

February 16, 2022  
Rowe School PTO Meeting, 6:30-7:30  
Draft Minutes

Officers Present: Rita King, PTO Co-President; Mark Bower, PTO Co-President; Starr Soul-McDonald, PTO vice-president; Kayla Theriault, Community Building Co-Chair; Emily Bishop, Community Building Co-Chair; Steph Walsh, Treasurer  
Other Attendees: Barbara Fletcher, Rowe Principal; Zoe Costa (Director of Learning Works Portland); Jonathan Graffius, Rowe Teacher; Jennifer Rent

## I. **Welcome and Introductions**

Rita called the meeting to order and participants introduced themselves.

## II. **Presentation from Zoe Costa Director of Learning Works**

Zoe provided a description of the Learning Works (LW) after school program 21st century grant funded program with programs in 6 Portland Public Schools, including Rowe. LW also operates programs in Waterboro, South Portland and Biddeford.

The goals of LW are overall **academic improvement** mostly using STEAM curricula. They try to find fun ways to engage kids around the curriculum so it feels fun to participate, e.g. bridge project and avalanche project.

They also provide some **academic enrichment** opportunities including cooking club, kindness club, art club. LW also has partnerships with outside agencies to provide other enrichment. For example 317 Main partnered to provide some programming around for garage band and ukelele. Portland youth dance has also provided some programming

Other area of focus are **health and wellness and parent and family engagement and education**.

Another focus is **sustainability** which includes partnerships, professional development for staff, identifying and accessing other sources of income to supplement the 21st century grant.

One misconception about LW is that it exclusively services students in poverty. The grant dictates operating in schools that are 40% free or reduced lunch. Actually, participation is based on referrals from school based on standardized test scores including MWEA. Students may be from any income level. LW staff works to collaborate with schools to make sure that student's needs are being met.

LW usually operates after school M-Th, 4 days per week. Due to staffing shortages so currently hybrid 2 days per week in person and 2 days with asynchronous home learning.

LW is looking to increase staff and are currently recruiting to hire new staff. Find employment information here:

<https://www.learningworks.me/join-the-team/staff-openings/>. They are hiring all levels of staffing.

Zoe also provided links to a LW newsletter and end of year slide show that highlights some of the work that LW kids and staff engaged in during the past year.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Fqec6ULZBxj15JJHq-fpjGnZfysne8bg/view>

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/14umY-KrVnwsH6QFlgaoNoaO0zj2IKQDwJwksFPoZsOE/mobilepresent?slide=id.g1079b1709ef\\_0\\_24](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/14umY-KrVnwsH6QFlgaoNoaO0zj2IKQDwJwksFPoZsOE/mobilepresent?slide=id.g1079b1709ef_0_24)

Please contact Zoe at [zcosta@learningworks.me](mailto:zcosta@learningworks.me) with thoughts or questions.

### Questions

What is a 21st Century Grant?

21 Century Community Learning Center; federal grant for after school learning programs. Includes boys and girls club

Will there be summer programming in 2022?

30 students at Rowe always working to move kids to meet their learning goals and be able to get new kids in for summer programming and the next year. Kids in learning works are generally are “cuspy” meaning that they are slightly or moderately below proficiency. This group often slips through the cracks as students who are significantly below target often qualify for additional interventions at school.

### III. Updates from Barb

It has been a really busy month. A lot of work with **Black Lives Matter** movement including teaching the principles of that movement. February is also **black history month** and teachers are weaving back history into the curriculum.

There is a new **PBIS bulletin board** that was designed by Ms Stillman’s 4th grade class.

Students celebrated **friendship day**. This was a very inclusive school wide event. Students were provided time to share messages of kindness and friendship. It was a nice different way to connect.

March planning includes planning for the **end of trimester 2** on 3/11/22. There is a lot of assessment and preparing for the final trimester.

Staff is beginning to plan for **conferences** in April. The conferences will most likely be virtual. Barb is working on getting staff input to make sure conferences are working for teachers, students and families.

Budget process has started. Administrators are thinking about staffing and what Rowe will invest in. Administrators are also working with district leadership to develop a budget.

COVID numbers are getting better There were no negative pools this week.

### **Parent Questions**

Survey about experience with remote learning during snow day. How did teachers experience the remote day?

Staff will get data from the survey soon. The remote day was hard for staff. Getting devices organized and chargers ready to go. Challenging logistics-wise. The remote day was a big gear switch that happened quickly. It did work well and there was pretty good attendance. Barb feels like it will be smoother next time based on learning from the first day. Barb also explained that planning a remote day is very different from planning an in person day, therefore, the quality of instruction may be different when the snow days are less predictable.

Why was the first snow day not remote?

The last snow day was predictable and the plan was to only use the remote days After having a certain amount of snow days.

Parents offered feedback about the remote day. Opinions included:

Implementing remote seems to be a lot of work for low return

Some students did not get enough material and were finished very early. Not enough rigor, not like a quality school day.

Parents may like extra work packets to supplement remote school in future.

#### **IV. Treasurer's Report Highlights**

##### **Teacher appreciation**

Collected \$700 for teacher appreciation coffee and pastries  
Approximately \$200 raised after orders were placed and that money remains available for future teacher appreciation needs.

##### **Other/ Misc**

\$24 box tops - \$19 Amazon Smile - \$149 Shaws Bags - \$246 Clynk

##### **Spirit Wear**

\$170 in Website orders in January and February  
Hoping for big sales at Springfest and Stargazing in person events.  
People can order through the Website and orders can be collected at the school Office and Steph can deliver in some circumstances.

##### **Sponsorships**

Soliciting sponsorships for Stargazing and Springfest Events.  
Received \$250 sponsorship from Foundation for Portland Public Schools.

##### **Other - PBL Funds and Spending**

Ms Brandon ordered a lot of things for 4th grade Project Based Learning. PTO assumes it is a bird migration project based on materials ordered. PTO is so excited to be supporting PBL as not many of the funds have been accessed by teachers at this point.

Barb is planning to remind teachers of PBL funds.

PTO will try to make it easy for teachers to access funds. PTO will also be offering a printed flier reminding teachers of PBL funds. PTO could also present to the staff and ask for feedback about how and which funds teachers need. PTO can be flexible when setting the budget as we really want to be meeting the actual needs of teachers.

Barb is looking to update the leveled library where students go book shopping as The current leveled library is over 20 years old. This may be a use of some of those funds.

#### **V. *Stargazing* Event Update from Jonathan Graffius (Rowe Outdoor Art Teacher) and Steph Walsh, PTO treasurer.**

*Stargazing* event will be held at Rowe School on March 4th from 7-8:30 pm. Rain date is scheduled for 3/11/2022. Bus transportation will be offered at 6:30-7 pm. The event is part of a school wide exploration of the book *Stargazing*.

Jonathan and Steph are working on finalizing the amount of telescopes that we have. Jonathan is going to make personal requests for help after the break. Have had a nice response to the most recent request for help. Will ask again after the break. Jonathan has started handing out copies of Stargazing to classrooms.

School needs to set a time for Zoom reading with author Jamie Hogan, on Friday, 3/4/2022 at 2 pm. Barb will help communicate and create a plan with teachers.

Barb is working on the transportation and bus route. Denny's will be the primary pick up spot and pickups down Congress and on Capisic. Bus is reserved and a driver is reserved. The group debated potential bus routes and created a plan to offer pick up locations within walking distance of each neighborhood.

It is hard to anticipate the number of people who will utilize transportation and some concerns about making sure transportation is used by people who actually need it. The group had an idea to maybe offer a walking bus to the event and need to communicate need of students to be supervised by adults going to and from and during the event.

#### **VI. SpringFest**

Date will be Saturday, 5/14/2022 with a rain date of Sunday, 5/15/2022. More information Will be presented at the next PTO meeting.

#### **VII. Restaurant Fundraisers - Mark Bower, PTO Co-President**

\$400 Raised from Portland Pie, this may have been a donation and not based on sales as it was more than we usually bring in from a restaurant fundraiser.

**Chipotle** Fundraiser will be Wednesday, June 8th.

**Elsmere** - Mark asked for feedback about a date. He will look for a date in April that is not during vacation.

#### **VIII. Approve Minutes**

An electronic link to the January 2022 PTO meeting minutes was previously provided to participants. The minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **IX. Rita adjourned the meeting at 7:36 pm.**