

**Creston PTA General Meeting
September 12, 2017**

Meeting called to order at 6:18pm
Quorum reached

President Abby Nilsen-Kirby introduced herself and the PTA board members. The 2017-18 budget will be moved to October meeting in order to allow for more time to discuss school changes with Jennifer Patterson and Krista Blovad.

Secretary's Report – Kathryn Schmidt

The minutes from the final meeting of the previous school year were distributed and reviewed. There were no corrections and the minutes will be filed.

Treasurer's Report – Rebekah Garringer

The year-end financial report was distributed for review. Fundraisers at the end of the year did better than expected. Rebekah has asked for someone to step up as assistant treasurer in order to have this school year to train with her; this is her final year as PTA treasurer.

Membership Report – Molly O'Neill

No report yet as Molly is completing her training in the coming month. Abby reviewed the membership cost with those present; it remains at \$10.

President's Report – Abby Nilsen-Kirby

Abby attended the National PTA conference in Las Vegas this summer. She attended very productive workshops covering topics such as competent leadership, conflict resolution, non-profit management and reviewed the national PTA programs available to schools. Additionally, the conference offered time for her to network and talk shop with other PTA leaders. Abby is excited for our PTA to continue on its path of promoting inclusivity and maintaining a good relationship with the staff.

Health and Safety – Jessica Wenzl

- Bike and Walk Day is October 4.
- The Great Shakeout is the week of Oct 16-20; we will be hosting various safety personnel to speak with the students at dismissal time. Red Cross, Fire Dept, PDX Portland Prepares and PPS Emergency Management will all be present.
- Jessica is working toward forming a Neighborhood Emergency Response Team. This will include training with police and fire for catastrophic emergency assistance. Jessica is hoping to get a team together; she has begun the leader training and is looking for several staff and parents to join.

Committee Reports:

Communications – Lisa Kensel

Lisa reviewed her job scope for the new parents. She is working on a website redesign for the PTA page. There will be a business page on the website in order to showcase neighborhood businesses and support Creston family-owned businesses.

Chinook Book – Lisa Kensel

Sales are starting out slow as usual. Lisa explained that this is the only school fundraiser that we do through the students, and encouraged everyone to check with friends and neighbors.

Green Team – Lisa Kensel

Lisa spoke on behalf of chair Heidi Jandro. The green team lost a valuable member last year and would love to have more members to work on their continuing projects.

Reflections – Elena Miranda

- Reflections, the National PTA Art Competition that encourages children to explore their creative sides, is working with the theme "Within Reach" this year. Elena gave a brief rundown of the program. She is always looking for committee members and has plans to use the committee's fundraised amount for after-school arts enrichments.
- Art Night is October 6; volunteers are welcome. Kids can work on Reflections projects.

Auction Committee – Lisa Kensel

The auction is scheduled for March 10, 2018 at the Mercy Corps building. We can bring in alcohol and the bar will be open for the duration of the event again. Lisa will be looking for sponsorships to underwrite the event costs. She is updating the business sponsorship levels with the hope of attracting a larger number of local businesses.

Creston Music Program – Sam McKinstry

- Winter Singalong will be in December
- Band program is in full swing with three levels
- Arts Council – working to get arts assemblies and events into the school day. The council is looking for ideas and parental volunteers to sit on the committee; additionally need a parent to chair.
- Abby and Sam will get together to determine what needs to happen so that we can focus fundraising specific to those needs.

New Business:

Volunteer Needs

We do not have EAs this year so the PTA is recruiting room parents to organize classroom volunteers. The teachers are excited to have this support throughout the year. Abby is working with Mirra Nerenberg to locate classroom parents for each teacher. The volunteer form went home in student packets and committees for this year's events/programs will be put together.

Principal's Report – Krista Blovad

Krista is very appreciative to the parents and staff for welcoming her. She is aware of the questions and uncertainties surrounding the interim principal situation, and her focus is on the students and staff and moving forward. She is working on developing Room 118 as a multipurpose space for the middle school students and Vermont Hills, and possibly for use as a community space during events such as Coffee with the Principal. She is available by phone/email.

Special Guest - Jennifer Patterson- Senior Director of Franklin Cluster

Jennifer attended this month's meeting in order to address parents concerns and questions about Principal Hurdle's leave of absence. She said she advocated for a fully committed interim administrator rather than choosing a retired principal in order to maintain the community at Creston. At this time she can only pass on a message from Conrad Hurdle that he "regrets the timing of this leave." She cannot give any further information as to the nature of the leave, the expected duration, or any other details due to the privacy laws surrounding human resources.

- Parents raised concerns over losing momentum on a number of ongoing projects at the school and want reassurance that Krista and Jennifer will be committed to both not losing ground on current programs as well as making headway on new and upcoming ones.
- The STEAM collaborative school designation is set to begin a multi-year process, which had been started by Principal Hurdle; Krista will look into the information and files available and will work with the committee to continue moving it forward.
- General view of the school is a struggle; the most recent capture rate was 51%, and parents are worried that the principal's leave will be another negative impact on community opinion about the school.
- The school and parents would like direction from the district as to what they can do to promote the school, rather than having to make suggestions from the school's end. A visit from the incoming superintendent was discussed, as well as bringing in the PPS Communications team to possibly highlight positive attributes or a particular program/event at the school.
- The parents want to be made aware of future news directly from PPS before it is sent to media outlets. Several parents indicated feeling ignored by PPS administration and want to know what the district can offer the school to offset this.

Jennifer will be spending time weekly at Creston to address these as well as work with Krista as she comes fully on board at the school. She spoke of her full confidence in Krista's abilities and energy, and Krista confirmed that she is excited to be a part of Creston for as long as it is required.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:18pm

Minutes recorded and submitted by Kathryn Schmidt, Creston PTA Secretary