

## **SES PTSA General Meeting Minutes, October 11, 2006**

**Board Members:** (those in bold were present)

**Doug Wells (president); Kristen Calhoun (president-elect); Nancy Church; (treasurer); Beth Azar (secretary); Claire Irvan (membership coordinator); Melinda Patterson (fundraising); Lisa Bauso (fundraising); Neeley Wells (volunteer coordinator);** Katie Smith (volunteer coordinator); **Jennifer Freda-Cowie (teacher support);** Courtney Lobo (teacher support); **Caryn Corwin (parent education);** Cindy Ewers (parent education); Robin May (teacher representative); **Rebecca Wagner (teacher representative); Anna Goldrich (member-at-large);** Mario Galindo (member-at-large); **Meg Stalnaker (member-at-large);** Beth Waltz (member-at-large)

Also attending: **Sarah Taylor; Rachel Langford (Stand for Children); a group of parents and students.**

The meeting officially began at 6:35pm

### **Welcome and introductions**

Doug brought the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. People introduced themselves around the room.

### **Announcements from guests**

Doug asked for any announcements or presentations from guests.

**Trick-or-treat for UNICEF: Kaitlyn Douglas**, from Tara's class, is organizing this fundraiser for her seventh grade service learning project. She gave a short presentation on the history of UNICEF and the work it does to help women and children around the world with issues related to education, health care and general quality of life. She showed the trick-or-treat for UNICEF box that children can use to collect money from neighbors and friends to support UNICEF. Kaitlyn will offer the boxes at assembly, giving a box to any child who wants to participate. An audience member suggested that parents can also take boxes to work, church and other locations to help collect money for this project. More information about the program will appear in the Messenger.

**Peer mediation: Anna Joy Gillis**, an eighth grader in Jon's class, spoke about the SES peer mediation program. Peer mediators are eighth graders selected to act as guides and peace makers for students at all grade levels at SES. Anna Joy explained that a peer mediator might be called if a student is getting into fights or if he or she simply needs someone to talk to. They can help students sort out problems. Each class has at least one peer mediator available to it. Peer mediators also help run the middle school meetings to make sure they run smoothly. They plan to put up signs next to the phones in all the classrooms as well as photos of the peer mediators so that teachers and students alike can feel comfortable calling on them when the need arises.

**Speaker: Stand for Children Representative, Rachel Langford**

Rachel began by describing Stand for Children and what its goals are. It's an organization that tries to be a voice for children who can't represent themselves. It's a grassroots organization with about 3500 members and is growing, slowly spreading outside the I-5 corridor into rural Oregon.

Last legislative session it was instrumental in getting \$95 million back into the budget for education—that's about \$10 million for Portland alone.

This year they're working in ten legislative races to change the legislature to a pro-school majority because 2/3 of money for schools comes from the state and right now education is not their priority.

Stand for Children is also working in Portland to help pass the local option property tax, which will raise \$33 million for Portland schools. About \$300,000 of that would go to SES per year. If it doesn't pass, the school will face losing four or five teachers. Rachel emphasized that this is the only tool we have right now to support education for our children.

She also discussed two other statewide measures—41 and 48—that, if they pass they will undo any good that measure 28 does. In particular, if measure 48 passes it will hamstring any legislature, even if it's pro-school.

Rachel added that Stand for Children isn't just about band-aid solutions to education issues. Their goal is to make Oregon schools in the top ten in the country. The aim is to provide more support for struggling teachers; support for pre-K and full day K; improve energy efficiency of facilities so money can go toward education; to improve facilities for the same reason.

Rachel encouraged SES parents to join Stand for Children with money and/or time commitments. There's a Buckman/Sunnyside team, but right now it's mostly led by Buckman parents. She'd like to see an increase in SES membership and coordination. She added that it's a minimal time commitment (1-2 hours/week) because the organization does the leg work so the time they need from volunteers is strategic.

**PTA Budget process explanation and report**

Nancy explained that she will come to the next general meeting in November with a proposed budget and she invited anyone who wants to join her, Doug, Kristen and Melinda in that process to contact her. There would be one or two meetings.

Sarah suggested that some of the more philosophical budget questions (for example, whether each grade should fund raise for its own field trips or whether PTA should handle all of that) be posed at a tea or some kind of focus group.

Nancy handed out a copy of a chart detailing money taken in and money that's already committed for various expenditures. There was some discussion of this. Nancy also

mentioned that she's created a form for people to use to get reimbursed by PTSA for some expense. The form is available in the SES Office—it's hanging on the bulletin board and can be placed in the PTSA mailbox in the office annex. Inside the mailbox is an envelope labeled "treasurer" that Nancy checks once a week. She asks that anyone seeking financial reimbursement from PTSA use one of these forms and she will be strict about only reimbursing using the form.

### **PTA Reports**

**Fundraising:** Melinda spoke about the upcoming **Harvest Faire** and passed out posters for people to hang around town to advertise it.

The **Poinsettia and Wreath Sale** is on the horizon. In particular, the poinsettias need to be ordered by Oct. 27, so information about that will be forthcoming.

Tuesday Nov. 28 Pizzacato on Burnside will donate 25% of sales to SES.

Neeley added that she feels SES needs to make a lot of money from **Run for the Arts** this year and she's like to see us do something bigger than usual to kick it off. There was talk of postponing it to get more people involved. Sarah suggested that they do a whole school assembly on Monday morning to kick it off and maybe have some music or some kind of performer there to help kick it off.

**Parent Education:** Indigo explained that she and Cindy are working to get speakers for the PTSA meetings. They've got Kathy Keller Jones for April and she will talk some about children and technology (like the internet). They're trying to get David, the K-2 music teacher to come in November. She also talked about parenting classes that Kathy Keller-Jones is heading and that Kathy is available for parent consultations for any concerned parent. They are also talking about a book club in the early evening that will focus on books picked by Karen the librarian.

**Volunteers:** Neeley said volunteer efforts are pretty well covered for now. They are still working on the database of information parents provided at the beginning of the year.

She mentioned that soon SES will begin gearing up for Forest Festival. Meg mentioned that Tracy Yee (parent of a first and second grader) wants to utilize artists in the community and have a big art fair during Forest Festival. Artists could sell their wares and give a portion of the proceeds back to the school.

Neeley said they had their first ever room parent meeting the other night and that it was a success—in fact some rooms have more parents wanting to be room parents than they can accommodate and every room as at least two parents coordinating.

**Membership:** There was talk of having a booth at curriculum night that could encourage people to become members to PTSA as well as educate parents about volunteer opportunities and also encourage parents to participate in fundraising for Run 4 the Arts.

**Report from Sarah**

Sarah said she thinks things are going well. The school has had to accommodate about 50 more children than expected. The district has also granted SES an extra half-time FTE, which Sarah hopes to use for 3, 4, 5 support. Eric had his baby. In general things seem to be stabilizing.

Doug mentioned that the next meeting will be November 15. And the meeting adjourned about 8:00.