# Pinecrest Parent Council Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2016

# Welcome

**In Attendance:** Jen Shanraw, Christe Alwin, Katie Van Dorn, April Hunt, Jody Moffett, Regan Quick-Severin, Ellie Vhalos, Nell Kuhnmuench, Amy Webster, Mary Vrbonic, Diane Tuinstra, Matt Pacer, Meg Drouare, Ikram Adame, Toya Pruitt, and Madhavi Natla.

**Call to order:** Christe Alwin called the meeting to order on September 13, 2016 at 7:00 P.M.

**Approval of the Agenda and** **Minutes:** There was a motion and second to approval the meeting’s agenda; the motion passed. There was a motion and a second to approve the minutes from the June 7, 2016 Parent Council meeting; the motion passed.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Christe Alwin and Jen Shangraw welcomed everyone, introduced themselves and the new board. Jen and Christe are the co-presidents; Tanya Merritt (absent) is the vice-president, Amy Adams (absent) is the treasurer, Katie Van Dorn is the secretary, and Ellie Vhalos is the volunteer coordinator. Everyone present at the meeting introduced themselves.

# Officer Reports:

**Presidents** **Report** – Christe Alwin and Jen Shangraw

* **Curriculum night** is coming up on Thursday, September 15, 2016 from 6 to 7:00. Popsicles will be provided at 7pm immediately following. Parent Council will have a table during curriculum night to share opportunities for volunteering at upcoming events.
* **Scholastic Book Fair** is Wednesday, September 14 to Friday, September 16. It will be open from 8am to 8pm on Thursday (Curriculum Night.) If the council meets its goal for this fair, the rewards from scholastic will be larger for the winter and spring fairs.
  + Teachers can bring their class through the fair and allow their students to make purchases. A sign up for time slots will be available in the library. An email will be sent to teachers letting them know the times the fair will be open during the week. Students can also shop during breaks.
  + Each teacher will receive $25 scholastic dollars to use at the fair. New teachers will receive $100. There is no teacher wish list in the fall, this will be a part of the Winter and Spring book fairs.
  + The book fair coordinator is not able to continue in this role. If someone (or multiple people) is interested in taking on a role with the book fair, please let Christe Alwin know. Jody Moffett is able to help co-chair this.
* **Picture Day** is on September 22. All volunteer slots are currently filled.
* **The Crazy Fun Color Run** fundraiser is on Friday, October 7. This event is being co-chaired by April Hunt. The fundraising goal is $8,000, which is about $20 per student. This $8,000 goal is higher than last year’s, but lower than the amount earned during the fundraiser. Every child that raises $20 or more will receive a $5 voucher to the Winter Scholastic Book Fair.
* **Monthly Movie Nights** will take place on the 2nd Friday of every month, starting on October 14, and will be sponsored by a grade, starting with 5th grade. The sponsoring grade will receive half of that month’s movie night profits. There will be popcorn and a movie in October, but hopefully pizza and a movie will be offered in subsequent months.
  + The girl scouts requested to sponsor a month if it is available.
* **Treasurer’s/Financial Update:** The treasurer was unable to attend due to a schedule conflict.
  + Issues with PNC bank have been resolved and the co-presidents now have access to the council’s account.
  + The council purchased a new laptop, which will be present at all of the events to allow parents to sign up for volunteer activities at that time.
* **Teacher Reimbursements** are available. Five teachers have submitted these so far.
* **Parent Council Information** will be updated on Facebook and on its webpage. We are encouraging people to like the page so they will stay up to date on what is happening. Upcoming meetings will pop up as events on Facebook. Katie Van Dorn will update the website.
  + There is also an unofficial Pinecrest Volunteer Facebook page where informal conversations about volunteering can take place. Any Pinecrest parent can request to join this closed Facebook group.
* **A Student Directory** is being assembled. Several teachers have already returned their students’ completed forms. There has been strong participation from families so far.
* **Future Help Requests** can be sent out on Facebook and through the parent directory.

**Principal's Report** - Amy Webster:

* **Shane Johnson** will be covering for 6 weeks while Amy is on maternity leave. Leave will start when the baby arrives.
* **A Staff and Teacher Survey** about Pinecrest is being implemented to gather more information about the school, its history, its current student enrollment, and programming. There is a diverse student body with many different languages being spoken. Once completed, this information will be shared with all families.
* Pinecrest will participate in **Walk to School Day** on October 5, see more information below.

**Teachers' Report** - Mrs. Vrbonic

* **A THANK YOU** to the Parent Council for the teacher reimbursements and the first day breakfast.
* It is confirmed that the council plans to **continue to reimburse** half of the tickets to Wharton, as well as the transportation costs with Dean.
* **Recess Balls** are disappearing. If anyone has any extras laying around their house, please bring them to school and they will be put to good use.
  + This request will be shared on the Parent Council Facebook page.

# Old and New Business

**Funding**

* Soccer nets are falling apart and must be replaced. They are $50 each.
* The Fifth Grade Zoo lesson will be reorganized this year, which will be led by Mr. Konett, to ensure it is more structured.
* The movie license was $460.

**East Lansing Board of Education Update** – Nell Kuhnmuench, President

* Board representatives will attend each school’s council meetings in order to provide updates about what is happening on the board. Board members will rotate which school they visit, so that each board member will have an opportunity to attend each school’s meeting.
* Mrs. Vrbonic is taking over the sex education advisory board.
* The Board of Education supports the State Board of Education’s guidance on LGBTQ youth. The new guidance is not a mandate from the state, but it is more clear on its recommendations and it asks for more parent involvement than in the previous guidance from the state.
* Class sizes are a concern and are being closely watched. The official count day is in early October.

**Bond Committee Update**

* A bond is proposed for next spring to renovate all of the elementary schools.
* Eric Schertzing, Ingham County Treasurer, is chairing the bond committee. Pinecrest has a parent representative on the committee, Robert Burns, who will be asked to attend October’s council meeting to give an update about the committee’s progress to date.
* The bond committee meets in the East Lansing High school library at 6pm, every Thursday until the end of November, except for the last Thursday in September. These are open meetings; anyone may attend.
* The Pinecrest building is filled to capacity. No individual classrooms are overloaded at this time, but the school is not able to accommodate its growing population, especially in the cafeteria.

**Box Tops for Education**

* Diane Tuinstra and Matt Pacer will continue to lead the Box Tops efforts this year.
* Efforts to improve class participation were discussed. Ideas included:
  + Having classrooms collect box tops towards a goal, such as a pizza party or extra recess.
  + Providing an envelope to each teacher with their name on it to make it easier to know which class the box tops are from. The box tops can be collected monthly, with the month’s total written on the envelope to the teacher will know how many they class has turned in that month.
  + Sending out email blasts about the box tops in the newsletter that highlight which classroom had the most that month.
* Labels for Education, which is separate from Box Tops for Education, will not be collected. Labels for Education changed its rules which increased the administrative burden of the program.

**Multicultural Night** takes places in January and was well received last year. There is no identified lead for this activity this year. April Hunt will reach out to the chair from last year.

**Safe Routes to School - International Walk to School Day**

* Regan Quick-Severin is the Pinecrest liaison for International Walk to School Day, which takes place on Wednesday, October 5, 2016. It is to encourage parents to see the possibility of walking on a more regular basis and to reduce the car congestion at drop-off time. Studies show that when kids exercise before school they come in more ready to learn.
  + Safe Routes to School registered Pinecrest to participate.
  + There will be a two-pronged approach to allow as many kids as possible to participate, both a walk *to* school for those who live close enough, and a walk *at* school for those who arrive by bus or who are in before school care.
  + For those who are able to walk to school, Regan needs help in identifying the walkable neighborhoods, meeting places within the neighborhoods where groups of kids can meet to walk together, and parents who can help walk kids from those meeting spots.
  + Safe Routes to Schools will create and print a flyer for walkabout meeting places which can be placed in Friday folders.

**Other Upcoming Activities**

* All Pinecrest Parents are invited to a Parent’s Night Out at Reno’s on October 7th at 7pm.
* Apple Crunch Day is on October 24.
* There is no plan to have a Holiday Bazaar this year.

**Open Discussion/Question**

* A parent shared that her son did not know where to go after he got off from the bus on the first day of school and no one was available to help him find his lineup location. More should be done next year to ensure that all children know where they need to go on the first day and there should be more supports available to assist those who need them.
* Parents requested that the school be open during the before school open house and popsicle playdate. Opening the school during this event would allow students to know where to go on their first day and know where their outside lineup is located. Popsicle playdate is optional for teachers to attend, which many do voluntarily. The council can work with Mr. Konett to make sure that classroom signs are hung up outside by the time of popsicle playdate.
* Parents of Ms. Cohen’s classroom appreciated the “Pre-open house” which gave new kindergarteners the opportunity to visit their new classroom and get more comfortable with the new space.
* The Girl Scouts meet once a month on the third Wednesday of the month, in the library. This is open to 4th and 5th graders. The Girl Scouts will have a table at curriculum night and they will have fliers to give to classrooms to hand out.
  + If anyone needs help around the school, the troop would love to get involved.

**Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned by Christe Alwin at 8:30PM.

Minutes submitted by Katie Van Dorn, Secretary