

Bigelow PTO Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2012

Meeting came to order

Present: Principal Todd Harrison, Co-president Carolyn Judge, Co-president Julie Bourgoin, Co-treasurer Ted Everett, Co-treasurer Vicki Spetter, Co-secretary Leslie Williams, Co-secretary Vicki Ritterband, Co-chair of Big Night Liz Haas, Co-chair of Big Night Laurie Halloran, Communications/Website Beth Coomber, CASC Chair Laura Davis, Renee Kwok, Una Simmons, Alicia Matos, Deb Jonas-Walsh, Claire Marré, Sally Brickell, Yoonjoo Park, Seunghje Lee (sorry if I messed up the spelling!), Jacquie Arbuckle, Dvora Pemstein, Beverly Craig, Stacy Schwartz, Maria Sullivan, Angela Pitter, Miriam Alandydy, Melanie Varady, Lorraine Johnson, Kim Buckton and Kyesha Elliott

I. Welcome/Introductions

II. Todd Harrison update: The year is off to a good start. The sixth grade field trip to a rock climbing gym in Watertown was fun and bonding. The eighth grade car wash fundraiser was also a success. The teachers report our kids are smart, mature, responsible and focused (are they talking about the same kids who eat and sleep in my house?). For the most part, students didn't seem disconcerted by the news about the Day Middle School teacher.

The school department has added **security cameras** around Bigelow, in response to several students suspecting that they were being followed to or from school.

One School, One Book has kicked off with the novel Flipped. It will be used as the focus of discussion at Bigelow in early October. There will be a **movie night at Newton North on Wed., Nov. 6**, featuring the film treatment of the book. Kids and parents invited.

Back to school night is (now was) Thursday, Sept. 26 from 7-9 pm

More events

Wed., Oct. 2: Sixth grade parent coffee

Week of Oct. 14: Open house mornings for all grades. It's the opportunity to be a fly on the wall in your child's classes.

Oct. 18: All school dance. Parent can hang out while kids in gym.

Oct. 25 6th grade parent potluck

Nov. 6: One School/One Book movie night

Nov. 16: Soup and Supper stroll

Several parents mentioned that the bus routes seem ill-conceived and that kids were arriving late to school. Mr. Harrison said the kinks have been worked out.

III. Creative Arts and Sciences update from Laura Davis: Half of the PTO budget goes to CASC, which brings arts and science enrichment programs into school. The programs are tied closely to the curriculum. This year's highlights:

- Klezmer Conservatory Band (traditional music of eastern European Jews) for all grades
- Museum of Science's Motion, Speed, Velocity for 6th graders
- Writer Greg Mone on the process of nonfiction writing (he writes for Atlantic monthly, Scientific American, etc)
- Engineers Teaching Algebra (real life applications of algebra) for 7th graders
- Re-enactment of Boston Massacre (kids act as jury. Teaches lessons about American history and making assumptions) for 8th graders

IV. Co-president Carolyn Judge

Make sure to check out the PTO's website which is chock full of information, including a comprehensive school calendar: bigelowpto.org

Beth Coomber is working on the school directory and hopes to get it out mid-October. Beth said that the new online directory system is secure. The deadline for directory ads is October 4. The rate sheet is on the PTO website.

If you're not getting community notes (information about what's going on in Newton in general) sign up on the PTO website.

There will be 5 PTO meetings this year and we're trying to schedule some in the evening.

Soup and Supper Stroll is Saturday, Nov. 16. We need 8-16 families to host.

Turkey bowl is Friday, Nov. 8. It's a school-wide flag football game that takes place after school at Burr Park. It's a fundraiser for 8th grade.

PTO positions still open:

- PTO Vice President: We groom you to be president, which includes weekly massages and pedicures (just kidding). The VP participates in the weekly meetings with Mr. Harrison, and fills in as needed with things like finding volunteers and attending events/meetings the presidents can't
- SchoolKidz kits fundraiser chair
- Hospitality: organizes refreshments for PTO meetings and other events
- Community outreach and Green Decade liaison
- Cookie dough fundraiser (it's a cake walk. Very easy!)

V. Alicia Matos, Co-chair of 8th grade activities (with Melanie Varady): We will need lots of volunteers. We're still finalizing the schedule of activities.

VI. Big Night Co-chair Liz Haas: Big Night is the biggest fundraiser of the year. It consists of a silent auction, dinner, drinks and dancing. We haven't decided on a location yet. It will take place in early spring and there will be a kick-off organizational meeting in October.

Date of next PTO meeting TBD

The meeting adjourned at 10 am.