

# Atkinson PTA Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2010

Minutes: Sanquinetta Higgins

## **PTA Meeting Attendees:**

Laura Mason, Heidi Stadler, Traci Fajardo, Chau Phan Mende, Tally Armbruster, Traci Sullivan, Anne Myrthue, Roselia Santos, Alfredo Santos, Molly Haynes, Kim DHHS, George Signori, Kristin Mour, Renee Carter, Wendy Miller, Holly Boime, Meg Ruby, Angie Janson, Sean Connelly, Elizabeth Connelly, Sonya Kauffman Smith, Christine Klein, Jean Hansen, Denise Dekker, Ted Havelka, Debbie Armendone, Nikki Schulak, Beth Gebsladt, Justin Becker, Gail Calcagne, Aaron Pearlman, Karla Zirbes, Sanquinetta Higgins

Meeting called to order by Karla Zirbes at 6:40. Previous meeting minutes circulated for approval.

## **Financial Update - Laura Mason**

Auction made \$19,674.00. Paddle bid for OLG 2450.00. Still have 330.00 outstanding. Explore program went over 400.00 over income. There are too many scholarships and not enough students attending. We have \$84,615.46 in savings and checking. Starting the budget process for next meeting. If you have anything that comes out of the budget, get that information in prior to the June meeting. The final budget is in October, and there is a link to the funding proposal on the website. Please turn into Treasurer office box by 5/11.

## **Events & Fundraising Updates - Angie Janson**

The 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Talent Show is April 30<sup>th</sup>. May 20<sup>th</sup> is the Volunteer Tea. Field Day will be held on June 11<sup>th</sup> but needs a coordinator. June 4<sup>th</sup> is the Carnival. Last fundraiser will be held on 5/24-25<sup>th</sup> at Pastini's. They will be giving Atkinson 50% of net sales. Bring in a flyer or mention Atkinson. This will be happening all day for lunch & dinner. Please add to your social networking sites such as Facebook & Twitter. Tracy says the Run for the Arts deposit was \$13,000. Registered volunteer hours for the school year so far: 7436 hrs!

## **Executive Committee Updates - Karla Zirbes**

Nominating committee will be filling key positions for next year. Please contact Jim Laden [j\\_laden@yahoo.com](mailto:j_laden@yahoo.com) or Rachel Belcher [keringel@SpiritOne.com](mailto:keringel@SpiritOne.com).

PTA officers voted to partially fund (\$200 of requested \$400) busses for band members to attend a contest at Jackson MS. [Note: the bus cost was around \$270, and Kim raised over \$300 from band families, so she will be adding the remaining funds to her band account for sheet music and will not be using the requested \$200 from PTA.]

Traversing wall to be installed (tentatively) June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **Walk & Bike to School - Molly Haynes**

May is Walk & Bike Challenge Month. There is a stop & walk program being organized for families that live far away from the school to participate as well. A computer design person is needed to help with the flyer. Friday morning, May 7<sup>th</sup> will be the kickoff. Drummers from band and coffee from Gigibar. Airpots are needed for the coffee. Posters will let the kids show how they got to school-bike, scooter, skateboard, walking. If you are available to volunteer please see Molly Haynes after the PTA meeting or contact [mollyhaynes@earthlink.net](mailto:mollyhaynes@earthlink.net). If you have connections for prizes let Molly know.

## **Outdoor Learning Garden - Denise Dekker & Sean Connelly**

Sean Connelly has procured 3 grants for OLG. 2 are for the OLG Summer Institute. Pollinators and prairie plants are most endangered in Oregon. We will be bringing in unique plants and be the only school that has federally listed plants like Kincaid's Lupine. Kids will be planning, planting, watching and recording growth. The kiosk will become an important link to the community from Atkinson. GPS is a fun way for kids to learn geography & mapping. There has been 2500.00 raised in grants. Major refurbishing walls and areas in OLG through art thanks to Diane Jacobs and PLACE project.

Spring gardens planted, mostly with heirloom seeds donated by a parent. Relocated kiosk to front of school, will have permanent info such as garden maps, updates, and free gardening and native plant handouts for everyone.

OLGSI July 5-30, weekly or whole month. Discount if parents volunteer, 45 spots total. Applications in office or go to [www.olgsi.blogspot.com](http://www.olgsi.blogspot.com) \$100-150 per week, \$350-400 month, scholarships available.

Thanks to US Fish & Wildlife.

OLG Fundraisers. Fundraiser Saturday 5/22 for the OLGSI-family tea celebrating the gardens and family. Benefit for OLG at Country Cat Restaurant Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup>-dinner time 5 PM till close.

Weeding this Saturday - volunteers at Warner Pacific coming.

Met recently with Linda Cowell, who created Abernathy garden program and Eat Think Grow. At upcoming mtg 5/11 she is trying to standardize garden curriculum for Portland schools. Bob Gliner (documentary filmmaker) is coming to film students in the learning gardens and working on OLG projects (like PLACE). Preliminary discussion about a new idea of Atkinson changing to focus option school - we would become a garden school which is an 18 month process. What makes us incredibly special is that we are a multicultural garden school.

## **PTA Vote on traversing wall memorial**

Gretchen Dursch proposed honoring Brad Buchanan who taught Explore basketball by a plaque that is next to the new climbing wall. They've talked w/his wife who approved of the idea. Meg Ruby motioned, Angie Janson seconded. PASSED. Karla will now check w/PPS project manager. [Project manager Don approved.]

## **Principal's Update & Introduction of Debbie Armendariz - Chris Gutierrez**

Chris - PTA and then-PTA president Gretchen Dursch was helpful in bringing staff, parents and teachers together. There is a love, commitment and center here, we are all team members in a community of caring.

Debbie Armendariz - Thrilled to be at Atkinson school, and believes it is a good fit. Met with board members and they helped in bringing perspectives together so she can develop and plan. What are our strengths? Improvements that need to be made? What do we need? Your thoughtful comments are appreciated. Debbie came from Argentina in 1981 to Texas. Have always worked in dual programs. Native language instruction & multicultural background. She also went to school for wildlife, fire management, wildlife and habitat management. It is great to see enthusiasm for teaching children and Debbie sees coming to Atkinson as a "coming home". PPS is moving into new positions and decision making and an increasing urgency to do right for all our children. Increase in support for educators and a great scene for advocating for children. She believes in communication in management, inquiry and hearing from all voices, not wasting time hearing same information. She wishes to develop a vision for the school from staff and parents. Lots of question asking is needed and checking for understanding, then move forward. Debbie took a few questions.

**Atkinson School Strengths / Things That Need Improvement / What We Need From Debbie - SEE ATTACHED LIST & DOT VOTE**

**Additional Quick Announcements**

PPS will be discussing publicly its redesign specifics 4/26, getting suggestions from the public & informing the public when it will happen. Specifically, which schools would be closed. The entire month of May is “just public meetings”.

Onpoint credit union is having a contest where you nominate your favorite teacher and they get their mortgage paid for a year. Deadline is 4/30.

Warner Pacific students will help weed Saturday 11-3 and a push to get Café Au Play open. Taking donations of food and money for food to thank the volunteers, please contact Traci Sullivan.

Approve Circulated Minutes for February & March.

Meg Ruby moved, Anne Myrthue seconded to approve circulated minutes. PASSED

Meeting concluded at 8:00 PM.

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**PTA view of Atkinson priorities: brainstorm & dot vote**

**04/20/10 Atkinson PTA Meeting**

Gretchen Dursch note taker, Karla Zirbes facilitator

**Strengths - What are Atkinson's strengths?**

Music	10
Push-in reading	8
Celebration of diversity	7
Parent [volunteer] coordinator in office	6
Immersion	5
Recess	5
Explorer, basketball, chess (after school [programs])	5
School counselor, behavioral [in class] program	4
Gardening program	4
Family [social] events	3
Neighborhood language program	3
Librarian	3
Full-day kindergarten	3
Nutrition program (its getting better)	2
Parent involvement	1
Positive community	1
Teachers, staff	0

Class size	0
Can-do attitude - creative, resourceful	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>

### Challenges - What are Atkinson's biggest challenges?

Neighborhood language program	13
Support of immersion staff, curriculum	11
Uneven academics (test scores)	9
Art program	8
More Spanish speakers in office	5
Class size	5
Class size	5
[Lack of] wellness committee & focus	4
Poor communication between admin / office and parents	4
Inequities / uneven staff	4
Weak tag program	3
PE teacher (not full time)	2
[Division] between neighborhood & immersion programs	2
Lack of coverage outside [recesses]	2
RIF [lack of] funding	2
Computer curriculum	1
Inequity of access to garden because of reliance on volunteers	1
Lack of volunteer work space	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81</b>

### What do we need from Debbie?

Strong & direct communication	13
Strong guidance, instructional leader for staff	13
Warm, personal with kids	10
Holding strong academic expectation	6
Art	6
Accessible to parents	5
Understanding, supporting multiple sides - conflict resolution	4
Beautification of the school [paint outside, inside]	4
More music, twice a week	4
Advocacy with PPS	3
Clear vision & ability to communicate	3
Network with middle schools & high schools	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>