

PTA MEETING MINUTES – 9/15/09 - approved 10/20

Follow up actions:

- Circulate thank you card to Warner Pacific College students at next PTA meeting.
- Explore establishing a PTA subsidy to pay for memberships of parents who cannot afford the \$10 fee.
- Advertise in the FYI/email listserve the need for someone to volunteer as PTA secretary.
- Advertise in the FYI/email listserve the need for parents of chess club kids to supervise the lunch time group once a week.
- Revisit question of competing Regional Arts and Culture Council grant proposals by Outdoor Learning Garden and Tabor Commons.
- Consider Kim Heron's requests for music program investments.

Attendees: Karla Zirbes, Angie Janson, Marti Johnson, Gabriela Goldfarb, Barb Frank, Stacy Larsen, Anne Myrthue, Laura Mason, Raymond Hamrick, Laura Minato, Lydia Hernandez, Teke Dillender, John Early, Jane Elliot, Teresa Wirsching, Traci Sullivan, Annie Tucker, Meg Ruby, Janet Cowal, Angie Beer, Molly Haynes, Serena Schultz-Rodriguez, Kim Heron.

Welcome/Introductions. PTA president Karla Zirbes welcomed meeting attendees, introduced the PTA executive committee consisting of herself, treasurer Laura Mason, and pending a vote, Anne Myrthue who agreed to serve as vice president. Everyone present introduced themselves, then Karla reviewed the functions, mission statement and organizational structure of Atkinson's PTA, which is legally part of the 501(c)3 Oregon PTA. The Oregon PTA bylaws & rules are being enforced, and going forward only members can vote according to Oregon PTA rules, with 2/3 support required for a motion to pass. She said following these will protect our non-profit status and let us continue our great work. Karla mentioned that Warner Pacific College students would be at Atkinson volunteering; Meg Ruby asked that people take time to thank them; Gabriela Goldfarb suggested that a thank you card be circulated at the next PTA meeting. Karla thanked Angie & Annie Tucker for coordinating a successful Community Care Day and Rachael Belcher & Jeannie & Dawn for a very successful Open House / Ice Cream Social.

Membership pitch. Gabriela Goldfarb urged attendees to become members of the PTA.

Stand for Children. Elliot Young introduced himself as the coordinator, together with Rachel Belcher, of the Atkinson/Richmond Stand for Children Atkinson chapter, and announced a Monday September 28 meeting at 6 pm [*note: meeting has been postpone*]) at the home of home of Jeff Hopper: 1816 SE 56th Ave to brainstorm ways to make improvements in the classroom while continuing to keep pressure on state government to support education. Elliott will circulate more information on the PTA Yahoo listserve.

Principal's Update. Principal Chris Gutierrez explained that Atkinson is a Title I school (48% of children are eligible for free or reduced lunch) which brings with it supplemental funding. Atkinson chooses to use those funds for enhancements that benefit all the children in the school, such as hiring reading specialists, upgrading the computer lab; children are not segregated. He reviewed the new teaching staff with slides (4 new Spanish Immersion teachers in grades K, 1, 3, and 5; and 1 new neighborhood teacher teaching a 1st/2nd grade blend). School enrollment was lower than anticipated. He reported on the new solar roof installed over the summer, which will

stop the chronic leaking and eventually cut the school's energy costs by 45%, after a 4-5 year payback period. He reviewed the 2009 Assessment of Atkinson and noted that the school met all its goals and Adequate Yearly Progress. He reported that reading scores are holding steady over 3 years, but that there is a slight deterioration of math scores. There is going to be more attention paid to that, and also intensified reading support to help the 25% of Atkinson students who are English language learners (ELL) to improve English proficiency. The writing scores of Atkinson's 4th graders have improved over the same period, going from 24th percentile to 46th percentile, but need to raise that higher, and will do so via professional development to help teachers achieve improvements. Tomorrow is the first of the 2 hour late starts that will occur the 3rd Wednesday of every month (except November), and give teachers time for professional development called "Every Day Counts."

Vacant PTA Executive Board Positions. Gabriela Goldfarb moved and Barb Frank seconded the nomination of Anne Myrthue as PTA vice president. More than 2/3 of the members voting supported her nomination. Karla asked if anyone present would be willing to serve as secretary. No one volunteered to become a candidate. Gabriela agreed to take minutes for this meeting.

Review of status of activity coordinator positions. Volunteer coordinator Angie Janson reviewed the vacant volunteer opportunities (Secretary, Laminating (new), Auction, Carnival co-leader, Dia de los Reyes Magos, Talent Show 3-5). In addition to the listed positions, Angie identified a need for a person to help coordinate the room representatives, and also encouraged people to go through their children's teachers to help during recess. (Angie Beer earlier made a pitch for helping with recess.) Karla announced that Alejandra Stich volunteered to assist with the Multicultural Outreach committee, along with Haydee Lopez [*note: Haydee Lopez's family is now at another school and won't be in the Outreach position*]. Lydia Hernandez mentioned that there would be a Spanish speaking parents meeting on Friday, where efforts will be made to recruit a parent to coordinate the Three Kings Day cultural celebration (Dia de los Reyes Magos) which is replacing the Posada.

English Classes Committee Formed. Karla noted that the number one request of the Multicultural/Outreach committee was to offer English classes to parents. She asked for volunteers to help her with that effort, and Janet Cowal and Meg Ruby volunteered. Gabriela suggested that Tabor Commons/Café au Play might be interested in hosting once it is up and running. Traci Sullivan, Tabor Commons liaison, agreed it could be a good match, would have to contact programming committee.

Chess for Success. Meg Ruby explained that teacher Rob Stuart will again coordinate the Atkinson Chess for Success group, but that because he is now teaching in a classroom he needs greater parent involvement. He especially needs parents to supervise once a week at lunch time for 45 minutes. The program is open to 3rd – 5th graders and no previous knowledge of chess is required. The afterschool part of the program will take place Wednesdays from 3p-4p. The first afterschool session is next Wednesday, 9/23. The suggestion was made to ask Gretchen to post a request for volunteers to the PTA listserv and Yahoo Group.

Tabor Commons/Café au Play. Traci Sullivan provided background information on this community-held site across the street from Atkinson, and reported that much work on the site has been accomplished, with more to go and regular volunteer work parties on Wednesdays and

Saturdays. She said there will be no parking available in the lot this year, but there are now spaces available on the street in front.

Regional Arts and Culture Council Grants. Traci introduced John Early, half of the team that painted the murals on three walls of the Tabor Commons building, who made a proposal that Atkinson join with him in submitting a grant application to the Regional Arts and Culture Council for a matching grant in the arts in the schools category to do in-class art workshops that would create permanent murals for the back of the Tabor Commons building, which will be a patio/play area. Meg Ruby brought to everyone's attention that the Atkinson Outdoor Learning Garden is applying for the same grant for a project on campus, and that the PTA should be fully apprised of that before endorsing or offering funding for anything. Kim Heron noted that the 4th and 5th graders already have artist in residence programming funded by Run for the Arts money to produce the "Ring Out the Bells of Freedom" presentation. When asked how much he may want Atkinson to contribute, John said it depended on details of how much money might be available from Atkinson's share of Run for the Arts money, number of kids involved, etc. All agreed that further conversation and investigation is needed soon, since the deadline is October.

Music Program Funding Requests. Kim Heron described the evolution over the past 15 years of Atkinson's now-robust music program, and how significant amounts of PTA funding were essential to that evolution, in particular the acquisition over 2 years of a 2nd-5th grade music curriculum and textbooks totaling \$7,000. Now, Kim would like to alert the PTA to the following needs:

- Replace a keyboard that "died": \$260
- Replace worn out mallets for xylophones/metalophones: approx \$200.
- Replace a broken CD unit in the amplifier system: \$430.
- Purchase a small CD player for the cafeteria to avoid having to roll the amplifier over: approx. \$75
- Purchase "flip form" units that can be configured as risers, seating, and a platform to be able to effectively use the gymnasium for school-wide performances (cafeteria is too small). Really need 6 units totaling \$4310 including shipping, but could buy 4 this year (\$2875), and 2 next year (\$1536). Currently are borrowed from another school.

Flu Clinic Opportunity. *[note: these notes are reconstructed]* Karla presented an opportunity from Oregon PTA to host a flu shot clinic. This would not be anything mandatory, but an offer extended to our community. She asked for help in exploring this; Stacy Larson offered help.

Minutes from June 2009 meeting. Members voted by majority to approve the circulated minutes draft.

8:10 Meeting adjourned.