

PTO Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 2, 2008
10:00-12:00
Volunteers Hall, Harvard Public Library

12 people attended

With no voting items and a what was thought to be a short topic list, the PTO board and members met in the new venue of the beautiful Volunteers Hall for an informal meeting consisting of updates, discussion and, of course, refreshments.

The first speaker was Suzanne Dutkewych. Suzanne began with an update on the membership directory. It is coming along nicely and will have a new format this year. Due to the laborious information gathering and data sharing process involved with this project, it's always a challenge to get it out quickly but she feels confident that it should be out to members within the next two weeks. Also, new PTO members will have their PTO newsflashes coming to their email boxes in even quicker fashion.

Suzanne also contributed a new idea about fundraising to the group. Her suggestion was to create a fundraising opportunity menu that the PTO might present to town businesses in the beginning of each school year so that they might be able to plan better for these opportunities as opposed to the current onesy ,twosy approach. This idea resonated well with the group and the PTO will follow up with the idea. Former PTO board member, Beth Drummey, contributed that there are advertising opportunities and perks given to PTO advertising supporters that are not currently marketed so this would be another way to increase fundraising business. (ex. If they donate \$500, they automatically get an ad in the fete program) One suggested that businesses might like and would pay for the opportunity to support a particular event or service because they can have more presence as a supporter of the PTO and the schools.

Deborah Sauve, PTO membership director, reported that membership numbers seem to be lower at this point than they have been in the past. We are currently at 172 memberships and are hoping to get that number up before the directories go to print. Along those lines, the PTO board has addressed parents at all 3 elementary curriculum nights and attended Bromfield Open House as well. We're hoping to identify what's going on with the low membership and suggestions were made to do some more public PR about the PTO by placing an invitation to join the PTO to parents and the community at large in the local paper next week.

We had a brief discussion about the importance of thanking the PTO volunteer base and it led into the idea that providing a guideline of expectations for Committee Chairs might be helpful to ensure that a program's legacy continues. These included simple suggestions such as a chair person should try to identify someone to shadow their hard work and provide the PTO with volunteer names such that they might be recognized for

their contributions. It was noted that the PTO is still working to identify co chairs for the Fun Fair.

Conversation turned to finances when Lynn Seymour gave a brief update on our budget this quarter. Not much has changed since last month except for the increase in funds due to membership dues. Calendar sales have just about broken even and it was pointed out that it's initial purpose was not to be a fundraiser, though it would be great if it turned out that way.

Discussion turned to some of the funding requests currently on the table from the elementary school. Renzulli learning software has been a topic of discussion. There is agreement that it could be a valuable learning tool for children, but some are still very uncomfortable with the cost/benefit of the tool and the planning around it's implementation and success metrics. Further discussion and exploration of Renzulli is necessary before bringing it to a vote. As mentioned last month, PTO members can explore the topic at [www. Renzullilearning.com](http://www.Renzullilearning.com) , user name: rectorp password: parent

Smartboards were also brought up and regarded as another cool learning tool for the schools. At \$5,000. per set up, more discussion is needed around these as well.

Two hours went by quickly with much lively discussion and idea sharing. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 6th in the Bromfield Library at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Bardenheuer
Harvard PTO Secretary