

**Lawton Elementary PTA  
Board Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2011, 9:30 AM  
PTA Meeting**

**In Attendance:** Lisa Blau, Melissa Denke, Kirsten Dumo, Nina Graff, Elaine McNabb, Kimball Mullins, Connie Olson, Sarah Terry, Christine Helm, Helen Pitts

**Principal's Report –**

**Budget Update:** Christine is in the early stages of thinking about the school budget for next year. There will be cuts coming from the District, and we can expect the budget to be bare bones. She will likely be asking the PTA to continue to fund existing programs, including ReTeach, A to Z/Raz Kids and Brain Pop. Also:

- **Technology enhancements:** This is probably more long-term, but Christine would like to see Lawton's technology modernized.
- **Tutoring:** This is valued by teachers and beneficial to students. This year we are spending \$6,000 from the school budget, but this might not be possible next year. A Board member asked how students are identified for tutoring. Christine explained that there are several mechanisms: MAP scores, SIT meetings, and teacher data. Tutoring is not parent-initiated. Currently, tutors are supporting K-2 and 4-5 classrooms. There is a gap in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- **Writers' Workshop:** There is currently \$10,000 allocated to Writers' Workshop training for teachers. Christine would like this to happen in June or July, but we don't yet know about cost or about who will participate. Kirsten added that June or July would be during next year's budget cycle. We may be able to put this line item in next year's budget, but more definite information about cost and timing would be helpful.

**Enrichment:** Melissa asked Christine for staff input about enrichment (what works, what doesn't). The idea of staggering

World Cultures and Science Fair (alternate years) has come up in staff and BLT meetings. Melissa will create a survey, and give it to Carrie Wheeler to distribute to staff. The sooner the better, so the BLT can see the data. Kimball expressed discomfort with the idea of shifting resources away from enrichment, as people who give money may do so with the understanding that we will have robust enrichment. Melissa confirmed that the survey wouldn't be about shifting funds away from enrichment.

**Challenging All Students (CAS) Team Update:** The team has been working hard to come up with a proposal. They are hoping to present one to the BLT on March 7. Christine had originally hoped for a community meeting on March 9, but may not be able to do this as staff would need to be consulted first. Board members expressed some concern about this time frame, as it doesn't give us information about advanced learning delivery before kindergarten tours start.

**Debate:** Connie thanked Christine for coming in on Saturday to support the Lawton debaters. She noted that Christine was the only principal from the cluster to attend, and that parents from other schools were impressed.

### **Volunteer Coordinator's Report** –

**Puzzlewise:** Helen has a professional background and interest in science education, and has been researching successful science programs in other schools and districts. She is looking at the possibility of bringing science tutors to Lawton, and getting teachers better resources to teach science. She has identified Puzzlewise (see attached) as a potentially useful program.

- It is research-based, and has a strong emphasis on science literacy and vocabulary.
- It is used in Fall City and several other successful districts/schools.
- It is aligned with District curriculum.

- It will be aligned with this year's MSP.
- Lawton 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers may be interested in piloting.
- Books – workbooks that kids write in and keep – are relatively inexpensive. The materials cost is annual. Books for next year would need to be ordered by July 1.
- Kirsten suggested funding these in the same manner as *Time for Kids*, as the cost is low per family.

**Tutoring:** Tutor recruitment is going well. Helen attended tutor training at Cleveland High School, which was very good. District math trainers will be coming to train math tutors and interested parents. Helen is still looking for 4<sup>th</sup> grade Math and Read Naturally tutors.

**Background Checks:** Helen has completed background checks and data entry.

**Volunteer Tea:** Helen has started to work on the Volunteer Tea, upcoming in May. She is looking at the possibility of offering childcare.

**Field Day:** Melissa passed on a request for help getting snacks (Pop Chips and Jamba Juice) donated for Field Day. Helen will look into this after auction procurement is complete.

**Hours:** Helen will be meeting with Christine soon as her hours are likely to run out in April. This is largely due to 1<sup>st</sup> year issues.

**Volunteer Training Handbook:** Kimball will put this on the website.

### **President's Report** –

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the January 12 Board meeting. Motion passed (7 votes in favor). A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the February 1 General meeting. Motion passed (7 votes in favor).

**Focus Day:** This PTA legislative advocacy event is coming up on Presidents' Day (February 21).

**Volunteer Sign-Up Tools:** We discussed the possibility of using volunteerspot.com, mysignup.com or similar for volunteer

scheduling. It would be best to use one service for multiple events. Connie will look at these and compare them to others she has looked at in the past.

**Small Group Management:** Kirsten asked about useful tools for small group management/sign-ups. Suggestions included Team Snap, Shutterfly, GCal and Doodle Poll.

**Nominating Committee:** We have approved a nominating committee. Connie has put out feelers for active parents via room parents. She has some responses, and will forward names to Sarah. We also have two people who have expressed interest in getting involved with PTA.

- Sarah will put together a Doodle poll to try to schedule an initial meeting. The PTA Board president(s) is/are supposed to attend this meeting if possible.
- Sarah needs job descriptions for open positions. We established that we are actively recruiting for a Co-President, Treasurer/Cashier, and a Co-Communications person.
- We will also think about other big volunteer needs for next year: an Auction Chair and an Enrichment Co-Chair.
- The Board slate will need to be approved at the April 28 general meeting, with a report due to the Board 15 days before this (April 13).

**Photos:** There have been a number of complaints about the quality of Yuen Lui's photos and service. Connie will talk to Marla about possibly changing vendors next year.

### **Treasurer's Report** –

**Auction Update:** Kirsten has been looking at financial information to try to predict what we might be able to raise at the auction. She is concerned that committing too much money to the Make-a-Difference item might be too risky, as it might mean that we don't raise enough in unrestricted funds to cover this year's budget. She would prefer to raise the paddle for the general fund, with the surplus going to Make-a-Difference. Everyone agreed that this would be a good idea. Kirsten has already talked to Christine about this.

- Tickets will cost \$68.50, which includes the Brown Paper Tickets service fee.
- We are trying to get early RSVPs. As an incentive, people who respond by 2/16 will be entered in a

- drawing to win a town car ride to/from the event.  
We will have a gift certificate wall, a big live auction, class projects, teacher experiences, and best of live. Raffle tickets will cost \$25.

**Meeting Adjourned 11:45 PM**

Minutes respectfully submitted by  
Sarah Terry  
Recording Secretary  
February 12, 2011  
Approved March 9, 2011