

Burr School PTO Minutes September 29, 2004

Introductions:

Lisa Mirable, PTO president, introduced the 2004-05 PTO Board members: Susan Foster, Susan Cassidy, Deanna Reid, Holli Roth, Ellen Regan, Roberta Whalen, and Lucy Norvell.

Election/Office Update

Lisa introduced Tracy Regan, nominee for Secretary, and asked for a motion to elect. It was seconded and Tracy was voted in as secretary.

Minutes

Due to the fact that there were 3 sets of minutes awaiting approval, Lisa proposed a vote for approval contingent upon any subsequent thoughts/changes upon reading these minutes. There was a motion to accept the minutes, it was seconded and voted in.

Cindy Bencal

Lisa introduced Cindy Bencal.

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Burr "profile"
 - 314 students K-5
 - 16 classrooms
 - 1 job share (gr 5)
 - 3 classes at each level (K-3)
 - 2 classes at each level (4,5)
 - 2 kindergarten classes next year
 - 17-23 students per classroom
 - 16 neighborhood inclusion
 - 21 new students to Burr this year
 - 35 students in the English Language Learner program
 - 17 METCO students
 - 75 students speak a language other than English at home
 - 19 other languages are spoken at Burr (including other dialects)
 - Title I School
 - No new teachers this year; there are several upcoming maternity leaves
 - _ time psychologist
 - 11 new aides
- 3) Goals/Plans for the year
 - 1) Achievement for all students
 - a) Balanced Literacy – goals set towards student needs, student assessments determine class plan
 - b) Writing Workshops
 - c) Math

- 2) Respect for Human Differences
 - a) small structured conversations among parents, school community
 - b) International Festival – January?
 - i. Need coordinators
 - c) Acknowledge diversity – be culturally responsive
 - d) Open Circle – social competency program
 - e) Improve lunch situation
- 3) Curriculum/Technology Integration
 - a) Enough technology for teachers
 - b) Technological benchmarks for consistency
- 4) Maintain a safe and vibrant school environment
 - a) Time for teacher collaboration
 - b) Crisis/Evacuation plan
 - c) Sign in system
 - d) Traffic (Blue Zone) – there was a suggestion for a “Coffee” to discuss the issues surrounding the Blue Zone – better parent education.

Also:

Food Allergy Plan

New Report Cards

Treasurer – Ellen Regan

Ellen outlined the 2004-05 PTO budget, explaining each line item in detail. Ellen discussed several new line items as well:

- 1) Fifth grade
- 2) Respect for Human Differences

Terri Romanelli mentioned that a friend would like to donate several computers to Burr families. The computers need Windows and she asked if the PTO could spend money for this from the Technology line item.

Lynette Lawton and Suzanne Wisniowski discussed the need for more technology and shared the enthusiasm of the teachers to learn how to use this new technology in the classroom.

Parents asked questions about the 4th grade Social Studies curriculum. Cindy explained that there is a pilot program in place at (5 or 10?) of the 15 elementary schools in Newton. Although the program was supposed to be implemented in all schools, the system apparently ran out of money and was unable to do so. It was suggested that a Coffee be scheduled to discuss concerns regarding this issue.

Options for the March fundraiser were discussed. Past events as well as new possibilities were described by Eileen Ingham and Maureen Precopio

Those present approved the 2004-2005 budget.

Committee Coordinators

Deanna Reid and Lisa Mirable introduced the Committee Coordinators who spoke briefly about their committees and their volunteer needs.

Susan Foster – Education Support

Creative Arts and Sciences
Garden Classroom
Specialist Coordinator
Understanding Human Differences

Lucy Norvell – Community Building

Back to School Picnic
Halloween Family Fun Night
Good Neighbor Social Action

Roberta Whalen – Fund Raising

Need a coordinator for SCRIP
Book Fair
Dues
Bake Sale for Election

Susan Cassidy – Communication

Burr Bulletin/website
Bulletin Board – Burr Foyer

The meeting was adjourned.