

**Romona Elementary School PTA
General Board Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2017
Romona Elementary School, Wilmette, IL**

Present: Principal Cindy Anderson, President Jacquelyn Singer, President-Elect Shannon Zock, Secretary Kimberly Newman, 1st VP D39 Communications & Legislation Sanna Imad, 2nd VP Volunteer & Support Sharon Gertz, 3rd VP Asst. Tania Bouwman, 4th VP Fundraising Trina Platt, 4th VP Asst. Sona Moorthy, 2nd grade teacher/Student Council Liaison Sandy Karwowski, Rockin' Romona Co-Chair Brittany Gerster, Daughter Dance Chair Lauren Litchfield, PASS 39 Representative Nik Rana, Civics & Safety/Junior Great Books/Lunch Clubs Chair Julie Hanahan, Parents Jennifer Diep, Morgan Estabrook, Mihaela Nistor, Silviu Nistor, Heather Salazar, Sergey Shemyakin, Jacob Shorr, Molly Meehan Jones, Jacki Krashin, Anna Veluz-Wilkins, Larissa Wozney

1. Call meeting to order - Jacquelyn Singer

- a. The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Jacquelyn Singer.

2. Principal's Report - Cindy Anderson

- a. New Learning Commons incorporates "4-C's" (Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking).
- b. Kids love the new gazebo!
- c. Just completed MAP computerized testing for grades 2-4.
 - i. Really useful information for staff to review growth throughout the year and adjust teaching methods accordingly.
 - ii. Test scores will go home in the spring.
- d. "WIN" Time is a new, district-wide effort to support or extend fluency in math and/or reading. "WIN" = What I Need. Based on data, kids will be grouped by grade and ability and will work with specialist teachers.
- e. Continuing to improve bus schedules due to changes in new lines/dismissal times.

- f. Students have noticed their Spanish classes are 3x/week (vs. every day last year). This was changed so that grade level teachers, specials teachers and the Special Ed team could have dedicated times to meet.
- g. Early Friday dismissal (2:15pm) is beginning to take hold. Parents need to let office know any change of pickup plans as far in advance as possible.
- h. Curriculum Night introduced The Learning Commons to many parents! Would love feedback on whether parents prefer the traditional introductions/speech in the auditorium over the more informal open house atmosphere in The Learning Commons. Please email Cindy Anderson directly.

3. President - Jacquelyn Singer

- a. Explained the 2017-2018 PTA vision: to be more accessible and inclusive through communication (style and tone). Everyone should feel comfortable to come to meetings, ask/email questions, and participate in activities!
- b. PTA membership is up year-to-date at 55%.
- c. IGNITE Fund would like to find opportunities outside of Romona to grow fund.
 - i. Dine Out for Romona! Is Thursday, 10/5 @ ROTI Glenview, 4:00-8:00pm
 - 1. Other future partners might include Valley Lodge, Nick's, California Pizza Kitchen
 - ii. Current participation rate is 35%. Historically we increase as the school year continues, ending up at about 45% participation rate, but our goal is still 100%.
- d. A few PTA positions are still open: Environmental Awareness Committee Representative and CRC (Communications Review Committee) Representative; contact Jackie or Shannon if interested.
- e. Discussion around changing Daughter/Dance and Mother/Son Spring Fling.

- i. A sports night theme was floated for the fall timeframe and a general dance (boys and girls with any parent) was suggested for the spring.
 - 1. Jennifer Diep liked these ideas because they sounded more inclusive.
 - 2. Lauren Litchfield advised that more people might attend, which would result in more volunteers needed.
 - 3. Heather Salazar suggested offering a discount on the cost of the event for volunteers.

4. President-Elect - Shannon Zock

- a. Mileage Club Update:
 - i. Explained that it is a program that will track how students run/walk by recording their laps. Can be used during recess as a fun, structured activity. Each time kids pass by a certain point they use a code to scan into an iPad. Kids earn rewards after a predetermined set amount of miles. It's a great way for kids to be more active!
 - ii. Each grade will have it's own color.
 - iii. PE Teachers to devise a catchy club name.
 - iv. Could recognize achievement over loudspeaker or by small prizes (i.e. Romona Wear sweatbands).
 - v. Nik Rana said he is thankful that the mileage club will be inclusive for IEP/special needs students.
- b. IGNITE Fund discussion focused around what IGNITE is and how to communicate its importance better to parents. The donation amount is less important that the fact that someone is giving.

- i. Julie Hanahan offered to send a pie chart of another school's donation breakout to Jackie.
- ii. Anna Veluz-Wilkins suggested doing a visual aid. Shannon explained which visual aids we are currently using but considered making some of them more high tech.
- iii. Jacki Krashin emphasized targeting Kindergarten parents, since that's when parents are being introduced to school programs and might be more apt to value IGNITE's importance. She acknowledged that it might be an overwhelming time for information however.
 - 1. Silviu Nistor, a Kindergarten parent, confirmed that he had missed seeing any information about IGNITE.
- iv. Anna Veluz-Wilkins proposed highlighting that donating to IGNITE 'gets us parents out of selling magazines/wrapping paper/etc!', a compelling selling point to many!
- v. Julie Hanahan would like to see increased IGNITE branding on PTA sponsored events. This would help increase awareness of what the funds pay for. "IGNITE Funded!" could help explain what the funds go towards and if more parents see it, the more familiar they'd be with the program.
- vi. Shannon shared that at President's Council meetings (a council of Wilmette Elementary School's PTA leaders) they hear about other great educational opportunities. If we could raise more IGNITE funding, we could do more for the children. There is also a way to gain efficiencies from group bookings (among other Wilmette schools) if we could add to our current offerings.

- vii. Julie Hanahan advocated for a emphasis on participation (in the program) vs. the amount donated.
- viii. Sergey Shemyakin inquired about IGNITE donations being tax deductible? They are and he encouraged the PTA to highlight that when soliciting donations!
- ix. Lauren Litchfield mentioned that some companies might match a donation, so people might want to inquire about it.

5. 1st VP, D39 Communications & Legislation - Sanaa Imad

- a. Civics & Safety Representative - Julie Hanahan
 - i. Next meeting is tomorrow, Thursday 9/28.
 - ii. Please put any feedback on the Romona Facebook page.
 - iii. Bike Safety Day will be in the spring.
- b. SAC - Student Council Representative Sandy Karwowski
 - i. The goal of SAC is to raise money for worthy causes in our community or in our school. The year's worthy cause is voted on in the beginning of the school year and money is raised via sales from the school store.
 - ii. 2017-2018 SAC will be formed in October.
 - iii. SAC is responsible for monthly school spirit days, helping out with school assemblies, etc.
- c. D39 Educational Foundation Representative - Sandy Karwowski
 - i. This group exists to raise money for Gripes Grants, which fund projects like the new Gazebo, the Gaga Pit, the WELL Garden, smart boards, etc.
 - ii. The 4th annual fundraiser "Attire to Inspire" will be held Thursday, 9/28 at 11:30am-2:00pm. Jacquelyn Singer, Shannon Zock and Linnea Johnson will represent Romona as models!

- iii. The Community Bingo Night is Friday, 10/20 at 7:45pm, location tbd. If you are not attending the Romona Multicultural Potluck, please come!

6. 2nd VP, Volunteer & Support - Sharon Gertz

- a. Lunchroom volunteers are full. Betsy Weitzman, the Cafeteria Chair, has a list of subs. Please email her directly if you'd like to be on the sub list.
 - i. Discussion around adding 1-2 extra volunteers on Thursday, since pizza day is always busier.
- b. Library Media Center has volunteer openings. Check on PTA website to sign up.
- c. Picture Day retakes will be in November. We are using a different company this year, HR Imaging. After hearing that an email from the company to parents was never sent out, Cindy promised prompt follow up and better future communication.

7. 3rd VP, Enrichment Asst. - Tania Bouwman

- a. Rockin' Romona Rocked! Great DJ, a Fun Run, thank you to everyone who volunteered!
- b. Destination Imagination: this is our 2nd year. Last year's feedback centered on difficulties having meetings at houses. Looking at holding meetings at school this year.
 - i. Come join! It's a reputable program involving science, being creative, and the arts. Plus, it's affordable! Must be available on March 3rd, 2018.
 - ii. Sign up sheet online at PTA website. Jackie to make sure it's easy to find.
- c. WELL Garden Open House Thursday, 10/5, 3:15-4:15pm
 - i. WELL Garden volunteers still needed for Fridays. Sign up online on the PTA website.

1. Brittany Gerster suggested including a list of weekly volunteer opportunities in the Romona Newsletter similar to what Highcrest does. Jackie to look into this.
- d. Multicultural Potluck will be held Friday, 10/20 6:00-7:30pm. Bring a dish to pass!
- e. October Coat Drive will be the last week of the month. No boots please!
 - i. Sandy Karwowski volunteered the SAC to help with this.

8. 4th VP, Fundraising - Trina Platt

- a. The Romona Spirit Wear store has closed so that the bulk order can be placed. It will re-open in the spring.
- b. Romona Red Gala scheduled for Saturday, 2/10.
- c. 3rd Annual Dad's Day Out is Sunday, 10/15 at Wilmette Golf Course. You don't have to golf, you can just come and hang out.
- d. Mom's Night Out coming soon!

9. Additional Business & Announcements

- a. Winter Lunch Clubs - Julie Hanahan would like feedback from parents on which topics they'd like to see and/or teach? Parent-talents are definitely encouraged! Previous topics have included karate, chess, kindness, rainbow loom, comedy, etc.
- b. PASS 39 - Nik Rana is the new President-Elect. The next meeting will be Wednesday, 10/18 at 9:15am at McKenzie Elementary School.
- c. Next Executive Board Meeting - Monday, 10/2, 8:45am.
- d. Next General Board Meeting - Wednesday, 11/15, 7:00pm.

10. Adjournment

- a. Jacquelyn Singer adjourned the meeting at 8:11pm.