update - Karla Zirbes

To all who worked on measures 66 & 67-Thank You! Filling slots for nominating committee which will help fill open positions on PTA board. Outreach coordinator & volunteer coordinator definitely open. There will be a report back in April. Jim has been nominated to this committee so far. Teachers are very happy with custodians this year and the 3 of them will be receiving \$50 gift cards.

Outdoor Learning Garden (OLG) summer program - Alicia. Was not at meeting, Denise Dekker reviewed basic program info

Gift wrap fundraiser alternative - Julie Montagne. Was not at meeting, will table for future discussion.

Parenting Workshop - Caroline Bleckmann

Caroline Bleckmann, LCSW. Therapy for children, adolescents and their families. Phone 503-358-6620. Caroline gave a great mini parenting workshop, speaking about various ways to help change problem behaviors into positive ones. She also gave a powerpoint presentation which outlined many different ways to help reinforce children's positive behavior. See attached handout.

Additional Announcements

Karla Zirbes - Thursday the 18th is the first meeting for new principal. Child care is available. Math Night is March 2nd for upper grades and coming in Spring for lower grades. Jan Gillespie will be presenting who created the number/math curriculum for the kindergarten. Laura Mason moved to approve January's meeting minutes. Someone seconded. Voted & minutes approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Caroline Bleckmann, LCSW

Therapy for children, adolescents, and their families

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Tools for promoting and supporting your child's positive behavior

- **“Special time”**: daily 1:1 time with your child spent playing or engaging in some other child-led activity where your job is to pay positive attention, use reflective listening and descriptive commenting, and allow your child to be in charge.
- **Praise and encouragement**: are best if they are specific and frequent—try to catch your child doing well and aim for a 4:1 ratio of positive to negative attention.
- **Tangible rewards**: help your child develop habits of desirable behaviors. Pick 1-3 rewards to track and remember to provide rewards immediately and consistently.

These practices can help foster a positive, nurturing relationship with your child that makes healthy limit-setting practices more effective.

Adapted from Carolyn Webster-Stratton's *The Incredible Years*; materials by Russell A. Barkley, and the “Everyday Parenting” curriculum developed by T. Dishion, E. Stormshak, and K. Kavanaugh.

Web Resources:

- www.kidshealth.org <http://www.kidsource.org/>: tons of information about child and adolescent health and mental health
- www.samgoldstein.com: Dr. Goldstein is the author of many books on topics such as ADHD and resilience
- www.nimh.nih.gov: great information about mental health and best practices

A Few Books I recommend:

- *Growing up Again: Parenting Ourselves, Parenting our Children* by Jean Illsley Clarke and Connie Dawson. A great book about parenting, child development, and parental self-care. I turn to it again and again as a therapist and as a parent!
- *The Incredible Years* by Carolyn Webster-Stratton: part of her parenting curriculum, but a fantastic stand-alone guide
- *Parenting from the Inside Out* by Daniel Siegel and Mary Hartzell: a great book, especially for parents who themselves experienced early childhood trauma and stress.
- *The ADHD Book of Lists* by Sandra A. Rief: a veritable ADHD encyclopedia that covers just about everything a parent needs to know and points you in the right direction for more information.