

Romona Elementary School PTA
General Board Meeting Minute (via Zoom)
September 30, 2020
Romona Elementary School, Wilmette, IL

Present: Principal Cindy Anderson, President Paloma Samotny, President-Elect Ela Nistor, Secretary Talita Skopis, 1st VPs D39 Communications & Legislation Jie Li and Caroline Ma, 2nd VPs Volunteers & Support Eliza Fisher and Katie Longstreth, 3rd VPs Enrichment Tania Bouwman and Linnea Johnson, 4th VPs Fundraising Lauren Litchfield and Jacki Krashin, Treasurer Kimberly Newman, Webmaster Preeti Varshney, Remote learning liaison Amy Bowen and Parents: Alexandra Eidenberg, Morgan Estabrook, Sarah Squires-Doyle, Julie Hanahan, Deanna Salerno, Ruth Chieng, Joseph and Isaiah Young, Gina Young ,Farheen Asif, Ali, Tina.

1. Call meeting to order - Paloma Samotny

- a. The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Paloma Samotny.

2. Principal's Report - Cindy Anderson

- a. Cindy has been sending individual birthday messages to our students and the school is considering a monthly after school snack (virtual) so all the students who are celebrating their birthdays can join together.
- b. Student assemblies are now going to happen monthly and the first one to be held will be on Respect.
- c. Picture Day is planned to take place in October for both in-person and remote students.
- d. Room parents are working together with their teachers to make sure our students can celebrate Halloween this year.
- e. Outdoor Ed is not taking place at this time, but District wise ideas have been discussed to hopefully be implemented in Spring.
- f. Equity team will be on hold until further instructions and more specific guidelines.

3. President - Paloma Samotny

- a. PTA has been working diligently to keep things as normal as possible for students and parents.
- b. Open Garden event will be taking place this weekend and all families are invited.
- c. Paloma remarks how important it is to stay updated on the PTA communication.
- d. Paloma mentions how successful the distribution of the EduKits was before the start of the school year.
- e. PTA membership is at 43%.

4. President-Elect - Ela Nistor (represented by Paloma Samotny)

- a. The PTA is looking to fill important positions for the next school year, such as VPs Enrichment and Treasurer.

5. Treasurer - Kimberly Newman

- a. Kimberly explains the process of requesting cash or reimbursement for PTA events to be made through the forms available on the PTA website.
- b. Budget for this year will be announced at the next Executive Board meeting and will be available on the PTA website.
- c. Treasurer has been working on submitting PTA's taxes and renewing insurance.

6. Webmaster - Preeti Varshney

- a. Events and deadlines have been posted on the Romona PTA website. Many helpful resources are also on the site as well as volunteer opportunities.
- b. Yearbooks from last year are still available and can be purchased through the website.

7. 1st VPs D39 Communications & Legislation - Jie Li and Caroline Ma

- a. Julie Hanahan explains the importance of the D39 Education Foundation and emphasizes its mission, as well explains what the Gripp Grant is and the Foundation's events.
- b. D39 Education Foundation Fashion Show will not take place this year.
- c. Lauren Litchfield mentions that the PTA received the Gripp Grant from the Education Foundation to be put towards the new playground. She also remarks that virtual bricks in honor of teachers can be purchased as a way to celebrate our teachers.
- d. Julie Hanahan also talks about the importance of Civics and Safety and the events that it is normally held, such as Bike to Highcrest with 4th graders, which did not happen last year due the pandemic, but they are hoping to be able to hold this event this year.
- e. Paloma highlights the importance of visiting the PASS 39 website, where parents of special needs kids and any other interested parents will be able to find important information on resources and events held by the District.
- f. The new members of the CRC, Farheen Ali and Rizwan Syed, are introduced and Paloma explains that the topic of the year will be discussed at their first meeting to be held on 10/7.
- g. SAC is on hold this year, expected to be resumed next year.

8. 2nd VPs Volunteer & Support - Eliza Fisher and Katie Longstreth

- a. Room parents are still needed for some classroom teachers. A meeting will be held via Zoom for the Room parents that have already volunteered to the position to brainstorm and share ideas to help and support their teachers.
- b. Amy Bowen, the Liaison for the Remote Learning community, brings up concerns from remote learning parents in regards to funds that are being raised for Holiday and End-of-Year gifts for teachers, especially in the situation where a Romona student has a teacher from a different school. Amy also reports that in response to a survey, remote learning parents are happy with the work that the teachers have been doing given the circumstances, yet the size of their classes is still an issue that can't be resolved by the PTA.
- c. Based on Amy's report, the Board proceeds to discuss how Romona will promote its Holiday and End-of-Year Teacher's Gift Fund, based on the amounts

of the other schools are collecting from their families. The way that Romona will go about gift giving will be determined and shared soon.

9. 3rd VPs Enrichment - Tania Bouwman and Linnea Johnson

- a. No updates on enrichment activities to be shared at this time. Planning is still happening and updates will be announced soon.
- b. Rocking Romona, which took a different format this year, was a successful event and well received by students and parents.
- c. Paloma gives more updates on the WELL Garden and the Open House to be held this weekend.
- d. Kimberly explains how our Multicultural Take-out Week will take place this year.
- e. Eliza explains how our Virtual Book Fair will happen this year.

9. 4th VPs Fundraising - Lauren Litchfield and Jacki Krashin

- a. Spiritwear - items are still on sale, including the face masks which have been a big hit.
- b. Fundraising from last year was very positive and plans are that the works on the new playground will start next summer.
- c. Jacki shares that the final touches are to be given on the bricks sold last year.
- d. The PTA thanks Alexandra Eidenberg for all her work towards fundraising for our new playground.

10. Additional Business & Announcements

- a. Q&A - meeting attendees ask questions to be answered by the Principal Cindy Anderson.

1- Alexandra Eidenberg asks Cindy to clarify why the Equity and Inclusion work is being canceled. Cindy Anderson answers saying that no work has been canceled and all the programming related to Equity and Inclusion continues the same, however nothing will be added to it until clear guidelines are received by the District and the school.

2- Morgan Estabrook asks what is expected to happen in January if everyone moves to in-person instruction and if the remote kids will join the existing in-person classes. Cindy Anderson answers by saying that it will all depend on the current guidelines in place when the time comes and there isn't an answer for that right now.

- b. The next PTA General Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18th at 7pm.

11. Adjournment

- a. Paloma Samotny adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.