

**Central School PTO Meeting  
February 12, 2013**

**Call to Order** 7:00 p.m. in the Central School Library.  
Members Present: Amy Jacksic, Lynda Murphy, Angela Izzo, Kim Macchia, Sue Pipal, Mary Komperda, Jessica Niekrasz, Paula Fudacz. Ann Twomey, Anna Lee, Pete Fudacz, Steve Elgeness, Dr. Janice Limperis

**Minutes** January 11, 2013 minutes were approved.

**Officers Reports**

**Co-Presidents' Report**

Raging Waves: The forms to participate in physical activity for a free water park tickets have been feedblitzed and are on the PTO website.

School Board Candidates: Will give introductions at the March 8 PTO meeting. There will be a statement by each candidate, but no Q and A.

Nominating Committee Jessica reported that members of this year's nominating committee (Jessica Niekrasz, Sue Pipal, Sandy Briolat, Amy Hill and Katie Leander) met and proposed the following slate: Lynda Murphy and Jessica Niekrasz as president, Amy Mooney and Paula Fudacz as 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Amy Hill as 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Kim Macchia as 3<sup>rd</sup> VP, Angela Izzo as Treasurer (subject to bylaw change); Amy Jacksic as Secretary, Sue Pipal as Parliamentarian. This is the first reading of the slate. The election of officers is April 12.

District 96 speaker: was well received and turn-out was good: 75 people attended the event. There will be a podcast of a similar presentation on the website, as technical difficulties prevented the recording at Hauser that evening. Members commented that Dr. Maniaci's presentation was helpful and his suggested resources were good.

**1<sup>st</sup> VPs' Report**

Kindergarten Information night will be held on March 7.

**2nd VP's Report**

Philanthropy Requests Jessica Niekrasz reported that 1<sup>st</sup> trimester requests have been purchased or are in progress. The committee is currently taking 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester requests. 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester requests will start soon.

**3<sup>rd</sup> VPs Report**

Kim reported on the BOE meeting in January. The board discussed capital improvements at Blythe and Hollywood. The Ames issue was discussed with a statement read that emphasized D96 is committed to protecting children and ensuring the anonymity of all involved. Three drafts of the school calendar for 2013-14 were discussed. Security at schools during Election Day for Ames and Hollywood was discussed.

**Treasurer's Report**

Angela Izzo reported that the PTO is budgeted to spend \$21,000 through the course of the year. In January, the PTO spent \$10,000, but still has a positive balance. Big

expenditures were Redmoon, D96 speaker and Philanthropy spending. The book fair budget needs to be increased to cover the pizza parties and the give-aways. A line item needs to be added to the budget to cover a supply of breakfast bars for children who are hungry . Teacher appreciation luncheon needs to increase its budget by \$400.

**A motion to increase the budget in the following way was made: 1) increase the Book Fair expenses by \$150; 2) Add a line item for \$200 for breakfast bars; 3) increase the teacher appreciation luncheon by \$400 (from \$900 to \$1300); 4) add a line item for the Lowes grant of \$2000.**

**Paula so moved, and Jessica seconded the motion. Motion passed.**

#### **Parliamentarian's Report**

Two bylaw changes (attached hereto) were presented for a first reading. The first proposed bylaw change allows a third term for the treasurer. The second bylaw updates the philanthropy description. Last year the committee description for philanthropy was changed.

#### **Committee Reports**

Central Artist in Residence Sue Pipal reported on behalf of the AIR committee that Redmoon has been hired and working with the teachers and Dr. Limperis to define the AIR experience. In a nutshell, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students will write poetry, which will be recorded and edited by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students as audio art. The fourth grade students will then work with this audio art to design and perform an outdoor spectacle of performance art on May 18, 2013 during the Riverside Arts Weekend. The theme is "We Define This Place" and the poetry will focus on the generational differences in perception of 12 major Riverside Landmarks. Redmoon will bring 20 teaching artist to Central school over the course of 2.5 months to work with our children. The cost of the Redmoon experience to the PTO is \$8,000.

Book Fair: The book fair sold an increase of \$260 worth of books than last year. This means that \$7600 worth of books will be given back to the school. The classrooms that collected the most change for the Kids Care students were Mr. Elgeness, Ms. McCarthy and Ms. Vizek. \$1000 worth of books was donated to the Lurie Children's Hospital (Katie Leander was thanked for her leadership on the Lurie project). The Winter Wonderland Social was delightful, and Paula was thanked for her delicious snacks!

Ice Skating Party: Kim Dixon was thanked for organizing a successful well attended event. The PTO hired two skate guards to assist during the event. A discussion was had about wearing helmets on the ice to prevent injuries at our next ice skating event.

RAIN: Mary Komperda gave a formal presentation on inclusion (attached hereto). The next RAIN meeting is February 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the Riverside Public Library. A support meeting immediately follows the business meeting.

Read to Succeed The last day to turn in forms is February 22.

Living Classroom: Paula reported she is working with the teachers regarding planting bulbs.

School Supplies: Will be picked up at the end of the school year. The supplies will be shrink wrapped.

Science in a Can: starts this week.

Yearbook: Kim and Stephanie need someone to manage the photos. If parents would like to contribute photos (and this is encouraged) they should put the photos on a disk and give it to Kim Bolton or drop it in the PTO box.

### **Principal's Report**

Dr. Limperis reported that changes in the ISATs will focus on a core curriculum. The Illinois interactive report card shows how our students will score on this new test. School administrators, teachers and parents are being prepared for an anticipated drop in scores, as much as 10-12%. There is an article in the Tribune regarding how high performing schools such as ours will be surprised by the test results. This testing will begin on March 11-22. A discussion was had about the implementation of new testing.

March 7 is Kindergarten Information Night. Parents will be encouraged to enroll a child at their home school, or request a school. There is no benefit to being the first person to enroll. Next year, there will be 3 first grade classrooms and 3 second grade classrooms at Central.

March 20 is spirit day. The theme is March Madness – and the students will be mad about cheese curds! (The PTO farm to table program sponsors this trimester's treat.)

From Feb 18-April 8, the teachers from RAC will be at Central to assist the substitute art teacher while Mrs. Mathis is out.

April 11 – the school will have a lock-down drill. Police are currently doing their reports in the school parking lot and the staff is happy they are there, especially during the times of day (opening and closing) when the doors are open.

April 15 the new superintendent, Dr. Sharma-Lewis, will visit the school. She will be in charge of the principal search for Central.

### **Teacher Representative**

Mr. Elgeness thanked the PTO for a great book fair and the generosity of the parents in this district. Mrs. McCarthy, Mr. Elgeness and Ms. Vizek also thanked the PTO for the pizza lunch for their classrooms. Teachers are very excited about Redmoon and the opportunity for all students to collaborate and contribute to a work in progress. Mr. Elgeness thanked the PTO for the philanthropy grant of \$500 for a sculpture for the garden. He is looking forward to working with the students and Heather Hug to collaborate on an idea of the sculpture. This is something the students can view when they return to Central and know they had a roll in creating this.

**Other Announcements**

Upcoming events:

March 8 – the next PTO meeting

April 12 – Election of PTO officers for next year

April 18 – Spring Open House

**Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m..

Minutes respectfully submitted by Susan Pipal, Secretary.

**PTO By-laws Article VIII, Section 2, Subsection (d)**

**Proposed amendment – Draft 1/30/13**

A person shall not be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as president or treasurer. Other officers may serve more than two consecutive terms.

**Comment [TMO1] :** Insert: “ three (3) consecutive terms as” before the word treasurer

**Comment [TMO2] :** Substitute: “three”

**To read:**

A person shall not be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms as president or three (3) consecutive terms as treasurer. Other officers may serve more than three consecutive terms.

**PTO By-laws Article XIII, Section 6, Subsection (e)**

**Proposed amendment – Draft 1/30/13**

The Philanthropy Committee shall consist of the incoming president, the immediate past president, the incoming treasurer, the immediate past treasurer, the second vice president and two members appointed by the president. The second vice president shall serve as chairperson. The Philanthropy Committee shall meet three times a year, either in person or by email to determine which philanthropic projects will be funded and in what amount. The Philanthropy Committee shall meet once in the fall and solicit philanthropy recommendations from the membership and school staff at that time. The committee shall meet mid year, and year end to consider any additional philanthropy requests made throughout the year. At each meeting, a majority of the members shall be required to conduct business, either by email or in person. At year end, the Philanthropy Committee shall make recommendations for the expenditure of funds not obligated at the end of the fiscal year, excluding a \$600 carryover. The Philanthropy Committee will present its recommendations to the membership at the May meeting.

**Comment [TMO3]** : Insert: "The recommendations of Philanthropy Committee shall be presented to the general membership for approval."

**Comment [TMO4]** : Insert "at the May meeting of the general membership"

**Comment [TMO5]** : Change "shall" to "may"

**Comment [TMO6]** : Insert "and shall recommend to the membership a carryover of no less than"

**Comment [TMO7]** : Redundant

**To read:**

The Philanthropy Committee shall consist of the incoming president, the immediate past president, the incoming treasurer, the immediate past treasurer, the second vice president and two members appointed by the president. The second vice president shall serve as chairperson. The Philanthropy Committee shall meet three times a year, either in person or by email to determine which

philanthropic projects will be funded and in what amount. The recommendations of the Philanthropy Committee shall be presented to the general membership for approval. The Philanthropy Committee shall meet once in the fall and solicit philanthropy recommendations from the membership and school staff at that time. The committee shall meet mid year, and year end to consider any additional philanthropy requests made throughout the year. At each meeting, a majority of the members shall be required to conduct business, either by email or in person. At year end, at the May meeting of the general membership, the Philanthropy Committee may make recommendations for the expenditure of funds not obligated at the end of the fiscal year and shall recommend to the membership a carryover of no less than \$600.

## PTO meeting

Comments by Mary Komperda regarding Inclusion

February 12, 2013

### Inclusion

As some of you know, this is my last year at Central. Next year I move on to Hauser. I know this is an old saying, it is the truth, "Time Flies". I remember coming to my first few PTO meetings, feeling intimidated by the knowledgeable parents. Parents who seemed to understand the education system in a way I did not. Those first few years I wasn't always a regular attendant at PTO meetings. I wasn't sure it was the right place for me. I had doctor appointments, therapy appointments, IEP meetings, calls from the principal, calls from the teachers, research to do on therapies/treatments and parenting practices that did not seem to come natural to me. But through my research of special education, through my experience of special education, I realized the only way to be a part of the school is through the PTO and attending Board of Education meetings. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be this involved in the educational process. Many different opportunities brought me to this place. I have met many wonderful people. I have learned so much. I think Central has a great group of parents that are very active in the education of their children. This is one of the greatest gifts parents can give their children.

Through all of this, my passion for Inclusion has been born and is my driving force. I talk about RAIN (the Riverside Area Inclusion Network) at these PTO meetings, but I realized maybe I haven't really defined this for many of you. RAIN has been so busy growing, having growing pains, evolving as the group has needed, fluid in the structure of the group to meet the needs of the parents who participate. For some people this is difficult, because it is not black and white. It is not always easy to understand. As a few of you know it started as "The creative learning team" and I was not even originally involved. As parents came together and discussed their needs, ideas, wants, we evolved into RAIN.

As I was reading my new book "Don't we already do Inclusion?" by Paula Kluth, I realized I should give you a definition and some examples of inclusion. I want to give you some examples of how inclusion works and looks in the classroom, the school, the community, and the district. I hope this peaks your interest in Inclusion and you will be interested in learning more about this topic.

Carol Quirk writes in the introduction, that the history of including students with disabilities began with exclusion, paralleling the experiences



of other groups in our society who have only achieved a measure of inclusion by fighting against laws, regulations, policies, and traditions that prevented their full participation. The right to vote, right to an education, right to sit in the front of the bus, they all began as social justice issues. For the children with disabilities, it was about getting into the school building and the classroom alongside non disabled peers. Research demonstrates positive outcomes for children with and without disabilities in inclusive communities.

Sailor (2008-2009) writes that inclusion is at a crossroads; we must move away from the construct of disability as the defining factor and engage in systemic change to employ a school-wide, preventive and problem solving approach to address the education and support needs of each and every learner in a school. Education can't be truly inclusive if the focus is only on students with disabilities and not on whole school practices with all groups who may experience isolation due to differences such as race, socioeconomic status, appearance, or sexual orientation. In their look at the global understanding and implementation of inclusive education, Artiles, Kozleski, and Waitoller (2011) conceptualize inclusive education as a means to provide students with educational access and opportunities to participate in society which entails access, participation and outcomes for all students who are marginalized in educational systems because gender, caste, ethnic identify, socioeconomic status, race, language, immigration status, and ability level. In a world that historically engages in bullying, ridicule, violence, and war because of difference, this remains nothing less than a social justice issue.

Paula Kluth then goes on to talk about the fact that Inclusion has come to be understood as a single practice that can be implemented by either placing students in the general education or not. In truth, Inclusive education is associated with dozens of practices including co-teaching, community building, active learning, peer tutoring, differentiating instruction, and use of assistive technology. Another misconception is related to the work itself. Some believe that schools either do or don't include and once they have been in the business of "doing inclusion" for a while, the work is done. Nothing could be further from the truth. Inclusion is a way of doing business in schools. It is a process. It is dynamic and figuring out how to best support and welcome a diverse student population changes with every new school reform, with advances in research and technology, and with every new learner that enters the classroom with a unique profile never before seen by his or her teacher. Therefore, the questions teacher must ask, the information they need, and education they

require will need constant adaptation and examination. inclusion is more than a set of strategies or practices, it is an educational orientation that embraces differences and values the uniqueness that each learner brings to the classroom.

Here are a few examples. These examples may or may not be done in our school or community. I did not pick them out for any reason other than the fact they may speak to many of you. Some of you may have strong feelings against this and that is OK. I would encourage you to look closer at what is inclusion and how support and “doing inclusion correctly” can make all the difference in the world. Examples read.

I am not sure who will be taking my place yet as PTO committee member, but I hope that our PTO will continue to grow and support the Inclusive community. I encourage anyone who may be interested in more about inclusion to check out our facebook page (thanks to those of you who have), read a few articles, check out Paula Kluth’s web page.