

Thoreau PTO General Meeting
February 8th, 2011 6:30-8:15pm
Dane County Parent Council

Agenda:

- Greetings
- Treasurers' Report
- Hannah Sievers, AmeriCorps-Schools of Hope Tutor Coordinator at Thoreau
- Thoreau Teachers Heidi Nielsen *and* Clare Gilmore, on the Earth Partnership Program
- PTO Funds Requests votes
- Bids for Kids information
- Information regarding the 2011/12 PTO board positions
- New Business

Attendance: Erin Weiss, Michelle Frehnre, AnnMarie Banas, Kate Huntington, Jenny Crawford, Connie Roderick, Betsy Parker, Robin Gray, Laura Glazer, Lydia Bach, Eric Bach, Ingrid Beamsley, Robin Conkey, Jonathan Sleeman, Christy Ehlert

PTO: Jenice Con Foo (fundraising chair), Sherri Stroebel (vice president), Louisa Medaris (president), Aphra Mednick (secretary), Marty Skubal,

Teachers: Andy Mayhall, Clare Gilmore, Heidi Nielsen, Kelly McCann, Audrey Smanski, Jackie Goessel, Joan Hanson, Hannah Sievers

Absent: Gina Skubanelli (co-treasurer, due to illness)

Minutes:

Greetings – started the meeting at 6:43pm

Treasurers' Report – Marty Skubal - Gina Skubanelli the co-treasurer is home with her son who is sick, currently have \$16,041.00 in account however most of the fund-raisers are done for the year, \$3494.00 expenses have been paid to date, 3 large expenses coming up, that teacher & academic support, safety patrol, playground improvement (budgeted for \$3,000.00), Carnival did very well, PTO is now tax-exempt

(effective November 19, 2009, due to becoming retroactive of original application),

Hannah Sievers, AmeriCorps-Schools of Hope Tutor Coordinator at Thoreau - in her position as Hope Tutor Coordinator she find volunteers to work with students in math and literacy, consistency from volunteers is really important, over 125 kids have benefitted from Hope Tutor Program this year, currently 30 tutors who come in 1 time a week, student receive a tutor after the teacher requests it, tutors go through background checks, training is offered

Thoreau Teachers Heidi Nielsen and Clare Gilmore, on the Earth Partnership Program – originated from the UW Arboretum and teaches children how to restore land, a large or small space, a few years ago Thoreau did a prairie land outside the music room which then moved beyond to the land on the hill towards the lower playground, land around Thoreau is owned by the city so they need to be collaborated with, “helping to cultivate a sense of place for children”, showed a video of the program at local Madison schools, talked about the importance of experiential learning and getting more teacher involved, They plan to:

- broaden awareness,
- students to participate a learning service project,
- butterfly garden
- increase value of space outside the schools

Additionally, they are looking for a parent to help with writing an essay for a Whole Foods grant that supports school gardens. Christy Ehlert volunteered to help with the Whole Foods grant proposal. Ingrid Beasley and Aphra Mednick spoke about having this become a project that the Healthy Foods Committee supports and works with, Ingrid will be in touch with Clare. Jenice Con Foo talked about having the PTO collect a general pool of volunteers to help with projects like this.

PTO Funds Requests votes-

Joan Hanson – request for \$100.00 for the Tiko store as there are some voids in the store that this money would go to filling (books, balls, etc), Pat and Helen (two parents) have taken on organizing the Tiko store & cart, Joan said a big thank you to parents who have donated VOTE: Approved

Andy Mayhall – request for \$500.00, Principal Costello and Mr. Mayhall talked about buying frames to put up children’s artwork in the school, framing and mating and then the artwork would go home with the child at

the end of the school year, will be placed inside the office, to the left of the office, stairwells and other locations, would like this to be an ongoing project.

A parent suggested purchasing Ikea frames that are decent and lower cost
- VOTE: Approved

Bottled Water for Staff lounge – request for \$350.00, Kelly Cruiser submitted the request and AnneMarie Banas made the request on her behalf, for a rented large bottle plus 4-5 bottles for the month, other suggestions were made including a filter for the water faucet

VOTE: decision was tabled until more information

Bookflix – differed until Principal Kathy Costello can present on the request

Bids for Kids information – Robin Grey – presenting on behalf of Leah Sandholm, Bids for Kids 3/26 at 7pm at Nakoma Country Club, tickets are \$35.00 which is a suggested donation, individuals can purchase tickets at a higher level, Nakoma Country Club charges \$20.00 per ticket for space and food, this event was started by the neighborhood to raise money for the endowment for Thoreau and Cherokee, \$ goes through the Madison Public School and Thoreau and Cherokee receive the interest each year and it supports innovate programs for the school, has approximately \$35,000.00 in the fund currently, silent and live auction profits goes to Cherokee and Thoreau, and the final general appeal goes directly to Thoreau

Information regarding the 2011/12 PTO board positions –

independently, the executive board and the fundraising chair have decided not to run for re-election for the 2011-2012 school year, interested parties are encouraged and welcome to attend a board meeting between now and the rest of the year to see what it's all about, as a lot of the fund raisers are scheduled for the fall ideally there would be someone in that position before the end of this school year, looking for interested parents and parties.

New Business-

5K Race fundraiser - Ms. Goessel and Ms. Samanski – would like to organize a 5k race for Thoreau on 5/14, as a fund raiser for Thoreau, the Arboretum is not available so they are looking at other locations, having the money go towards healthy food and snacks, or purchasing a “mini-playground” bin for each class to have items to take out to the playground,

at this time unsure of expenses, looking for volunteers and ideas

Career Day – Robin Grey – Career Day didn't happen as scheduled, how could we/the PTO come up a way to keep track of all the events, putting together a list

Louisa Medaris– Ms. Felton is interested in working on making Career Day happen this year, there is currently no chair for Career Day but they are working on recruiting one and having it rescheduled

Discovery Fair – Scott Leonard is working on it,

Future Problem Solvers –Laura Glaser - for 4th & 5th graders, a former Thoreau teacher use to be responsible for this, Laura is working on putting it together, 15 kids participated last year, a nation wide program, possibly could be parent run ideally having a teacher would be good, looking into the possibility of having some time during the classroom devoted to it, Kelly McCann suggested having it during lunch to address the afterschool transportation issue.

Reading Night – Kelly McCann- 2/15 from 6-8pm, dinner and transportation provided, like dinner theater, children are signed up to read while people are eating, goal is to have all of children at Thoreau reading at a higher level

Future goal is to have children reading for 20 minutes 3 nights a week, if they reach the goal they will get a free pass for roller skating, goal is to have every child at Thoreau participate. Received an Artimous grant for this project.

**Please join us for our next meeting:
Tuesday, March 8, 2011, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Dane County Parent Council**