

Bowman PTA Board Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2016, 7:00-8:30pm

Bowman Library

7:00PM Sign-In & Introductions

In attendance: Rebecca Fagan Gorospe, Sarah Wolfson, Tish Apstein, Kristin Sleeper, Alison Stevens, Gary Van Deurse, Courtney Lauriat, Xi Sun, Daniel Gomez, Karin Ornstein, Terri Rosica, Flo Donaghy, Alexa Elliott, Lisa Premerlani, Danielle Schuman-Olivier, Suman Murali, Ting Fang, Olga Kuzovkina, Kavita Ravi, Heidi Barrett-Model, Cindy Arens, Maria Asuncion Choneez, Margot Tracy, Christina Lin-Butler, Allyson Hopkins, Rita Cameron, Lauren Avery, Anna Angelova, Shankav Venkateswavan

Staff: Joshua Curhan, Laura Lees, Ann Matthews, Karen Thompson, Mary Anton

7:10PM PTA Business

- Updated membership this year with tiered options. A lot joined at \$100 and \$200 level. Exec board signing thank-yous.
- PTA was contacted by Indian Americans of Lexington-want to create new PTA position between IAL and us. IAL was founded in 1990s and represents 300-400 Indian families in Lexington-goal is to assimilate into Lexington. Currently revamping organization to be more hands-on. Formed a committee in schools and want to be more involved/represented in PTA. IAL school committee is requesting representation in each school in Lexington. Suman Murali will be Bowman representative
- Adventure Run shirts-not discussing
- Family picnic-Picnic is on Friday (Sept 16). Rebecca has designed stickers and banner to kick off 50th anniversary. Banner will be available at picnic for kids and staff to sign.
- Back to School Night-PTA will have table in Specialist section in gym. Looking for volunteers to staff table. Will send announcement for people to sign up for PTA. There will also be people in office to do CORIs for those parents who need to do one (6:00-6:30)

Updates from VPs

- Treasurers
 - Statement of financial positions-\$54K in bank account, spends \$60K in a year. One year in reserve. Healthy with reserve but goal for the year is not to spend it down too much.
 - ACT fund will be negative when we get to next year. Have been spending more than we have received in donations. ACT account is money slated for music and art performances. Battle run might be a way to get donations for ACT. Last year Bowman was a top earner and got an extra portion (\$1900 last year).
 - Voting to take a break from Museum of Science programs this year. Museum program costs have gone up as size of Bowman is growing and it has been difficult to organize. Proposing to take a break this year.
 - Last year PTA spent \$18,000 more than it took in. This year we need to reign in expenses
 - Budgeted \$500 for new event (field day) which will take place in the spring
 - Passport to the World is back in the budget and we are considering fitting it in again this year. We are looking for someone to run it. Dr. Anton explained that a social justice curriculum is being added to Bowman curriculum this year (was created by teachers over the summer). Each classroom will be working on personal narratives/family history project. It would be nice if Passport to the World celebration is back this year to connect with new emphasis on Social Justice but as of now there are no confirmed plans for Passport to the World.
 - Budgeting to break even. Last year auction brought in \$20K...if we make more than we can add it to the reserve
 - Lisa Premerlani will send out electronic version of budget with a few changes and then we can vote on budget
 - Sagam program-Small community school in Kenya. Connection through Dr. Anton brought us together. Goal is to create cross-cultural concept. PTA has held a support piece but most funding coming from outside sources. School has made curricular connections and is trying to make more.

- Membership Update
 - Levels are new this year. 181 memberships have been purchased to date. There are 563 children, family count is around 475/500. Raised \$8800 so far, which is more than last year's total. Average donation is \$48. Not doing great with ACT or 5th grade activity donations and may not get as many purchasing additional directories or giving additional money to PTA because of new tiers
 - Letter will go out this week from PTA to all families-hopefully that will help increase membership. There will also be a table at curriculum night and flyers in backpacks. Intention for front sign is to let people know what is happening/welcome people but not put a plug in for fundraising.
 - Last year's membership was 60% of families. Goal is to increase membership this year.
 - Rebecca previewed car magnet, tote bag, and water bottle. Not sure yet how items will get distributed-most likely through classrooms. Discussion about how much swag to order and whether there should be a sign-up deadline for swag.

- School Support
 - Safe Routes-some people working on it. State sponsored program that encourages students to get to school other ways than car.

7:45PM PTA discussion – Bowman

- Mini grant request-written for special Educator to receive Orton Gillingham advanced training (multi-sensory reading program for struggling readers). District offers basic training. This training would allow for teacher to get more advanced support. School budget can support half of the budget for the training. All special educators are involved in Response to Intervention-all students would get support/benefits. Budgeting is for \$2000 for the year. This request is for \$1625. Dr. Anton says this is a legitimate need and would strongly support this and will help school in long-term.

- Mrs. Goldfarb is requesting 2-4 volunteers for Artsonia to help scan/upload student art. Not sure if Ms. O'Connor's classes will also be uploaded to Artsonia.

- Several requests have been put in to facilities to put up bulletin boards to showcase student art around the school and we are still waiting for them to be hung
- Square 1 required art teachers to stop teaching regular curriculum to do Square 1 with teachers. Problematic to stop curriculum in order to do a fundraiser. Some parents expressed disappointment that Square 1 is no longer done.
- Big Map is not happening across the district this year. K-5 Social studies curriculum coordinator has moved to Middle school and they have not yet hired someone for the K-5 coordinator. Will be back next year. Investigating other options to do during book fair since Big Map will not be happening (possibly around fun run).

8:00PM PTA discussion - School District / School Committee

- Buffer Zone policy – on 9/24. Meeting will discuss language for policy, not for buffer lines.
- World language program-school committee had been investigating bringing it back. Decided too much going on in district to bring it back right now. Put on hold for longer. Not enough money or manpower now to address it
- Estabrook trying out a new homework pilot and will not be assigning any homework this year. They are putting a focus on reading for pleasure. Ongoing conversation about homework in the district. Estabrook focusing more on reading, other schools are wondering whether some grade levels should not have any homework. Dr. Anton addressed this and said we have to think about the purpose and value of homework and its impact on family life. Bowman will keep status quo this year (no change to homework policy). Dr. Anton encouraged parents to discuss directly with teachers if individual students are struggling with homework. She reiterated again that the school committee is actively relooking at homework within the district.

- Vote for Minuteman High School at the Community Center from 12:00-8:00pm on Sept 20. If it passes it will cost average household \$37/year. MSBA has approved funding for a percentage of the school if the vote passes.
- Beyond Measure is a book that a lot of the LPS staff has read. There will be a community discussion and movie screening of the book coming up within the next few weeks.

8:30PM Adjourn