

Stoddert Elementary PTA Meeting Notes
May 15, 2014

PTA President's Report

1. Summary of Big Chill(i) Financials
 - Document showing financials for the last four years distributed
 - Overall higher revenue this year than previous years
 - Fewer auction items this year
 - However, items garnered more bidding in the online format
 - Significantly less work for the Big Chili than in previous years due to the online auction format
 - Live auction of Classroom art projects yielded large increase this year
 - Perhaps teacher items could go into a silent auction format next year
 - Should we consider adding the raffle back in next year?
 - There are people interested in leading it for next year, but there is always room for involvement next year. Please volunteer, donate auction items, etc.

2. Playground update
 - Nothing new to report
 - Everything that PTA needed to do has been done
 - As far as we know, the plan is still to complete the project this summer
 - The summer camp will still happen and will use other space on the Stoddert grounds
 - Principal Bryant shared the drawings of the plans

3. Common Sense Media suggested media guidelines
 - PTA distributed factsheets
 - These and others are available on commonsensemedia.org
 - Question about whether this is addressed somehow school-wide
 - Suggestion was made that principal and librarian work on this together

4. Stoddert wolf logo
 - Stoddert parent and local artist, Wes Lawrence is working on putting an ink logo of the Stoddert Wolf logo outside on the concrete entry area of the school; Wes is donating his time and expertise and was able to secure the necessary materials through donations; He has also offered to paint hopscotch and four square on the concrete area along the early education wing. Wes and Principal Bryant have already discussed and agreed to the project(s).

5. Survey

- Survey forthcoming to get input on PTA activities to inform next year's planning

6. News about next year

- Proving What's Possible grant: \$42,000
- Grant to address feedback on the student satisfaction survey
- Grant will be spent on Play Works (to train teachers to encourage healthy interaction and play); Yoga4Classrooms (professional development on yoga for classrooms to help keep classes and hallways calm); and additional hands-on learning – field trips, guest speakers, assemblies.
- PTA-funded staff: Ms. Kealy is staying with us next year with the same financial arrangement –PTA pays for up to half of her salary, DCPS pays her as a 12-month instructional aide.
- Ms. Schneider will come on staff through DCPS as a Library and Technology Aide.

7. Parent-Teacher Association Bylaws

- In order to remain in good standing as a DC PTA Association member (and the PTA nationally) Stoddert needs to:
 - 1) Pay a per member fee (about \$800.00 in total)
 - 2) Provide them with a roster of our board members
 - 3) Provide them the names of addresses of all members
- Discussion of any benefit to belonging to the national/state PTA: PTA is an advocacy organization. Theoretically, there are resources that you tap into, e.g., training, discounted insurance, etc.
- Over the past several years, Stoddert has not tapped into any of these resources. Our current focus is on Stoddert and DC schools generally (particularly our peers that feed to Hardy), rather than broader national concerns. Also, we'd have to seek permission to revise our bylaws.
- The Stoddert Executive Board has discussed perhaps considering other models for our parent-teacher group that might suit Stoddert better, such as becoming a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and now brings it to the full membership to discuss. PTO does not require affiliation with a state or national body. More autonomous.
- David Clark, a Stoddert parent who is also an attorney has been researching the implications of becoming a PTO and will continue to do so. He has already secured copies of our Articles of Incorporation from the DC Dept of Regulatory Affairs. Mr. Clark explained that he is still trying to gain clarification about implications for our 501(c)3 status, any implications with the IRS and any potential implications for our extended care program.
- PTA leadership is hoping to get input, and potentially buy-in before the end of the school year on moving to a new governing structure.

Discussion ensued and a parent suggested the Stoddert community needs more information about the benefits (or lack there of) of remaining a PTA. Jesse Kirkpatrick, a Stoddert parent, volunteered to draft a summary document aimed at educating Stoddert parents on the issue.

- It was recommended that we take a vote to disassociate, and then a vote on whether to change our name to PTO. There are timeline issues, so we need to take that into account in crafting language for the Stoddert community to consider.
- A vote will be taken during the last Principal's Coffee of the year, scheduled for Friday, June 6 before school. We need to have at least 25 people vote.

8. Deputy Mayor for Education School Assignment and School Boundaries Review Process and Implications for Stoddert

- Actual draft recommendations are coming out in June.
- Key piece for Stoddert: We would be affected by boundary review. Burleith could be moved from Stoddert to Hyde.
- Plans for "grandfathering" affected neighborhoods have not been clarified. DME has verbally committed to the concept of grandfather but not the specifics.

9. Position on Burleith

- Statement from PTA member: PTA should support the maintenance of all current school boundaries.
- PTA co-presidents explained that the PTA Executive Committee discussed the issue at the April meeting and decided not to take a position on Burleith at that time.
- Request from a member that PTA releases a statement that the PTA supports all boundaries remaining the same. There doesn't need to be specific reference to Burleith.
- The decision taken in the meeting is that we will make a draft position/resolution/letter available at the principal's coffee scheduled for Friday, June 6 (And potentially vote on it).

II. Principal's Report

- The principal reviewed expected enrollment changes.
- We anticipate getting demountables (trailers) large enough to accommodate 6 classrooms. While we hope they will be ready when school starts (Aug 25), Principal Bryant has been told to have a back-up plan in place.
- If we get trailers, we will then have space for three fourth grades.
- We can manage the fifth grade by managing who we take off of the waitlist.
- Over 200 kids are waitlisted for Pre-K (31 are in-boundary).

- Staffing: a few staff people are leaving and need to be replaced and a few positions are being added.
- One important change is that PE will be offered 150 hours per week next school year (so Stoddert will be hiring 1.5 PE teachers; previously, our PE teacher was provided/funded through Fillmore).
- One third grade teaching position is open.
- Candidates for Assistant Principal have been interviewed and an offer has been made to one candidate.

III. Teacher's Report

- International day coming up on May 21
- Career day was really successful
- Field day was a success – lots of parent volunteers
- Science Fair is coming up May 29th. They are still looking for judges. Contact Ms. Prosser.
- Dancing classroom presentation was excellent (5th graders)
- Talent Show – June 11. Auditions coming up.
- Thanked the PTA for teacher appreciation week.
- Two great plays brought to Stoddert by Ms. Schneider

IV. Election:

- Named and thanked the PTA members who played a role this year.
- Thanked Caitlin for her work as co-president.
- Slate of candidates elected for next year.

Garden committee report will be in the Chalkboard.