

Melrose Elementary PTO General Meeting

September 8, 2015

Meeting called to order at 8:18 am by **Sarita Singh**, PTO President, and **Jane Boegel-Koch**, PTO Vice-President.

Ongoing Fundraising

- **Ola May**, PTO Director of Ongoing Fundraisers reminded us about ongoing fundraisers at Melrose:
 - Amazon.com: Enter site through link on PTO website for Melrose to get up to 8% of what is spent.
 - Target: Get a Target REDcard. You get 5% off your purchases each time you shop, plus free shipping with no minimum on Target.com. Once you receive the card, link the card to Melrose via their Take Charge of Education program so that Melrose automatically gets 1% of your purchases! Last year we made over \$800 this way!
 - Ralphs/Food for Less: Up to 4% of purchases donated to Melrose. Ralph's card can be linked to Melrose via website or in store. If you signed up last year, please renew starting September 1.
 - Escrip: Register for Escrip, a fundraising program that allows participating merchants and restaurants to contribute a percentage (from 2-10%) of your purchases to Melrose. Many companies participate in Escrip including Fresh & Easy, Bristol Farms, and Home Depot.
 - Box Tops: Collect box tops from food, office, home items. Each box top collected is worth 10 cents. Encourage friends, family to collect. Great project for grandparents.
 - Labels for Education: Cut them out (including the bar code), collect them and drop them off in the collection box in front of the school. Each point goes towards various supplies that the school can order.
 - Shutterfly: Enter site through link on PTO website and Melrose will receive 13% of the purchase.
 - A new program added this year is My Coke Rewards—each point code is worth 10 cents.
 - Please see the PTO website for details on the programs above and other easy fundraisers.

How to Stay Informed flyers

Katie Weber from the Melrose Hospitality Board shared "How to Stay Informed" flyers with info/faq about the school. This flyer will be available on the PTO website.

Pledge Drive

- The Pledge Drive begins September 21 and runs through October 30, ending at the Harvest Festival.
- The funds we raise this year will primarily go towards our technology refresh program and the purchase of new laptops for the 3rd Grade next school year. First, we need to pay off a bridge loan of about \$25,000 that allowed us to complete this year's purchase of 4th Grade computers.
- Not only does the PD allow us to maintain our goal of one-to-one technology, it also allows our community to demonstrate our commitment to the school.
- We would like to strive 100% participation in the PD if possible, even if only a small amount is given. This participation level is also helpful when we apply for grants. In 2014, we had 67% participation in the PD.
- In 2014, the suggested amounts for giving were: \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500, \$950, and \$1,500.
- Giving levels discussed for 2015 are: \$75, \$150, \$300, \$600, \$950, \$1,500 and a "Reach for the Stars" amount for larger donors.
- These giving levels have been helpful in the past—people tend to give what is asked.
- Incentives will be given at each gift level, but it was suggested that there also be an "opt out" choice for incentives. These items are purchased by the PTO, so any that are not used represent savings.
- \$300 is the "magic number"—the amount per student that is needed to make our budget for next year.
- It's realized that this is not possible for all families, but this amount may be highlighted on the PD envelope so everyone understands what we need.
- Like last year, families will be able to complete their pledge amounts during a six-month payment plan.
- Parents were encouraged to remember to check with their employers to see if they have matching funds programs.
- Suggestions were also made in favor of:
 - A Paypal option for payments
 - Icons to represent what the different giving levels will help buy for the school
 - A way for families to pledge/donate on behalf of another family

Harvest Festival

- Novelyn Aquino and Dan Kiefer are event leads
- The Harvest Festival will be on October 30 and will start right after school.
- Students are encouraged to wear costumes.
- Each grade has a booth. We plan to have pie throwing, face painting, and a cake walk, among others.
- Most activities were free, but some money was made on certain games and a raffle.
- Prizes are needed for the Raffle Families can donate raffle items to Novelyn.
- Volunteers will be needed for set up, clean up, and help in the booths. You can volunteer on the PTO website where there are descriptions of each month and links to email the booth leads.
- More details about the event are on the PTO website.

Family Fun Nights/Fratelli Fridays

Krys Grant, PTO Director of Family Fun Nights, shared the following:

- There is a Family Fun Night scheduled for September 25 with the theme of La Noche Latina. This will take place on the yard with food trucks. More details to come.
- The next Fratelli Friday will also take place on Friday, September 25. Twenty-percent of what Melrose families spend from 7-10am on Friday will go to the school.

Beautification

Gabbie Leone, PTO Communications, gave an update:

- Kara Newmark and Chris Shanley are the leads on Gardens and Beautification.
- We need volunteers to water the gardens. Sign up is on the PTO website and only takes about 15 minutes each week. Volunteers can set their own schedules.

Kara Newmark, PTO Gardens and Beautification, shared exciting news:

- Kara's sister, who is a landscape architect, has facilitated a tree donation from Tree People for Melrose.
- This will be a large number of trees that will be placed around campus.
- Representatives from the Tree People will be on the Melrose campus for a meeting on October 9 at 2:45pm. Parents are encouraged to attend this meeting so we can show our appreciation and support of this project.
- The Fall Beautification event will take place after the tree donation. Date TBD.

STEAM Founders Community Breakfast

- This event, scheduled for November 20, gives us the opportunity to thank community supporters, volunteers, Melrose alumni and local businesses for their interest in and support of Melrose.
- More details and volunteer opportunities to come.

Book Fair

- The Book Fair is scheduled for November 16-20.
- Volunteers are needed throughout each day. Please contact Patti Espinosa, School Librarian, to help.

Mr. Needleman

- Mr. Needleman reminded everyone to complete the lunch application (link is on the school website).
- Please complete the application even if you don't think you'll qualify. Our status as a Title One school could be jeopardized if we don't get enough participation. This will result in a loss of major dollars for the school.
- The new math program, Eureka, will be starting soon. Mr. Needleman is still working on a date for a tutorial for parents.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:27 am.