

Summit Street School PTO Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 13, 2011 6:30 PM

Officers in attendance:
Christy Fay, Chair
Casey Carmolli, Secretary

Staff in attendance:
Mary Hughes, Principal
Kim Hamilton
Kathy Heikel

Total attendance: 25

Welcome and Introductions, Christy Fay

Summit Street PTO Mission Statement

The Summit Street PTO promotes the welfare and education of children in our school community. Parents, guardians and school administration are active participants in establishing educational goals and supporting academic and extracurricular offerings through fundraising and other activities. By virtue of their relation to the school and its students, parents and guardians, as well as school staff, are considered members of the Summit PTO.

Principal's Report, Mary Hughes

- Mary is pleased with **attendance** at this first PTO meeting and hopes these numbers continue. Fathers are welcome, too! She reports a terrific beginning to the year, one of the best.
 - Number of students: **233**. Second grade is the largest class with 61 students.
 - The school's **mission statement** is reviewed each year by the staff. *At Summit Street School, each child learns... within a safe and engaging environment, to achieve social and academic success, through established attainable goals, by self-empowerment and self-directed investigations, so that is natural to take risks.*
 - Game Day** took place on the playground on the first Friday of school with a message of "Have Fun, Play Hard, Be Safe." Students spent 1 ½ hours going through 6 stations. They enjoyed popsicles and learned how to join a group, solve problems, use the equipment appropriately, and the location of the playground boundaries.
 - The faculty decided to **schedule lunch after recess**. The children are much more settled.
 - A school-wide **assembly** takes place every-other week and will now occur on Tuesdays instead of Thursdays because children have 2 extra specials on Thursdays.
 - School Rules**, updated by the faculty: Be Safe. Be Kind. Be Respectful. Do Your Best.
 - The **Angel Fund** has been designated to allow children to go to camps or other enrichment activities they wouldn't normally have access to. Formerly, requests were sent in for a variety of needs like food and utility payments, but these can be addressed by other agencies. About \$2000 is in the fund from the PTO, private donations, and retiring teacher requests.
 - The first **practice evacuation** was successful.
 - Mary completed a **safety tour** checklist and report of the school this summer, which included every room as well as outside.
 - Summit Street School's **60th Anniversary**. Please join us! Mary would like PTO assistance.
 - Faculty contest including now and then questions. What was the average class size in 1951? Now it is 19. Then it was 29. 347 students in grades 1-6. The summer BBQ was moved to the fall as a kick-off event. A great turnout despite the rain. Mary will solicit Summit stories from the past. Celebration on December 2nd, the 60th day of school.
 - April 7th - Rededication ceremony during assembly, ribbon cutting, dignitaries, time capsule.
 - April 20th - Afternoon Dance on the Friday before vacation. Each class represent a decade?
 - May 25th - Carnival. Entire school aerial photo.
 - Professional Coaches** here this year: Susan Titterton to revisit Responsive Classroom methods; Pam Chomsky, a literacy expert, to work on writing standards.
 - Open House** on Tues, Sept. 27th from 6:30-7:30 PM. 1st half hour: children give parents a tour. 2nd: children watch Joey the Clown and parents go to classrooms to learn about the curriculum.
 - Mary is reading Emily's Everyday Manners to each class. Focus: Good Manners are important.
- Treasurer's Report, Christy Fay.** Treasurer, Sachi Hergesheimer could not be here.

-Current balance is \$2253. Four Winds payment will be due in March. (Four Winds is a monthly, parent-taught, nature/science program that the kids love.)

-We are still in need of a Co-Treasurer. Please let us know if you are interested in serving.

Fundraising, Abby Rice

-Suggests that we keep funds at a reasonable level and forward the rest to the playground fund.

-Discussion of **Red Barn**, VT products fundraiser. It made about \$700 last year. Decided not to try their new program to earn an extra dollar per item by doing 2 separate fundraisers. Perishable and non-perishable catalogs will be sent out near Thanksgiving in time for holiday shopping. Hiawatha is going to try Red Barn's new VT company coupon book fundraiser (\$15 with \$5 to their PTO.) Abby will need help on delivery day: difficult logistics for perishable items. She does like working with this company, based in Hinesburg.

-Kim Hamilton suggested another Summit apparel sale. Others said it does not make a lot of money, but that it would be nice to do for Summit's 60th Anniversary. Design?

-Tracey said that Fleming has been inundated w/ fundraisers and asked for cash donations instead. A letter went home saying if we get enough donations, we won't have to fundraise.

-Abby reiterated that we try not to overburden families with fundraisers, but due to the playground, we cannot stop fundraising. Suggestion: a letter saying if you do not want anything from a catalog fundraiser, cash donations would be welcome.

-The monthly Gift Card Grab will continue. Melanie is willing to continue organizing this.

Playground Fundraising, Tracey Williams

-Asked about the cookbook project, Tracey said she has received the last piece from Mary and that it will be coming. Unsure of turn-around time with the printer. Perhaps a spring fundraiser.

-The Fun Run would be a good opportunity for another fundraiser.

Playground Committee, Chris Catterton. Time Line and Subcommittee description handouts.

-Chris is looking for 5 subcommittee chairs to help this project move forward: PR/Communications, Fundraising, Grants, Construction, and Administration. Once the leadership team is formed, meetings can be scheduled. The Playground Committee met weekly last year. Consider giving one solid year. If we want this playground to be built, we need to step up. Spread the word and recruit. Be positive. After working hard for 3 years, we are poised to make this happen. Recruitment party? Suggestion to advertise committee needs to the community to tap people w/ non-profit experience. Have children take something tangible home to draw attention to the project.

-We have not received 501c3 non-profit status yet. The process takes time.

-Projected cost? About \$150,000 with volunteer labor, donations. Sizable trees are expensive.

-About \$5000 left. Phase I: reading garden, game tables, and some fencing \$15-25,000. If receive Lowe's grant, it would be enough for this phase. Phase I areas would not be disrupted by Phase II.

-Mindy Deibler mentioned the United Way volunteer list.

-Allison Coeyman stressed that the PTO and Playground should not be separate. The same five people can't do it alone. Chris agreed that the Natural Playground is a PTO project.

-Betsy Boland mentioned the consolidation survey. Mary has not heard any further discussion. Chris feels that if changes were to happen, it would be years in the future after many meetings, public surveys, and votes. The project can move forward. Our children need a new playground. People value community schools. Tracey attended the survey results meeting and said the only real issues for Summit and Fleming were traffic flow and parking. Buildings are being used to potential in an age-appropriate way.

Volunteer Opportunities

A sign-up sheet will be sent home to parents in Friday folders. The list of PTO activities will be posted on the PTO section of the Summit website. The Book Fair, Fun Run, and Staff Dinner for Parent Teacher Conferences are coming up in October. The Non-Food Drive takes place in Nov. Deb Carlin is on board for the Spaghetti Dinner and Pancake Breakfast, but only for 3 more years!

Other Business

-ECHO used to provide a discount pass free of charge to schools, but will be charging \$50/year. A family of 5 can visit for \$20 instead of \$55. The pass is advertised on the front door of the school and is available in the office. Parents in attendance report using the pass, which is available more often than the Brownell Library's ECHO pass. Casey made a motion to provide funds for the pass. Mindy seconded. Motion approved.

-Voting Process explained. Motion, Second, Vote. All in attendance at meetings are eligible to vote. Our by-laws were revised with the incorporation of the PTO last year.

-Budget to be voted on at next meeting. Review ahead of time on the school's website. All items in the budget will not have to be voted on separately at future meetings.

-Melissa Pacquette nominated by Christy for Co-Chair. Seconded by Kelly Raynsford. Approved.

Meeting ended at 8:00 PM.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 11th at 6:30.

Minutes submitted by Casey Carmolli, Secretary