



MINUTES

OES PTA Meeting

March 4, 2020, 7:00pm

In Attendance

Karen Rose, Meredith Campbell, Donna Kakarala, Chris Kelly, Keith Eck, Ellie Zadeh, Brigette Polmar, Nicole White, Jim Miller, Mimi Chou, Megan Harrell, Hema Arora, Gary Koroloev, Suparna Paul

Welcome

Karen Rose, PTA President, welcomed everyone. Meredith Campbell ran the FaceBook Live feed and Brigette Polmar had the call-in line open. No one called in on the call-in line, so it was closed after about 45 minutes.

Minutes: Nicole White made a motion that the minutes from the prior meeting be approved. It was seconded by Donna Kakarala and approved (unopposed).

Business – Enrichment Program

Entire meeting dedicated to the subject of after school enrichment. Brigette Polmar led the attendees through a presentation which addressed the results of the online survey regarding after school enrichment and detailed the realities of the program including how it is run, who has responsibility for various aspects of the program, the challenges in setting up and running after school programs, and ideas for next steps.

Video of meeting (and after school enrichment program presentation):

<https://www.facebook.com/meredithcampbell.98/videos/10220250601442772/> (OES Facebook page)

Some details of the presentation:

(Brigette Polmar also offered to make available the presentation slide show on request)

People love the enrichment program. Parents of students attending enrichment and also volunteers running the program have concerns about the program going forward. The biggest issue is the ability to ensure that kids safely make it to their programs after school (that they don't forget or go home to an empty house) and the volunteers needed to make this happen. There are other issues as well, such as when parents are late to pick up their children, and the impact to volunteers who are parents themselves. The presentation also includes comments, questions, and concerns from the survey that gathered parent input about the enrichment program at OES.

There were several questions raised to better understand issues around this program and clarify misconceptions. Two questions of note addressed a program of a different nature:

Jim Miller spoke specifically to a self-defense program he successfully ran in the past that benefitted OES and did not have any of the problems that are addressed in the presentation. It was established that this type of program indeed stands alone as it was held later in the afternoon/evening, so parents were responsible for taking kids to class themselves and stayed during the class to be there when the class ended. This type of program, one that starts later in the evening, avoids the safety issues of a program that starts directly after school.

An online question was raised about the possibility of a different format for classes. Rather than classes that meet once a week for 9 weeks, maybe consider classes that are just 1-2 days or 1-2 weeks. This is something that absolutely could be considered.

There were positive comments about the morning program and it makes sense to consider keeping morning only sessions if the afternoon programs can't be worked out. The afternoon programs cannot be run without volunteers. Up to now, members of the PTA Board have volunteered, in addition to their Board duties, jobs, and parent responsibilities. But there has been no formal backup or contingency plan to allow any flexibility at all (for illness or travel, bad traffic, etc.). We cannot plan afternoon programs that start directly after school without adequate volunteers. Many families at Oakton have 2 working parents, making volunteering after school impossible. And some count on the after school programs to allow them extra time to get to school to pick up their kids. This is especially true of parents who aren't able to get their kids into SACC. Unfortunately, the enrichment program is not a substitute for SACC and cannot work with SACC to help with the after school coordination.

There was discussion about the duties to be covered in the enrichment program – from the VP of Programs to the volunteers to help sign kids in and out and remind kids, parents, teachers about classes each week (for classes that start right after school).

The discussion led to a new perspective that maybe we don't need to fix the current system, but instead explore other types of class offerings. Focus on the content, not the construct – unless we have enough volunteers to make the traditional program work.

NEEDED: OES PTA VP of Programs (required position to run the program). This position can also be done with 2 or more volunteers sharing the many responsibilities. Will advertise the opening through PTA channels. Jim Miller offered to volunteer to help on a team working on the enrichment program.

Next Steps:

March 15 – PTA will make recommendation about how to move forward with enrichment program

March 22 – feedback from Principal, preference about how to move forward with enrichment program

March 29 – PTA Board will vote on future of the program and how to implement

Upcoming Events and Activities

Skate Night - Friday, March 20

DFD Chipotle – March 25

Variety Show – March 26, 27

6th Grade Basketball Game – June 2

Next Meeting

The next Meeting will be on Wednesday, May 6th at 8:30am in the OES library.