

PTA General Membership Meeting, October 2, 2014

In Attendance: Carrie Wheeler, Kathryn Ficarra, Cheryl Parks, Katie Price, Dorian Manza, Amy Tucci Webert, Jen Wenrick, Lisa Blau, Lisa Johnson, Shannon Sommer, Connie Olson, Lindsay Kendall, Cynthia Dold, Christina Van Middlesworth, Kara Mallon, Julia Wester, Elaine Cooper, Carrie Snow, Julie Carr, Jo Ficarra, Janie Hoskinson, Kevin Craig, Erica Jamir, Anson Fatland, Kimberly Ely, Vanessa Gregory, Fengie Ma, Lynn McBride, Jim Bruce, Sarah Morgan, Amy Efrymson, Xiaoting Tang, Diane Garland, Jessamy Falk

Welcome and Introductions

- The 2014-2015 Lawton PTA Board members were introduced and contact info was made available:
 - Carrie Wheeler, Co-President: presidents@lawtonelementary.org
 - Kathryn Ficarra, Co-President: presidents@lawtonelementary.org
 - Lisa Blau, Co-Vice President: vicepresidents@lawtonelementary.org
 - Jen Wenrick, Co-Vice President: vicepresidents@lawtonelementary.org
 - Amy Tucci-Webert, Communications Co-Chair Newsletter : newsletter@lawtonelementary.org
 - Cheryl Parks, Communications Co-Chair Website: website@lawtonelementary.org
 - Katie Price, Treasurer: treasurer@lawtonelementary.org
 - Lisa Johnson, Cashier: cashier@lawtonelementary.org
 - Shannon Sommer, Recording Secretary: secretary@lawtonelementary.org

- Mr. Manza introduced himself
 - Grew up in Yakima Valley and graduated from Sunnyside High School
 - Both parents were educators
 - Graduated from WSU
 - Career path: Alderwood (history, social studies, fitness/health) and Whitman (dean of students)
 - Favorite things to do are spend time with family, including daughter Penelope, and travel!
 - Goal for the year: to lead and learn side by side with Lawton staff and community.
 - Hopes to become permanent building Principal and make Lawton his new home. He's excited to continue the outstanding work we have been doing here in regard to academic excellence.

Discussion Topics

- There was a discussion of the kindergarten crowding issue and the decision to use part of Mrs. Dowd's (nationally certified teacher) position to fund walk to math and walk to reading. Groups are based on children's abilities. For example, children that are ready to read are in Mrs. Dowd's reading group. Each kindergarten teacher leads a group as well.

- There was a discussion about STEAM - A is for art, taking STEM and adding art for creativity that is necessary in science, technology, and math. Cardboard challenge is coming up at the end of the month.

Why be a part of the PTA/Volunteer Opportunities:

- There are many opportunities to be involved in the PTA. For example: Help organize the STEAM Challenges, be a part of the Yearbook Team (mentorship available from the previous Yearbook chair), Organize family events such as the Bingo Night and the Kindergarten Cookie Night, help coordinate field day or the move-a-thon or join the Arts Enrichment Team.

Understanding Proposition 1 with guest, Michael DeBell, Retired Two term Seattle School Board Director, Former PTSA President

- Vote is historic opportunity for Seattle to create quality preschool slots in the city; there are two options, 1A and 1B (see below); Michael DeBell spoke primarily about 1B.
- Proposition 1A (Initiative 107)
 - Would establish \$15 minimum wage for childcare workers (phased in over three years for employers with under 250 employees);
 - Seeks to reduce childcare costs to 10% or less of family income;
 - Prohibits violent felons from providing professional childcare;
 - Requires enhanced training and certification through a training institute;
 - Creates a workforce board and establishes a fund to help providers meet standards; and
 - Hires an organization to facilitate communication between the City and childcare workers.
- Proposition 1B - As an alternative, the Seattle City Council and Mayor and proposed Proposition 1B (Ordinance 124509),
 - Would fund the four-year initial phase of of a City early learning program with the goal of developing a widely-available, affordable, licensed, and voluntary preschool option;
 - Requires support, training, and certification for teachers;
 - Uses research based strategies, includes evaluation of results, and provides tuition support; and
 - Authorizes property taxes above RCW 84.55 limits, allowing additional 2015 collection of up to \$14,566,630 (approximately 11 cents per \$1,000 assessed value), totaling \$58,266,518 over four years.
- Notes from Q & A with Michael DeBell:
 - There are racial and economic discrepancies in Kindergarten preparedness; quality preschools get kids on the same page by Kindergarten;
 - SPS would be under no obligation to supply classrooms (but if there is space in could be used);
 - Would be 400 seats in the 1st year and 2000 seats by the 4th year; would need to create 5000 seats for it to be universal;

- This is a prop tax levy; would be city run (similar to how the Families in Education levy is now)
- Currently SPS has preschool at some schools and helps administer the Head Start program; this levy would be a major expansion of that and will follow SPS curriculum; this would reach the group that makes too much money to afford Head Start but not enough to afford high quality preschools;
- Benefits: Kindergarten will be able to move faster;
- Would require 1 certified teacher and 2 aids for 22 students;
- Cannot vote for both 1A and 1B or ballot will be ignored