

October 13, 2021

Rowe School PTO Meeting, 6:30-7:30

Approved 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; Bianca MacDonald, Secretary

Other Attendees: Barbara Fletcher, Rowe Principal; Bianca Winship; Jean Rank; Susan Mercier; Kerrie Dowdy; Sydney Levesque; Kerrie LeClaire; Kimberly Anderson; Michelle Waring; Amy Hayes; Jennifer Rent; Kimberly Anderson; Alicia Peters

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Rita called the meeting to order and most participants introduced themselves.

### **II. Approve Minutes**

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

### **III. PTO Presidents' Welcome and Message**

Rita offered a president's message to the group and outlined the PTO plan to focus on community building and bringing people together. The PTO is looking to expand the circle of PTO members chairing and attending PTO events and reinvigorate energy around PTO activity. The PTO is looking to increase communication with teachers through monthly updates.

### **IV. School Updates from Barbara Fletcher, Rowe Principal**

Barb shared that the focus at school has been on community building and making connections. She praised the teacher's work towards making this goal a success.

- The start to the school year has been challenging and a lot of last minute adjustments have been made to ensure the safety of staff and students. Focus on modeling and teaching masking expectations, distancing requirements and sanitizing. Also students are spending a lot of time outside. With the outside learning comes a lot of transitions for students. Staff are working to support students to make these transitions as smooth as possible.
- Barb reports that more than 400+ out of 470 students are currently participating in pooled testing. Students are adjusting well to the pooled testing protocols. Pre K students are currently not participating in the pooled testing. Students are tested on Monday and results are returned on Wednesday morning.
- Students are setting into social emotional learning routines. The school will welcome Portland Ovation for a "Mile Tile" celebration.
- Students have started working in small groups to address specific academic needs and for targeted learning interventions.
- Students are working to build stamina for the full day of learning and teachers are noticing a decrease in energy after 2 pm.

- Picture day was a success!!
- Recess runners is happening at recess and students have run 600 miles so far!
- Staff is working on device distribution and the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders will be taking the MWEA assessments this month.
- Staff are focusing on building trust with kids and families and families are encouraged to reach out to the school with any needs or questions.

### **Parent Questions**

- Will Rowe be welcoming refugees from Afghanistan? And are there ways that the community/ PTO can be helpful to make sure that families feel welcome and have the things that they need?

Barb shared that she is unsure of how many new families will be joining Rowe as relocation is largely based on housing availability. She will keep community members informed of needs as they emerge.

- A parent commented that the outdoor art and garden classes are great. Will they continue in future years?

Barb shared that these are 1 year positions funded by the COVID relief fund. It is unknown if they will continue beyond this year.

### **Teacher Updates**

**Kerrie Dowdy** shared that the children seem very happy to be together and outdoor Time has been especially great.

She requests that parents send a change of mask with their children as masks frequently get wet or soiled.

**Sydney Levesque** shared that the first 6 weeks of Kindergarten is focused on learning to be in school. She reports that students are learning routines and expectations and appear very happy to be at school.

### **V. Treasurer's Report and Budget Vote**

Steph provided an update on the PTO budget. Participants were informed that the current year's budget is based on money raised the previous year and that the money that we raise this year will fund activities and initiatives for the 2022-2023 school year.

Steph reports that the budget is off to a good start.

We have not had a major fundraiser this year.

Income to date is:

\$309 - Clynk

\$440 - Spirit Wear

The major PTO has investments this month have been:

\$4000 - to provide each teacher with \$100 for classroom supplies

\$1260 - Ruth's Reusable Resources

\$902 - to purchase 112 yoga mats so each student has a mat for outdoor learning

\$1076 - Go 2 Science online subscription for 2nd grade Project Based Learning (PBL)

\$57 - Purchased copies of Yuzef Azeen Is Not a Hero for 5th grade classrooms (PBL)

\$150 - fitness finders for Mr Custeau's recess runners program

## **VI. Community Building Update**

Emily and Kayla presented an update on PTO community building efforts.

### **A. Scavenger Hunt**

PTO hosted a Scavenger Hunt event on October 2nd at the school 50-60 students participated despite rainy weather. Free snacks, water and prizes were given out. Thanks to Sandy, Sally and Jenn for help with Spirit wear sales; \$395 was raised.

### **B. Book Swap and Winter Gear Donation Drive**

The PTO will be hosting this event on November 20th. We will be looking for donations of board games, puzzles and books. We will also be collecting new and gently used outdoor gear.

PTO will provide free snacks and cocoa. We will be looking for donations of these items as well. If you are interested in volunteering for this event please contact Kayla and Emily at [communitybuilding@rowepto.org](mailto:communitybuilding@rowepto.org)

### **C. Winterfest**

This event will be outdoors this year. Kids love this event and it takes an enormous amount of volunteers to pull it off. Will likely be held sometime in January. Please contact [communitybuilding@rowepto.org](mailto:communitybuilding@rowepto.org) if you would like to help out.

## **VII. Fundraising Update**

Kerrie LeClair has stepped down as fundraising chair. The PTO will continue the year without a fundraising chair and responsibilities will be carried out by other PTO officers.

### **A. Direct Appeal**

PTO is still looking to raise a substantial amount of money through a direct appeal. We are looking for ideas about the best way to ask for donations.

### **B. Spirit Wear**

Mark is handling Spirit Wear. We are looking to replenish stock of spirit wear items as this is a good fundraiser. The PTO is currently seeking a new vendor.

### **C. Walk-a-Thon**

October 29. This is a big fundraiser for the PTO and the kids love it! Please spread the word, we are hoping to raise  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the budget through this event. We are hoping to keep fundraising to 2 major events this year.

### **D. Donation Drive**

October 15th during drop off at school. This is to help meet specific community needs. Anyone can donate please extend event information to other neighbors. Looking for Grocery store gift cards - even \$5-\$10 is helpful. New and gently used clothing items are appreciated. We can accept hand knitted items this year as well.

### **E. Restaurant Fundraisers**

We will be organizing some restaurant fundraisers. Please reach out to [president@roweschoolpto.org](mailto:president@roweschoolpto.org) if you have ideas of good restaurants or would like to help organize.

### **VI. Wrap up and Adjournment**

Rita thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm.