

**Oak Grove School Parent Teacher Organization  
Meeting Agenda - Wednesday, March 4, 2020**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 9:00am CT in the Jr. High Cafeteria at Oak Grove School.

Meeting attendees included:

Aayshah Mirza	Casey Dugan	Julie Kovach	Melissa Thoune
Adrienne Castro	Cathie DeMoon	Julie Piazzi	Mia Hughes
Afreen Sheikh	Cathie Saia	Kari Meyer	Muizza Suglatwala
Agata Karpowicz	Christine Merrild	Karin Pawlowski	Patti Jacobs
Alexa Dunn	Cindy Rigali Lund	Kate Byers	Pete Furlong
Alicia Noonan	Corinne Harrington	Katie Riley	Raabia Khan
Allison Honaker	Danielle Sonshine	Katie Yarc	Rashida Rihman
Allison Sherman	Dave Pawlowski	Katrina Treutelaar	Sanjay Narayan
Alyssa Osterman	Donna Griffin	Keiko Tsumura	Sarah Ali
Amber Rynes	Elizabeth O'Neill	Ken LaCrosse	Sarah Cacciatore
Amy Flores	Erin Ecton	Krista Demma	Sarah Roe
Andrea Dunn	Erin Smith	Laura Reutzel	Sarwat Ahmad
Andrea Parks	Erin Vance	Leah Parr	Sehrish Quraishi
Anne Miller	Eve Wallin	Lilli Melamed	Shannon Rojas
Anneke Polka	Farah Mahmood	Lindsey Nietfeldt	Shawn Parks
Ashleigh Grambo	Frani Sherman	Liz Howard	Srinivasa Inkollu
Ashley Douglass	Jason Meltzer	Logan Farris	Srirama Krishna Reddy
Ashley Wilson	Jean Hattendorf	Lonny Lemon	Susan Kurland
Barb Banduch	Jeff Barry	Lynn Klunder	Susie Kiefer
Becky Rynes	Jen Tippet	Lynn Pusateri	Susie Nave
Becky Sims	Jenifer Alghini	Lynsey Wolfe	Taylor Sale
Beth Hughes	Jennifer Davis	Marcy Gibbar	Tiffani Baffico
Beth Zender	Jill Procop	Mary Jo Swift	Wendy Miller
Bethany Williams	Jillian Giovannetti	Megan Oesch	Yasmin Kagzi
Bev Smith	Jina Rappaport	Melanie Ludington	
Brooke Chamber	John Mehnert	Melissa Sallmann	

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from February 5, 2020 were reviewed. Minutes were approved as distributed.

**3. Reports of Officers**

a. **President** (Laura Reutzel)

As discussed at previous meetings, the PTO identified \$45,000 in the budget that is available to put towards one or more projects this year. A survey was distributed to collect feedback on how these funds should be used including feedback regarding the elementary library renovation funding request submitted at the last meeting. The results of the survey were reviewed.

- 80% of respondents said that the PTO should help fund the elementary library renovation.
- When asked if the PTO should fully fund the portion of the library renovation that the administration cannot cover (approximately \$45,226) 47% of respondents said yes, 38% said no, and 15% were undecided.

- Of those respondents that did not wish to fully fund the library renovation, or were undecided, the majority chose to fund between \$15k-\$25k, but ultimately responses were spread fairly evenly among all values.
- A wide variety of ideas were submitted as part of an open-ended survey question regarding ideas to enhance our school. These included:
  - Curriculum/Resources – Junior High Bookroom, more books and resources in JH Library, dual language program, PearDeck Subscription 5-8, increase in teacher fund, additional aid for spelling, after school math tutoring
  - Classroom/Work Space - "Safe Space" and/or Calm Corner within classrooms, more comfortable/flexible classroom seating, collaboration areas for all grades K-8
  - Clubs/Sports - More clubs and sports teams all grades, soccer team & uniforms/equipment, track & field equipment, yearbook club, student newspaper and/or news broadcasts, more project "LEAD" type opportunities for all grades, intramural softball (JH), outdoor intramural kickball (Elem.)
  - Recreation Space - Junior High playground repairs and improvements, soccer goals, more indoor recess space, more for peaceful playground
  - Professional Developments – PD for staff to support students with emotional difficulties and/or behavioral challenges, seminar by team who created Love & Logic
  - Other - Sensory Path in Elementary hallway, more summer programs, sound systems for gyms, more instruments for band, more educational field trips, hot lunch kitchen, new lockers

The \$45,000 the PTO identified as surplus funds available for special projects was part of funds previously needed to manage the lunch program. With Marla's success, the PTO no longer needs to keep this amount of excess cash on hand. However, without extra fund raising, it could take several years to build this sort of surplus again.

If all \$45,000 is designated to one project today as a result of the library vote, it could possibly impact all future funding requests for the remainder of the year. The PTO will need to evaluate on a month-to-month basis to determine funds available for additional requests. There are several requests for funds on the agenda today and anticipate there to be more requests over the remainder of the school year.

#### 4. Old Business

In the interest of time, Old Business was moved ahead in the agenda to facilitate the discussion and vote regarding the Elementary Library.

Liz Howard made a motion to discuss old business that was seconded by Raabia Khan.

A robust discussion regarding the elementary library project followed. The discussion included:

- What is the likelihood the library renovation would happen if it doesn't pass today?
  - The project would likely be postponed for at least year. The administration can only spend up to \$30k on one project without Board approval, so the project would fall under Board of Education purview if the school were to fund the whole thing.
- What is the concern with the library now?
  - The shelves are at their lifespan and they are sagging. The space isn't a creative learning space and it isn't flexible enough for the variety of classes who use it on a daily basis.
- Is there a way to spread the project over two years?
  - It is possible, but may not be time- or cost-efficient.

- Is it possible to look for donors?
  - Due to the deadline with the furniture company, there isn't time to look for donors.
- Is OGSEF able to contribute funds and share the cost of the project?
  - OGSEF funds are for teacher grants and not building projects. Examples include buying books for teachers and classrooms, continuing education for literacy for teachers.

Several meeting participants shared personal commentary regarding the project including:

- Jeff Barry: The timing of the PTO meeting and vote during the day does not accommodate working professionals and more PTO members would vote on this topic if the meeting were at a different time
- Julie Kovach: Past PTO spending has supported elementary projects. This money should be allocated across grade levels and projects for the middle school should be prioritized.
- Raabia Khan: Funding the library is a long term project that will have lasting impact.
- Elizabeth O'Neil: The elementary library is much more than just a library – it is a multipurpose space used by a number of teachers and students for non-library needs.
- Leah Parr: Funding requests are submitted monthly by teachers and administration. Other worthy funding requests will come in for the remainder of the year and funds may not be available.
- Liz Howard: This surplus in the budget has accumulated over time. It could take another 10 years to accumulate this amount of surplus.
- Cathy Saia: The library renovation should be built into the school budget and should not be covered by the PTO.

Upon conclusion of the discussion a paper ballot vote occurred. The vote was to decide on the motion to support the elementary library renovation for the requested amount of \$45k. The paper ballots were counted and the motion passed by a count of 70 “yes” to 31 “no” votes.

### 3. Reports of Officers (continued)

#### b. Vice President (Beth Zender)

Board of Education meeting report:

- a. Special BOE Meeting on Space Needs on February 19th, 2020:
  - i. The BOE prioritized needs and eliminated some of the options from Peter Grave's presentation.
    1. Priorities: 1) Faculty Lounge, 2) Kindergarten needs to give back the elementary art space and have its own room, and 3) 2 additional classrooms should be added to handle the influx of students / flexible space.
    2. There will be a decision by December 2020 if a building expansion is chosen.
    3. For next year, they will decide by July if things will remain status quo, if class sizes will be increasing, if foreign languages would be put on a cart, or if Jr. High teachers would share classrooms. (Each Junior High room is unscheduled and vacant 2 hours per day.)
    4. There is not enough time at this point to make any changes to the building for the start of next year.
  - ii. If a building expansion is selected next December, OGS does not have enough money in reserves; we would need to borrow money again. We are currently in debt now, but that would be paid off before the next debt would be incurred. OGS is looking at adding between 4-9 classrooms. One number Peter mentioned was about \$700,000 per classroom, but he said the cost increases exponentially as you increase the number of classrooms.
- b. Committee of the Whole & BOE on February 25, 2020
  - i. Dr. Lemon welcomed our future superintendent Ms. Allison Sherman to OGS, who has officially started her job as Assistant Superintendent.
  - ii. Showcases on Technology

1. Ms. Fillinger (5th grade Science) presented with Dr. Meltzer on her Biomes Project using MIT's Scratch Coding and the Makey-Makey keyboard extension.
  2. Dr. Meltzer and PTO volunteers presented the use of the green screen and Final Cut Pro, where each kindergarten class created a video of a book. Students worked on fluency, intonation, and public speaking with this project. Dr. Meltzer was very grateful for the PTO volunteers and hopes to increase volunteers in the future in the production room, and by offering classes to parents.
- a. Cyber Security practice drills continue to take place. (Failure rate is usually around 88%, so ongoing education is needed.)
  - b. A community member gave an update on ETO. See the OGS website or the virtual backpack for details.
  - c. The Principal's Award was awarded to outstanding students who are making a positive influence and are role models in their class.
  - d. The BOE discussed potential for COVID-19 (Coronavirus) to spread to schools, and that the IL CDC will direct schools how to respond and if/when to cancel school. (Subsequently an email went out last Thursday with details with current recommendations from the ILDH to prevent the spread of viruses. It was mentioned that we do not have E-Learning at OGS should the school be closed.)
  - e. Summer Project Work was approved for \$700,000. There was nothing in the Agenda Packet for the public on this item.
  - f. Discipline Report: no out-of-school suspensions, 2 in-school suspensions.
  - g. The Scheduling Committee is still working on the details of the proposed changes to 4th and 5th grades. Dr. Cacciatore wants to run a sample schedule with current students to see what the results would look like for individual classes and the students. Next month the finalized scheduling plan should be ready for the BOE to view.
  - h. Last spring, the BOE approved the changes to the TAG program, which raises the bar for being admitted into the program and reduces the number of students pulled out for the TAG program. In order for students to have access to a more "personalized" math experience, in 8th grade, there will be 4 days of math instruction; the 5th day will be an "independent practice day" for those who no longer qualify for the TAG program. If students are motivated, they could learn some of the information being covered in the TAG section. Dr. Cacciatore will be providing more information in the OGS News and hosting a "Coffee Talk Tuesday " to explain details further.
  - i. 2020-2021 Staff Proposals:
    1. An additional PE teacher to reduce the number of students in a PE class; currently there are 29 per class.
    2. An additional Music teacher, perhaps OGS could look at even adding orchestra as an option in the future, or moving some of the band / orchestra to during the regular school day.
- c. Treasurer (Donna Griffin)**
- i. Currently \$1,342 behind the fundraising goal for the year, but anticipate meeting fundraising goal by the end of the year
  - ii. Approximately \$34,000 expenditures remaining for the year
  - iii. The majority of expenses for both dances are wrapped up – 1 expenditure outstanding
  - iv. The grade level socials are still ongoing – 1 remains
- d. Registrar (Lynsey Wolfe)**
- i. No report

**5. Report of Administration (Lonny Lemon)**

- a. Expressed appreciation for the support of the library renovation project
- b. Introduced Allison Sherman
- c. Parent Teacher conferences will take place later this week. Thanked the PTO in advance for the support of the staff appreciation dinner and desserts.
- d. OGS will be an election site on March 17<sup>th</sup>
- e. The OGSEF Gala was fantastic and very successful
- f. Discussed the implications of the vote regarding progressive income tax and school funding. If the progressive income tax doesn't pass it may shift pension costs to local districts which would have a big implication on the OGS budget.

**6. Reports from Standing Committees**

a. **Teachers Liaison (Jina Rappaport)**

- i. Expressed appreciation for the support of the library renovation project
- ii. Monday March 16 – Battle of the books finals
- iii. Thankful for the Parent Teacher conference dinner and desserts

b. **Mother Son Dance**

- i. The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Mother Son Dance was a huge success with 300 attendees
- ii. \$6,500 revenue with a net profit of \$2,500. The profit goal for this event was \$1,200
- iii. Thank you to the planning committee including Linda Ford, Erica Verma, Jamie Evans, Carrie Seibert, Laura Reutzler, parent volunteers and 8<sup>th</sup> grade NHS girls.
- iv. The DJ from North Shore Entertainment did a great job keeping the kids entertained and engaged.

c. **Field Day**

- i. Friday, May 22 – modifications will be made to the stations so Field Day doesn't disrupt 8<sup>th</sup> grade dance setup

d. **Variety Show (Christine Merrild)**

- i. Students in 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade are eligible to participate
- ii. MC tryouts next week
- iii. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 at door
- iv. The show will be April 24<sup>th</sup> – there are 2 show times at 4pm and 7pm
- v. Tryouts will be the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April and tryout signups will come out next week
- vi. Concessions candy is sold through Student Council

e. **Speakers & Programs (Julie Kovach)**

- i. There was a Crime Scene Science assembly on Monday 3/2 that included forensic science demonstrations.

**7. Report from OGSEF (Katrina Treutelaar)**

- a. The Gala raised approximately \$30k
- b. Community donations were down – teachers stepped up donating experiences
- c. \$2k donated to a school in Zion in the form of books, monetary donations and the revenue from the wine toss game
- d. OGSEF is willing to partner with the school and PTO to conduct a targeted fundraiser to raise money to support the library renovation

**8. New Business**

- a. Christine Merrild made a motion to discuss a request for funds from Jenny Lucas for 30 Spanish readers and Ken LaCrosse seconded the motion. The books are \$6 each and the total amount requested is \$190. There was discussion of funds available given the vote to support the library.

Donna Griffin indicated there is some flexibility in the budget for a request of this size. Motion carries unanimously.

- b. Katrina Treutelaar made a motion to discuss a request for funds from Nicholas Heckel for a high-quality eagle mascot costume and Ashley Wilson seconded the motion. The total amount requested is up to \$400. The idea for the mascot costume came from a collaboration of the Programs & Assemblies Committee along with Mr. Heckel. The Committee plans to do the first OGS spirit assembly with the mascot and then the mascot could appear at games, events, school assemblies, the OGSEF Gala, etc as part of a school mascot program/club. There was a discussion about the willingness and interest among students to participate and who will manage the costume. The administration will manage the costume and there will be sportsmanship training for whoever is chosen to wear it. There was again discussion regarding the availability of funds in the PTO budget in light of the library vote. Jeff Barry spoke up and said OGSEF could cover the cost of the costume if the PTO decides not to fund this request. A yay/nay spoken vote was too close to call, so a paper vote was conducted. The results of the paper vote were 10 yes and 11 no votes. The motion failed, but OGSEF said they will cover the cost.
- c. Christine Merrild made a motion to discuss a request for funds from Lynn Pusateri for 12 digital microscopes and Raabia Khan seconded the request. The total amount requested is \$2,354.85 plus shipping. Jeff Barry spoke up and suggested that the PTO ask Mrs. Pusateri to submit her request to the Foundation and that the Foundation could cover this request. LHS identified that students need more microscope training. The current microscopes can be passed down to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. No vote took place given the dollar amount of this request. If the request is still put forward to the PTO at the next meeting a vote will take place then.

## 9. Announcements

- a. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Father Son Night planned for 3/11 from 6:00-8:30pm
- b. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Mother Daughter Tea on 3/12 from 6:00-8:30pm
- c. Oak Grove Reads – Whole school reading one book, Wish Tree, in the month of April. Each family in the whole school will get a book to read at home including all students, teachers, staff, bus drivers, lunch staff, maintenance team, etc.

## 10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:29am CT. The next meeting is Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am CT in the Elementary PD Room at OGS.