

Meeting Minutes

Polaris PTO

Monday, February 4, 2019

6:00 pm

Polaris Library

Attendees

Kara Chitwood, Chair (via phone)

Jenny Cookson, Vice-Chair

Jessica Sullivan, Treasurer

Melanie Chenard, Secretary

Anne Sterrett, Principal

Beth Fleming, Communications Chair

Nicole Getzelman, Fundraising Chair

Kris Heilbron, 4th Grade Teacher

Catherine Forington, Teacher Lead

Melanie Lundeen, parent

Vanessa Constanti, parent

Michael O'Keeffe, Deputy COO DPS

Agenda

1. Call to Order: Welcome and Introductions
2. Minutes: January minutes approved as written
3. Principal's Report: Special Guest Michael O'Keeffe, Deputy COO of DPS

Mr. O'Keeffe presented information on options to address the heating & cooling within the school building. There was an overwhelming request for improvements to heating & cooling in the DPS bond money survey results. Polaris receives \$70,000 bond money for upgrading learning environments. Mr. O'Keeffe is responsible for executing the bond.

- Of 207 DPS schools, 86 are not air-conditioned, Polaris is in the top 10 for highest temperature.
- The cost of installing central air conditioning in one school can range in the millions of dollars. 18 schools received A/C with this bond cycle at a total cost of \$65-70 million.
- Bonds tend to run in four year cycles. The next potential bond year would be 2020. It is possible that Polaris could get funding for central A/C with the next bond measure since we are so high on the list.
- In the meantime, DPS is working to evaluate current systems and make improvements in the following ways:

- Maintenance of existing equipment: fix broken thermostats, etc. This effort is underway and will be completed by 2/23. This work is covered by DPS maintenance dollars, and is not part of the bond money.
- New equipment: The bond money will be used to install improvements such as ceiling fans in the hottest classrooms, window shades, and possibly larger fans in common spaces.
- Operations: a “playbook” will be created to inform faculty, facility managers, and parents on how to manage the systems to optimize temperatures. For example, keep window shades closed against the sun, don’t use heating and cooling equipment as shelving, etc.
- Mr. O’Keeffe will work with the project manager assigned to Polaris to plan improvements utilizing the bond money.
- Polaris will remain high on the priority list even with improvements, as air movement does not reduce air temperature.
- Mr. O’Keeffe is available to answer any questions. He can be contacted via email at michael_o’keeffe@dpsk12.org. He also provided his personal cell phone number.

4. Teacher’s Report: STEAM grant requests were distributed to the board last week via email. Requests include fraction manipulatives (4th - Allen), 3D software (Katie Ray), and sewing machines & supplies (Electives). There is sufficient funding available to fund all three requests. *Motion to approve all STEAM grant requests passed unanimously.* A third round of grant funding will be offered to exhaust current year STEAM funds. Due date for requests will be April 26 for consideration at the May PTO meeting.

5. Treasurer Report:

- a. January financials were reviewed. Jessica Rogers has requested additional art supplies - \$103 over her budget amount. *Motion to approve additional art funding up to \$120 passed unanimously.*
- b. 65 parents responded to the budget survey. Specials ranked high among currently funded items, and creative expression ranked high for potential future funding. Comments included request for foreign language - Anne explained that between the high amount of specials time and electives, there is no time available for language. Jessica will consider the survey feedback as she puts together a draft budget to present at the March meeting.
- c. Other budget discussion:
 - Anne expressed appreciation for PTO support.
 - Anne confirmed that current level of paraprofessional support is what the teachers would like to maintain for next year.

- The group discussed the role of paraprofessionals in providing social-emotional support. The consensus was that paras increase the teachers bandwidth, therefore increasing teachers' capacity to provide social-emotional support to the students.
- Anne suggested that PTO fund the artist-in-residence program in the future, as the DPS process is difficult.

6. Committee Reports

a. Fundraising

- Annual Fund: Donor cocktail party will be held 2/28 at Jodi Blomberg's house. Monthly giving is up.

b. Communications

- ePost: going well, no issues.

c. Social

- Beth is helping work on building community in 1st grade through coffee talks and monthly mingles.
- A parent is putting together a spreadsheet template for volunteer info.

7. Board Reports:

- a. Chair's Report: Talent night went well. Anne Penner streamlined process, will hopefully help out next year. Other volunteers are 5th grade parents leaving school.
- b. Vice-Chair's Report: none
- c. Secretary's Report: Bylaw update in progress.

8. New Business: Anne discussed the principal selection process. CSC meets with the instructional superintendent this week to select the parent committee members. Steps include district interview, school interview, community session, learning walk. Were hoping to have selection by March 1, but teacher strike has delayed the process.

9. Meeting adjourned at 7:39. Next meeting March 11.