

SARAH ADAMS PTO MEETING

October 19, 2009

Carol Cramer called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance. She then introduced Jean Malek as the guest speaker.

JOANIE'S CLOSET:

Jean Malek, a parent at May Whitney and MSN, gave an overview of the Joanie's Closet program. Joanie's Closet was started in 2005 in honor of Joanie Bednarz, May Whitney's school nurse. It provides assistance to needy families (much like Sarah Adams' Family Connections). The Joanie's Closet committee steps into action when the school nurse or social worker sees a child or family in need (i.e., clothing, food, gas, etc.).

After the recent redistricting, May Whitney transitioned approximately 40% of their population to Spencer Loomis, which had no such program in place. Concerned that the families who receive assistance through Joanie's Closet would still need help throughout their school career, Jean recently met with the PTO presidents to have Joanie's Closet become a district-wide program. Families in need would then have help available to them that they would not have otherwise had once their children leave the elementary school. Each school would have a contact person to handle the local needs of that school, with Jean being the main contact person for the program.

Joanie's Closet is funded entirely through generous donations and grants. At this present time, the committee has not had to fundraise, nor have any PTO funds gone to supplement the program. Last year, Joanie's Closet was able to secure a grant through the Hawthorn Woods Women's Club (HWWC) for school supplies for needy children. If approved as a district-wide program, any and all fundraising would be done separately from the PTO.

Jean then answered questions about the program:

- *What do you envision as the commitment for the contact person at the school level?*
 - Confidentiality would remain intact. The school individual would not know the name of the family for which they are requesting assistance. The staff (school nurse, social worker, etc) would alert the person to a need. The contact person would then send the email to Joanie's Closet and state what the need is. The committee would then go and purchase whatever needed.
- *Is there a webpage?*
 - No, but that could be a possibility in the future.
- *Will there be separate fundraising from the PTO?*
 - As of this point, Joanie's Closet has not needed to do any fundraising, but if the program goes district-wide, that might become necessary. If it does, fundraising would be completely separate and not interfere with any PTO fundraising at any of the schools. As a priority, donations and grants would be sought out first before any fundraising would be considered.
 - Details are not yet worked out about whether or not the school-level contact would facilitate any necessary fundraising, but if needed, any involvement would be minimal.

- *With regard to offering school supplies, not every student who “qualifies” would need or want them. If the program were to go district-wide, would the amount of help be scaled down per school?*
 - The committee would first look at the district-wide number of children who qualify for free and/or reduced lunch, and make any decisions from there.
- *How would the funds be distributed district-wide?*
 - The funds would be broken down by the number of children who qualify for free and/or reduced lunch per school.
 - There will not be a set dollar amount per school, as the different schools have very different needs.
- *What about families who don’t qualify for free/reduced lunch, yet still need help?*
 - Unfortunately, there is no perfect answer. They will try to identify families in crisis.
- *If made a district program, will it take anything away from programs already set in place at the school level?*
 - No. This program is only to give each school a basic level of support (i.e., providing snacks for the school nurse’s office). If a school already has a needs-based program in place, it will not supersede that program.
- *What about St. Francis, Quentin Road, St. Matthew’s?*
 - There is nothing official at this time, but there are some networking opportunities (i.e., Jubilee Garden) available.
- *Are you a 503c?*
 - Yes. If the program goes district-wide, then they would make sure to be separate from the May Whitney PTO.

If there any questions, please contact Jean Malek. Carol thanked Jean for coming and suggested further discussion. Concerned was expressed about how the funds would be dispersed, especially since the Family Connections budget has always been stable. It was explained that while the program will be on a broader scope, it will not take away from anything Family Connections currently does. Kim Gross would be the contact person for Joanie’s Closet, along with Diane Slonski and Stacy Krebill.

The decision to participate should be based on how the program is currently explained, not based on future concerns of where the program might be headed. Kelley Belew motioned to vote on the matter, Jean Medina seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed to participate in a district-wide Joanie’s Closet program.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

PTO By-Laws

Carol explained the PTO by-laws and encouraged everyone in attendance to familiarize themselves with them. They are always a “work in progress”, and will change periodically. The current by-laws were voted on in June, and a current copy can also be found on the school website. Carol motioned to approve the by-laws; Kathy Keenan seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed to approve the PTO by-laws.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Heidi Davis provided copies of the September PTO minutes. After review, Shelley Cooper made a motion to approve the minutes and was seconded by Bobbie Carr. All were in favor; the motion passed to approve the September PTO minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The PTO is approving all of the fall grants. There is \$2,000 for the fall and \$2,000 for the spring. The PTO is using funds for a new binding system in the office, as well as extra cameras in the library, and a small laminator for smaller projects. Bobbie then motioned to approve the grants; the motion was seconded by Shelley Cooper. All were in favor; the motion passed to approve the fall grants.

There is also a lot of carry-over from last year's committees. The PTO will use those funds for two projectors for the classrooms and two "smart boards". The goal is to have a projector in each classroom. The total to be spent is \$5,400. Bobbie motioned to approve the expenditure, and was seconded by Kelley Belew. All were in favor; the motion passed.

TEACHER'S REPORT:

All of the staff received an Entertainment Book as a gift from the PTO. Laurie Doheny expressed their gratitude for all that the PTO does for them.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:

ISAT/MAP Tests

Mrs. Mall reported on the recent ISAT and MAP scores. ISAT tests are given to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders each year. This is how the state gauges progress. The MAP tests are a local test given to 2nd through 5th graders to see how the students are progressing. As a whole, they look at all of the scores, and the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the average. Sarah Adams scores generally increase overall. Mrs. Mall showed graphs of the Sarah Adams scores from 2006-2009, as well as a graph of one class over the same amount of time. The graphs showed a steady increase in scores.

A question was asked about student absences during the ISAT tests. If a student is sick and cannot make up that test, then there is a code the school uses when the score is factored in.

The next MAP tests will be January 11-25, 2010

The next ISAT tests will be March 1-12, 2010

The spring MAP tests will be May 3-14, 2010

Principal Forum

The next forum will be on Friday, October 23rd at 8:45 a.m. in room 25.

Paper

District 95 is going paperless as of January 1, 2010. There will be no more newsletters or Friday notes from teachers sent home via backpacks, unless a family does not provide an email address. Email addresses are obtained from registration forms. If you need to change your email address, please contact the office. All information will be available via the school and district website. A question was asked about having an email reminder to check the website. The answer is yes, that can be done. Attachments can also be sent in pdf format.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Musical

Mia Hirschel reported on the planning stages of a spring musical. This would be in lieu of the Strongest Link variety show. Auditions will be held for 3rd through 5th graders. When a motion was made to approve the planning of the musical, there was opposition. There was discussion on both sides regarding the merits of the musical and the variety show. It was agreed that the two cannot take place within a few weeks of each other, so other options are being explored. One option may be to have Strongest Link host the variety show in January, or going forward, have the variety show in the fall, and a musical in the spring. Carol Cramer suggested that Strongest Link and Mia discuss their options and report back at the November meeting. Kim Gross made a motion for there to be both the variety show and the musical. The motion was seconded by Bobbie Carr and agreed by all in attendance.

Halloween Parties

Allie Miller reported that all of the head room parents have been emailed about the upcoming Halloween parties. Each head room parent is to provide a list of attending parents, and there will be a desk set up to check in and receive a special sticker. As previously stated in the newsletter, all cars need to be out of the back lot no later than 2:40 so that the busses can get in to pick up students.

Gift Wrap

Jen Grinnip thanked all who participated in the gift wrap fundraiser. The items should be in the week before Thanksgiving.

Restaurant Family Fun Nights

Shelley Cooper reported on behalf of Tammi Soloway that the next Family Fun Night will be Tuesday, November 17th at Bellaluke's in Lake Zurich.

Book Fair

There was approximately \$600 in Scholastic Rewards left over from last year, which expires in January. Every teacher received a \$50 gift certificate to spend at the Book Fair this year. The book fair will run from October 21st through the 23rd, with the ice cream social being on Friday night. The teachers will have a breakfast provided for them with a preview on October 21st.

Character Counts

Kim Gross gave a brief history of the Character Counts t-shirts. New this year, the first school day of each month is a Character Counts assembly. Kim proposed a one-time upsize for 3rd through 5th graders of their t-shirts. This would cost approximately \$800. Then, after this year, every 3rd grader would receive an upsize, as well as a new t-shirt for each incoming kindergartener, at a cost of approximately \$300-\$400. Kelley Belew motioned to approve the cost of the t-shirts. Jean Medina seconded the motion, and it was approved by all.

Kim will also be selling tie-dye t-shirts with the Character Counts colors in the near future. Look for more information to follow.

Strongest Link

Kathy Keenan reported that the first Strongest Link meeting went well, with 50 students joining the club.

Student Assistance Program

The SAP needs reading parent volunteers on the following days:

Tues, Thurs: 11:00-11:45 2nd grade

Thurs: 9:45-10:45 1st grade

This is a weekly commitment. If interested, please contact Kelley Belew.

Box Tops/Labels

Proceeds from the Box Tops were used to purchase playground balls for recess. Connie will be submitting the Box Tops and Campbell labels at the end of October. Do not save up a big bag, please send them in as you get them, as there are expiration dates on them!

Silent Auction

Anna Strobel reported that the Silent Auction will be Saturday, February 27, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at the Concord. The price will be approximately the same as last year. A theme is still up for consideration. She is working with print shops to donate the programs. Anna is looking for many volunteers to help make the Silent Auction a success. She can be reached at bandr669@yahoo.com.

Market Day

The November sale will have a pie fundraiser. Consider ordering an extra pie or two and help out the school!

Cultural Arts

On November 4th, Big Run Wolf Ranch will hold an assembly. A survey form will go out to the staff after the assembly for feedback. Mia is trying to put together a block of tickets for the Marriott Lincolnshire to see *A Christmas Carol* in December. She is also putting together a museum overnight with the Rockford Science museum. This would possibly be a father/kid event. A "stay safe" assembly will be coming soon, as well as a bike rodeo in the spring.

The next PTO meeting will be November 16th at 6:30 p.m. in the library. Carol thanked everyone for attending and dismissed the meeting.