

**Lawton Elementary PTA
Board Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2012, 3:15 PM
Lawton PTA Room**

In Attendance: Lisa Blau, Diana Deen, Kimberlee Ely, Kelly Esterberg, Anson Fatland, Neil Gerrans, Kathy Johnson, Kimball Mullins, Connie Olson, Cheryl Parks, Sarah Terry

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the February 27 Board meeting. Motion passed (7 votes in favor, 1 abstention). A separate motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the April 26 general meeting. Motion passed (8 votes in favor).

Welcome and Introductions: We welcomed incoming Board members Anson Fatland (Co-President) and Kelly Esterberg (Cashier).

Financial Report:

Lisa distributed an updated financial report (as of May 3; see attached). We are doing very well for the year overall.

Before- and After-School Enrichment: Instructors have been paid and scholarship funds have been distributed.

Make-a-Difference Funds: There are still \$1,501 left in the line item from the 2007 Make-a-Difference campaign (for the Lawton Commons rehabilitation). There was quite a bit left over after the initial phase of this project was completed. Some was spent on replacing the Commons iPod; some was spent on paint for the library. Neil asked about the possibility of spending this money. The school will develop a proposal for the use of these funds for the June 1 Board meeting.

Islandwood: The parent who is chairing Islandwood fundraising for next year has expressed concern that the 2012-2013 allocation for scholarships may not be adequate, given a larger class and greater potential need. There is \$781 left in the Islandwood line item from this year. While this money will not roll over into next year's Islandwood line item (it will roll

over into the general budget), we can add money to the scholarship line item if and when the need arises.

Credit Card? A question arose about whether it was possible to have a PTA credit card or debit card. Diana and Sarah thought that this was specifically prohibited by the WSPTA.¹

2012-2013 Budget: The 2012-2013 budget was officially approved at the April 26 General Meeting. Diana and Sarah would like to add some documentation to the budget before the end of the year, so that incoming officers will have more information about the purpose of (and process behind) specific budget items.

Other Matters:

Golden Acorn Award: We discussed possible recipients of this year's Golden Acorn Award. As is past years, we will probably forgo the official PTA pin in favor of a different gift. We will also engrave winners' names on the school plaque. Four potential candidates stood out as potential recipients. Kimball and Sarah will work on blind bios of these people and distribute to the Board for a final determination. These awards should be presented at the Volunteer Tea (June 13) and/or 5th Grade Graduation (June 14).

DebateAble After-School Club: A group of parents have decided to revive the SSIA debate program for 4th and 5th graders in the QA/Magnolia cluster schools for 2012-2013 (see information attached). They are hoping to receive a firm commitment from participating schools by May 31. Coaches will be hired by DebateAble, and the organization will have their own insurance and handle their own payments and registrations. They need schools to provide classroom space and a liaison to the program. Sarah will refer DebateAble to Neil, so that the school can advise them on permits, etc.

¹ **NOTE:** The WSPTA bylaws as amended state that "Article 6 Council, Section 7 Duties of Officers, (a) General, (3): WSPTA requires two (2) signatures on every check. Use of a PTA debit card, credit card, ATM card and online banking to disburse PTA funds is not permitted."

School Update:

Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) Testing: 3rd and 4th grade testing is complete. The 5th graders still need to complete the reading portion. Scores will be sent to parents in the fall; aggregate scores will appear on the school report card.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Testing: MAP testing will occur at the end of the month for all grades.

Question: What is the difference between these tests?

Answer: MSP is State-mandated; MAP is a district contract, and is intended to provide immediate feedback to teachers to inform instruction.

2012-2013 Teaching Assignments: We are going to have 18 teachers/classrooms next year. Our current projected enrollment is 432 students. This does not include the waitlist (we have a small wait list because some grade levels are full).

- **5th Grade:** Ms. Misner, Mr. Hubbard, Ms. Ulmer
- **4th Grade:** Mr. Shernoff, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Terry
- **3rd Grade:** Ms. Mitchell, Ms. Rybock, Ms. Wong
- **2nd Grade:** Ms. Dowd, Mr. Reddy, Ms. Hensley
- **1st Grade:** Mr. Connor, Mr. Matzner, Ms. Palewicz
- **Kindergarten:** Ms. Eppley, Ms. McDonagh, Ms. Rudisill
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Ms. Anderson has announced that she will retire at the end of this year. We will continue to use a cluster-grouping model to deliver the Spectrum program. The teaching assignments for Spectrum have not yet been determined.

Building Leadership Team (BLT) Changes: The staff reviewed the BLT structure, per the Seattle Education Association (SEA) contract. They voted to change the BLT's make-up so that there are six staff members (five SEA members and the principal), and three parents (two are voting members, and one is a non-voting PTA designee).

Question: Can PTA send more than one person, since the position is non-voting, and meetings are open.

Answer: Yes, though not with the same level of participation. Also, some meetings may not be open if sensitive matters are discussed.

Question: Why is the PTA designee non-voting?

Answer: We can revisit this.

Question: Who will the other parents be? Will they represent particular grade bands or programs as in the past?

Answer: No. The goal will be to have diverse perspectives, but there will not be a specific requirement vis-à-vis grades or programs.

April/May/June Events

Staff Appreciation: Staff appreciation week was great. The volunteer chairs did a great job, and their efforts were very much appreciated.

Upcoming Events:

- **May 25:** Young Authors Celebration
- **June 13:** Volunteer Appreciation Tea
- **June 14:** 5th Grade Promotion
- **June 15:** Field Day
- **June 22:** Last Day of School

2012-2013 Planning

June Board Meeting: We will have a working meeting in June (currently scheduled for June 1).

PTA Board Retreat/Potluck: We can plan this at the net meeting or over e-mail.

Proposed Committee Structure: Since there are a couple of significant changes in PTA operations next year, specifically the direct drive and Taking Care of Business (TCB) day, Diana

has designed a new committee structure for the PTA, with the goal of creating a more cohesive and coordinated approach. Current chair positions have been aggregated into five committees organized around specific strategic priorities. These are:

1. Direct Drive Campaign Committee
2. Membership, Volunteer, and Advocacy Campaign Committee
3. Community Building and Events Committee
4. Arts and Enrichment Committee
5. Fundraising and Celebration Committee

Each committee should have two co-chairs and other members; each should be supported by several key Board members. This will help to improve communication between the Board and the various chairs, and hopefully will get more people actively engaged in PTA. For more information, see explanatory document, attached.

Comments and Questions:

- What about other items not in one of the categories (e.g. reader board, Special Ed PTA representative, Secret Garden)? This formulation is not comprehensive. We can figure out where things fit later.
 - This creates an organizational hierarchy, but we still need people to take on the smaller jobs. Hopefully we can work this into this new structure.
 - It seems like this leaves open the possibility that all the work will get heaped on one person (i.e. the chair).
 - Some of these committees may have analogs in the school (specifically Arts and Enrichment and Community Events). We should have joint committees to avoid duplication of effort.
 - What if things fall through the cracks? Ultimately VPs will still be following up on things.
 - What if we cannot find chairs?
 - We should revise "Share Your Passion" form to incorporate broader categories/stock these committees.
- **VOTE:** A motion was made and seconded to adopt the direction implicit in the new committee structure, with specific details to be worked out. Motion passed (8 votes in favor).

Direct Drive: We need to begin a communications campaign about this now. Diana recommended scheduling a Board retreat in June rather than August so that we can be up and running at the beginning of the year.

Taking Care of Business (TCB) Day: The idea behind this day is that we distribute first day packets, and have people fill out forms, meet their teacher, etc. on a day before school starts. It is also a good way to kick off a PTA membership campaign and direct drive, and to recruit school and PTA volunteers, especially room parents. It also might help us to collect contact/directory information sooner and expedite beginning-of-year communication.

- **Question:** How do we get people to come?
- **Answer:** We had initially hoped to withhold class lists, but the letter announcing they will be posted has already gone out. To be continued...

Meeting Adjourned 5:25 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Sarah Terry
May 6, 2012

DebateAble
An After School Debate Club Program for 4th and 5th Grade Students

2012-2013 School Year

About the Program:

DebateAble is an after-school Debate Program for 4th and 5th grade students attending the Queen Anne and Magnolia public elementary schools. DebateAble operates as a debate club at each of the schools, wherein children will be given the opportunity to learn critical thinking skills, analysis and public speaking in a fun and positive environment. Using teamwork, research materials, games and practice debates, students will be taught to formulate, support and present arguments, as well as listen, understand, and respond to the arguments of others. Every twelve week session will end with a Saturday, cross-school Debate Tournament where students from each school will be divided into teams of two and given the opportunity to showcase their skills in a fun, low-key debate competition. Sample debate competition topics might include: Students should have cell phones in class; Students should be required to wear school uniforms in public schools; Smoking should be illegal; Television is bad for children's brain development.

Our Coaches: DebateAble coaches are adults who have the experience and passion to work with kids within this age group. Our coaches are fully trained in DebateAble curricula. All DebateAble coaches have completed a criminal background check.

Class Schedule: DebateAble consists of two, twelve-week sessions during the school year. Students may sign up for one or both sessions. Debate club meets once a week after school in coordination with the regular school day schedule. No classes are held on regular school closures (holidays, snow days, early dismissal days, etc). Classes follows the Seattle Public Schools school calendar.

Class size: Our focus is on active learning, so class sizes are limited to 14 students. A minimum of 8 students is required to run the program at each school, with exceptions under limited circumstances.

Debate Tournament: An interschool debate tournament will be held at the end of each session on a Saturday, during which students' family and friends are invited to watch teams of two debate for two rounds against teams from other elementary schools in the QA/Magnolia cluster. The focus of the scored tournament will be for the kids to have fun and to be given an opportunity to demonstrate the skills that they've learned, with adult judges ranging from attorneys to teachers and other neighborhood leaders. Certificates will be awarded to all students who participate and the highest scoring students will receive medals.

Tuition: \$200 per session

Materials: In an effort to be conscious of the environment, reference and research materials, announcements and other communications will be provided to students and families via email. Families who do not have access to email or to a printer should inform your students' coach within a week of the first meeting in order to receive hard copies please let your coach know at the first meeting.

Snacks will be provided each week for the team. Families should inform DebateAble of any food allergies at the time of registration.

School Requirements

To successfully run the Debate Club program, we ask that schools:

- Provide a coordinator to liaison between school and DebateAble.
- Provide dedicated classroom space for one hour after school, one day each week.
- Notify DebateAble of any space rental or insurance requirements well in advance of the session.
- Distribute information and sign-up materials via email, kid mail, school newsletters, etc.
- Organize "late pick up" staffing or volunteers. DebateAble coaches are not responsible for students who are not picked up more than 5 minutes after class dismissal.
- Host the cross-school Debate Tournament. The tournament rotates among the schools in the QA/Magnolia cluster each session, so schools should plan to host approximately once every other year. Tournaments are held on Saturday mornings from 8:00am-1:00pm and require a large room for registration and assembly (generally the lunchroom) and 10-15 classrooms for the competition.

Proposed 2012/2013 Committee Structure

There are many reasons to consider changing the committee structure of the Lawton Elementary PTA. First, the shift to a Direct Drive necessitates more active engagement of multiple parents and teachers with a variety of gifts and talents toward the end of 2011/2012 and throughout the summer. Second, the dedication of a new school principal and a new vision and strategy for Lawton affords an opportunity to aggregate similar activities under common chairs to support that strategy. Third, as part of our 2012 communications, we want to build a common vision across all committees to bring forward the best PTA activities and create more transparency and understanding of what the PTA does. This contributes to our goals and objectives to engage every family as we make every child's potential a reality, as seen in below!

Washington State PTA Vision & Mission

Vision

Making every child's potential a reality

Mission

- **PTA is** a powerful voice for all children.
- **PTA is** a relevant resource for families and communities.
- **PTA is** a strong advocate for the well-being and education of every child.

The PTA accomplishes this mission by:

- Speaking on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- Supporting parents* in developing skills to raise, protect and advocate for their children;
- Encouraging parent*, teacher, student and community involvement;
- Promoting opportunities for positive outcomes for children; and
- Being a financially stable, well-managed organization that promotes diversity, provides quality service, models best practices and values its members and employees.

Proposed 2012/2013 PTA Committees

#1 – Direct Drive Campaign Committee

- **Chairs:** Connie Olson, TBD
- **Committee Members:** TBD
- **Key Participants:** Vice President, Fundraising; Communications Chair; Co-President; Treasurer
- **Objective:** To strategize, build and manage the Direct Drive Campaign for the 2012/2013 School Year for Lawton Elementary PTA.
- **Critical Success Factors and Activities**
 - Proactive Communication Campaign
 - “Taking Care of Business Day”
 - Solid Project Planning
 - “Spirit Ware” / “Spirit Items” for new school year (Lawton Rocks!)

#2 – Membership, Volunteer and Advocacy Campaign Committee

- **Chairs:** Sarah Terry, TBD
- **Committee Members:** TBD
- **Key Participants:** Co-Vice Presidents; Co-President; Staff Liaison; Communications Chair; Recording Secretary
- **Objective:** To raise the level of active membership through proactive communication, membership campaign, volunteer opportunities for both the PTA and School’s needs. To engage every family!
- **Critical Success Factors and Activities**
 - Launches a Membership Campaign alongside the Direct Drive
 - Manages annual membership survey
 - Manages/publishes school directory
 - Represents the Membership on the BLT alongside the PTA Co-President
 - Represents Legislative Issues and Voice to Washington State PTA
 - Provides guidance and support to Volunteer Coordinator
 - Supports chairs of School Photos and Yearbook
 - Identify candidates for the volunteer appreciation awards

#3 - Community Building and Events Committee

- **Chairs:** TBD, TBD

- **Committee Members:** TBD
- **Key Participants:** Co-Vice Presidents, Event Chairs; Communications Chairs; Staff Liaison
- **Objective:** To build the Lawton parent/teacher community by providing a consistent approach, support and a comprehensive framework for all community events. To make every family feel at home and welcome at Lawton!
- **Critical Success Factors and Activities:**
 - Rethink and reposition all community building communications, events and outreach
 - Manage popsicle playdates in summer of 2012
 - Launch a welcome outreach program / events to new Lawton families (cocktail hours, personal outreach, new family mentoring programs)
 - Responsible to staff and support primary community building activities including back to school bash, bingo night, community outreach, field day, kindergarten tours, and open house, staff appreciation, 5th grade promotion, and lost and found.
 - Build relationships with Magnolia and Queen Anne businesses in support of the school and PTA.
 - Share great stories through writing newsletter articles about the great things the community is doing to support Lawton.

#4 – Arts and Enrichment Committee

- **Chairs:** TBD, TBD
- **Committee:** TBD
- **Key Participants:** Staff Liaison, Co-President, Treasurer, Art Docent (Tracy Pozil)
- **Objective:** To strategize, manage and deliver the arts and enrichment programs and objectives defined jointly with the school and community.
- **Critical Success Factors and Activities:**
 - To oversee and support the joint school/PTA efforts at enriching the school day with arts and enrichment events including Visiting Authors, Young Authors, Art Docent Program, Math Night, Science Week, World Cultures, Visiting Artists, Class Projects for Spring Gala, Performing Arts, 4th Grade Social Studies, Outdoor Education, 5th Grade Legacy Art
 - To identify and work with the artistic community represented within the parents to bring more enrichment into the classrooms
 - To establish the appropriate process and protocols for events occurring during the school days; to manage the communications of such events accordingly

#5 - Fundraising and Celebration Committee

- **Chairs:** Kelly Fulks, TBD
- **Committee:** TBD

- **Key Participants:** Staff Liaison, Vice President, Fundraising; Cashier; Spring Gala Chairs
- **Objective:** To build and manage a post Direct Drive fundraising strategy, campaign and events including the Spring Gala.
- **Critical Success Factors and Activities:**
 - Strategize, secure volunteers and support the Spring Gala event committee
 - Support the Move-A-Thon chairs and events
 - Receive and consider all fundraising proposals
 - Define, launch and oversee passive fundraising approach (box tops, thriftway, etc) and online fundraisers
 - Manage student art sale as appropriate