

## PTA meeting 4/15 with Committee Chairs

in attendance: Betty Gau, Diane Biglow, Carin Casey, Nancy Alloway, Kristine Arena, Debbë Crooke, Jane Hundley, Emily Leish, Heidi Pasternak, Maud Carty-Fischer, Melissa George, Kelly Linden, Shannon Kreytak, Sharon Kendall, Jessie Steigerwald, Sion Harris, Matt Schnall, Gale McLaughlin, June Hsiao

H. P. presented exec. committee slate for 2008-2009

Presidents. Jessie Steigerwald, Carin Casey

VPs: Betty Gao

Ayla Kavanaugh

Ann Tenhor

sec: Kris Arena

Treasurer: Kelly Linden ( ? ) may be moving, will know in @2 weeks

Jessie stated: people may be added/anyone can be nominated up until the meeting in May when the slate will be voted

Up to date budget: still missing fair and book sale, membership (book fair made @3844)  
Spring fair goal: we are hoping for at least \$4000—waiting on final total to see what the business office of the public schools will charge for custodians, and final tally has not been summarized yet.

The following votes were taken to make amendments to the budget: presented by Kelly L. (treasurer). Each item was presented as a motion, then membership was asked to signify yes or no

1. \$1300 drying rack from minigrants line item for art room—Total minigrant budget is \$5000, so far have only spent about half of that.

SK: not expecting any other minigrants this budget cycle

Motion made to amend to spend a higher amount per minigrant if request comes to the PTA (we are up to \$700 per grant)

Vote: all in favor, none opposed

Motion made to grant \$1300 for drying rack for art room

Vote: all in favor, none opposed

2. Motion made to make lef trivia be it's own line item (\$375)--currently it is in our PTA admin budget (most schools sponsor more than one team--last year Bridge school sponsored 7 teams !) This might be best to help teachers if they want to be a team from Hastings, other teams could be supported by parents funding themselves.

Vote to amend budget to support LEF line item: all in favor, none opposed

3. Motions to decrease other items --

i) field day; budget to decrease \$200 since we are not buying water bottles now

Vote: all in favor, none opposed

ii) bby: decrease from \$400 to \$200 (mostly photocopying) garden expenses very minimal

vote: all in favor, none opposed

iii) discretionary checks—less teachers this year, so our spending is a bit less than the original budget which was \$7000, spent \$625 less, total distributed was \$6375

Vote: all in favor, none opposed

Motion made to use those funds reduced above to pay for a \$900 outside message board (so we don't have to dip into reserves)

Vote: all in favor, none opposed

SK; visual presentation on The PTA : Where does our money go ?

pie charts showed : memberships=\$6500, gw (gift wrap)=\$4500 sf (spring fair estimate.)

\$4000 sp=\$2000 other=\$1000 lef/act grant= \$2000

50% of our income goes directly to the teachers for their discretionary checks, other smaller committees, photo copy paper, new computer quicken program for treasury records, new computer checks, Dr. Brooks (speaker that was hired by all Lexington PTAs), back to school coffee, pta scholarships for field trips, etc.

\$28000 was the total budget: in order to do the same next year, we may need to raise about \$8,000-\$10,000 for ACT. In past years, ACT has usually had it's own fund raiser (usually the Walk for the Arts and some movie nights). In this year, 07-08 there was a complete transition with all new staff (librarian, music and art teachers and vice-principal) and new parent volunteer coordinator (only 1-E.L.), PTA decided to partially fund act, and also use funds from LEF. Planning for next year should conclude that \$5000 given to ACT by the PTA for programs in 07-08 won't exist again, and fund raising should be considered.

Of course the goal of the PTA is to spend money not keep reserves. ( Most schools are spending \$10000-\$12000 per year on ACT in Lexington, but also fund raising for these programs).

7:30, J.S. intro:

We can't effectively represent all our connections in the PTA without having at least one meeting like this, so thank you for coming tonight.

MAY is the month we **may** need to have a budget discussion instead of a vote for next year's budget. Unless we have parents willing to come forward to do fund raising, we won't be able to set the 08-09 budget, as we won't know if we will be raising the \$\$\$ to fund special programs i.e. ACT.

93 responses from online survey

J.S. stated that the week after vacation, survey results will be sent out via emails, then some kind of informal meeting set up to discuss the results. PTA goal is to have a budget by the

May meeting. This year we may not be voting on the budget in May, the next few weeks will determine if this can happen.

clarification of what the PTA does  
big range of experience of the organization

What does the PTA do ?

we provide Insurance for events,  
checks done by central treasurer

storage in the school, trying to get school administration to give us room for our stuff  
i.e. Halloween and spring fair items

Transitions: if someone leaves a position/event and no one covers the job, (i.e. as SK saved family math night) or if a committee needs help with running an event the PTA tries to pitch in and help

Publicity/Appreciation of school events, town events, things that concern education

Advocacy—good example this year: we were able to raise the school district's technology budget this year from \$400,000-->\$600,000

as we got input from our own school and that of the other elementary schools, we got the town to spend the money instead of doing our own fund raising

Grants—other funds, raise the image of LEF

The following are short presentations of Hastings committee goals, budget, etc.. questions or comments to the end of the meeting

N.A.—Teachers book group: 16 teachers participated, 3 times together, once with parents: 12-15 attend. They have been really great, she hopes we can continue because it is so beneficial—Boy Writers, last book—very informative, Thank you to parents  
parent-teacher book group in Nov. was very successful, many positive comments by both parents and teachers; choose the correct book is key, Dr. Brooks perhaps for next year ?  
Anyone who has an idea, Nancy will take suggestions about potential books  
almost 40 people attended, Nancy says a big thank you to all committee chairs

S.H: Family Friends

In the Fall she had a tour of Lexington for the first family friends meeting, got a real town tour guide and took the kids to candycastle for ice cream

in November a few more kids placed; things are going smoothly

on occasion in winter months, families might have a sick child, so they can't take the family friend, Alana Osher has helped with getting those kids lunch if they have to stay at school

They did not do an all district event. coordinators thought it was not needed this year

ABCD—M.C. ( not doing it next year, as her daughter is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade)

wants to have a motivational speaker before the end of the year—still has some budget left for this

potluck a little later this year; they did not have regular monthly meetings—helped by have work done at home, on the phone and through email, she thought this worked out fine, also teachers were very invested in the event this year

ACT: E.L

programs this year: visit from David Coffin, jumprope team, Mass movement

(dance)residency here for a week;  
challenges were everyone was new (teachers, admin, parent coordinators)  
At Hastings the programming has been all school—equity—but the challenge is in the scheduling for that seems to be difficult—  
what do other schools do ? grade level specific at some schools  
i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade might have something different than other grades; (might allow ACT to actually spend all their money ?)  
J.H. will be also coordinate with E.L. next year (08-09)  
As ACT did not do any fundraising this year, the budget was \$5000 from the PTA , \$1900 from LEF, and there is \$2000 left –E.L was hoping to have a Jazz group, but it can't be scheduled unfortunately  
ball park budget if ACT did a grade by grade program= \$1000 per grade,  
(MAY Meeting: what to do about ACT, message needs to be clear that these programs are provided by the money we raise—parents work together, )  
a specific event may help people understand where the money comes from

M.S.: Odyssey of the Mind:

A creative problem solving activity: Tuesday morning meetings for creative fun, this year 10 sessions, about 64 kids involved, short term problems for one or two sessions

Team program: we had 11 coaches for 5 teams, 90% of kids who applied were placed, all teams went to the state competition in March,  
program is entirely self-funded, tues. a.m. program \$3 per kid (if collected)  
Long term teams: per kid charge: \$30, raised \$1800 this year  
request for PTA to fund team registration fees to state and national tournaments  
all expenses are materials, and team fees  
World finals: large expense because it is about \$500 per person (not including travel)-which is paid for by the participants and their families  
varies every year based on attendance and outside fund raising for this purpose  
potential to do another program which is more supported in the state (?)  
smaller vs. larger competitions, more creative inspiration  
budget line item: creative problem solving or some other title other than Odyssey (?)-

Site Council: State law provides for every school to have a council of principal, teachers, community members and parents of the school: purpose is a community based check on how the school is performing; must do a school improvement plan every year  
Hastings council: principal, 4 parents, 3 teacher, 1 community representative  
5-6 meetings so far this year; draft of i.p. for current year; but Dr. Ash kind of rewrote ours with just a bit of input from our council (streamlining year ? perhaps he was trying to get all the elementary schools to have similar/identical plans ?)  
the only data we have to assess performance is MCAS results, some are uncomfortable with using only this data as a measure for the school; not a lot of progress with getting feedback from the community; have done survey: subject for next meeting is current survey—are there openings for next year ?  
2 years terms are staggered for members: this is a good place, to voice opinions, the only institutional vehicle to have input to school policy

Gift Wrap: D.C.

quick summary: we made \$4500, but did not meet goal (which was ?) in addition at gift wrap pick up time, staggered times, 5% picked up when volunteers there (this was an

issue) one person's gift wrap got lost, they were generous to just donate

D.C. will do it next year, has been doing it since 2001

that year the gws made 12000 (which means 24000 worth of gw)

last year there was about 5000, point is to look at this, delivery dates are moved up shorter time from getting orders and delivery time; week of first conferences will be delivery for next year

proposal for next year—no volunteers, your stuff is here---great email system—no communication lost---no paper notices, but bulletin back up and new message board

all ticket vouchers not honored because it is 1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> served

if we want to make more, we need to do something, we do have feedback with valuable comments only 2 or 3 just straight donations

Sally Foster does do other items, i.e. cookie dough , the entertainment book

try to raise awareness with asm, something fun with the principal

You can still order online with Sally Foster, may have impact, all the preschools are now doing this as a fundraiser; we could do the 2 things simultaneously less than 10% of our parent population participates in gift wrap has no expenses

J.H. :Unicef

the little orange boxes at Halloween, down to less than \$1000, maybe other natural disasters like the tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. Darfur was the big push this year; Jane H. will not be doing this next year—small time frame, not a big commitment. Parents write a check, added and sent in directly: there used to be more a townwide coordinator, but she doesn't exist anymore;

Library>book fair:

Volunteers and their time--#s down last few years, first time last year there was no one for one of the kindergarten classes—more classes without volunteers—not sure why trend is drop in the # of volunteers: good solid core, many good people were redistricted BOOK FAIR—great week ! total 15377.98, 3844.50 for the library, we think about 129 books purchased for the teachers, 20 books for the library, 2 yrs, 20,000, last year 18,600, this year 15,377---drop in sales correspond also in our drop in population, we sold more paperbacks this year; 3<sup>rd</sup> year working with Bookends in Winchester—they are really great to work with, parents and kids very happy with selections great share of time; this is the largest percentage of the budget) we don't get this from the town, collections always need to be updated

M.G. (last year of 12 here) 5<sup>th</sup> grade activities with Gayle M.

some traditions that are very strong: Sargent camp, pool party, gift back to school, year book, Halloween party, conference babysitting, used book sale, cotton candy/popcorn at spring fair they are in good shape for the year

yearbook cost still waiting on, (Frances Cooke and Kelly Tzannes and Sharon Lawler are all interested for next year) the more the merrier,

things are very well organized, so transitions are important, especially needs to be staffed before the end as the activities start at the very beginning of the year Thank you for your effort

used book sale was the most valued thing in the school survey, books donated to Honduras conference babysitting should be

Family Math Night; great feedback, and glad to save it ! SK thinks it is a great dad activity

because it is at night

don't want to get people too far ahead, end of kindergarten math night they wanted it again  
we still need people, and there is no overall coordinator

Lowell Devils—almost 80 people there, a great community social community event—very  
easy event to schedule

Directory—Linda S. wants Heidi to do the directory---membership and directory need to be  
done together—we may do an early directory sign up

Staff appreciation lunch: \$300 still needed S.B. did it on her own with outside volunteers K.P.  
also assisted.

we are doing the planning time now with survey to see how can we maybe do a few things

Fiske sends home a letter to get \$\$ up front, radically different

Bowman is into lots of community events;

J.S. asks forms to be submitted, and asks committee people to attend at least 3 meetings  
during the year