

IDES PTO Meeting  
School auditorium  
November 20, 2017: 5:30 pm

Attendees: Matt Menne, Jess Danielian, Pepi Acebo, Sarah Patten, Jessica Blunden, Rhonda Sizemore, Bo Royer, Libby Kyles, Ryan Williams, Leslie Blaich, Joan Pinegar, Brad Johnson, Maggie Wheelless, Marti Sullivan, Betsie Stockslager, **many others**

*\*See related ppt slides for meeting.*

Matt provided a brief introduction and encouraged folks to “like” Isaac Dickson Parents and Families on Facebook.

**PTO Mission:** Work to improve the experience of students, families, and teachers at IDES.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Presentation:**

- Excellent presentation by Grayson, a current 4<sup>th</sup> grader, who provided an overview of the Tailgate Market fundraiser by the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders last year.
  - They raised \$893.66!!!
    - Created 7 scholarships for Camp Greenville
    - Presented Joan a check for \$293.66.
    - IMPRESSIVE!

**Clarity on Volunteering:** (Joyce Graves was supposed to come discuss, could not make it. Matt gave overview instead):

- There are 2 levels of volunteers
  - Level 1: Not alone with kids (e.g., helping in classrooms, chaperoning regular field trips). No background check needed.
  - Level 2: May be alone with 1 to a few kids (e.g., tutoring, overnight field trips). Background check strongly recommended (Pepi noted it is not *required*).
- Volunteer “training” required in person. Will be held on December 13 at 5:15.
  - A parent noted that this creates a lot of obstacles to trying to just help out when you can. Others agreed.
  - Will there be an alternative to this in person training if folks can’t make that time?

### **“Speed Dating”:**

- All attendees spent 4-5 minutes talking with someone they didn’t know about their thoughts on homework – pros/con (nice way to get to know your neighbor and gain a different perspective on an important topic).

### **Movie Night in December (Jess Danielian gave overview):**

- Looks like a go – still deciding on what movie to show. Must be “G” and not centered around any specific holiday.

- Will likely be on December 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Maybe have popcorn, hot chocolate, kids can wear pjs.
- NOT a dropoff.
- Volunteer sheets were passed around to everyone in attendance.

**Recess Project:** (Holly Musgrove, our IDES rep on this district wide project gave the overview)

- Should kids have recess every day, including PE days? (we don't have any more due to earlier release compared with past couple of years).
- Many studies show that free play is good for kids. Will post several studies on website.
- Aim to petition school board on this.
- A few teacher opinions:
  - Libby: With schedules as is, the PE day time is appreciated because she needs to do her iReady time. Basically, teachers need to get stuff done.
  - Betsie: students are more productive after they get a break, even 15-20 minutes.
  - Rhonda: her kids go out and run every day anyway.
- Matt asked how parents can be supportive of this.
  - Bo noted that they should talk to the grade levels to see.
- Joan: some teachers have garden time on the same days as PE time.
- Sarah: Need a playground for older kids. What they have now just isn't adequate.
- Joan asked about reviving playground committee. Libby noted that unfortunately too many teachers are on too many committees. Maybe reach out to parents?
- Jess D. noted that Windy Ridge (Weaverville) built a really nice playground for ~\$30K. They did a fundraiser to come up with funds. Libby said that a lot of places will fund playgrounds – need to be strategic.

**Hot Chocolate 10K/5K/Marshmallow Dash:** Matt described

- 11th annual race will be January 20.
- Need ~100 volunteers for race day.
- Jess D. and others met with Leslie G. We are \$4K behind in sponsorships. Packets to solicit sponsorships were passed out to everyone in attendance in case they know of any business interested in participating.
- Need a Hot Chocolate committee for next year. This is the first year that Leslie does not have a child at IDES, so a bit of a vacuum was created this year.
- Question: Is it worthwhile to send home registration packets in kids' backpacks to try to get more participation?

**Budget:** (update from Sarah, see ppt slides for specific numbers)

- There is some \$ that dates to 2009. Joan asked about using K-2 playground funds for older kids playground but it is specifically designated for playground maintenance only.
- \$ is still coming in from various Dine for Dickson events already held.

**Montford North Star Academy:** Pepi provided update

- This is the new middle school at the old Isaac Dickson building on Montford.
- At meeting, ACS superintendent cleared up some questions/concerns/uncertainty. The school WILL be a 6,7,8 grade school, NOT a 5-6 grade school.
- There are questions about whether 9-12 grades will be added. Parents not happy about that prospect.
- Parents seem to be happy with the school so far.
- Pepi plans to attend the school board session on December 4.

**Conservation Easement:** (Pepi led discussion)

- Pepi explained the broad general idea is to get investors, but property from Duke, put conversation easement, and donate back to school.
- Look at the amount of land behind the fence. Swap with Duke.
- Changes won't happen now, but maybe in 10-20 years IDES will have more land/flexibility.
- Duke still owns the property now. This idea cannot work if a developer buys it. Duke does plan to sell once the substations (i.e., Patton Ave) are a done deal, so this is pretty timely.

**"Portrait of a Community":** (update from Matt)

- December 18<sup>th</sup> PTO meeting (5:30 PM) will be a listening and discussion session. Parents and others encouraged to attend and participate.
- Portrait expected to be how we (IDES) got to current state of education system.
- Christopher Holt will do the artwork via Artist in Residence program - give input to faces and stories. Plans to work with Ms Duffy's art classes.
- Asheville City Schools is excited about the project. Wants us to write a grant proposal so they may provide matching funds.

**Open Mike:**

- Smile.amazon.com:
  - For anyone who signs up and uses this website to make Amazon purchase, 0.5% of purchase goes to IDES PTO.
  - Need to get this information out to parents (before holidays) – easy way to raise money!
- Brad presented (beautifully designed!) IDES t-shirts to PTO LC. Thank you!
- Matt noted that we may get a \$67K grant for Solar Panels and anonymous donor will close the gap. Stay tuned for more details from Matt who has spearheaded this initiative. Thanks Matt!
- Nikole Hannah Jones (2017 MacArthur Genius Grant awardee) will speak on February 28 at UNCA's Lipinkski Auditorium. This is an Asheville City Schools fundraiser.
- Go Local cards coming at end of November. See Pepi to purchase one! A card for 2018 will also give you access to 2017 deals through end of the year.

Next PTO meeting will be held Monday, December 18 at 5:30 PM in IDES auditorium. As noted above, this will be a "Portrait of a Community" listening and discussion session.

Meeting adjourned