

Minutes from the Montessori PTO Meeting  
March 8<sup>th</sup> 2005

The meeting began with an update on playground resurfacing from school Director, Gordon Cook. The current pea gravel is fine for now as we continue to raise money toward a soft surface. DHS had indicated that there might be some funds available from the University of Northern Iowa – Gordon is pursuing this with the University. Kim Kopt mentioned that Webber Elementary has been applying for grant money for their playground renovations. She will try to get a grant list from Webber and see if any of the sources would apply to Montessori.

Gordon has also agreed to eliminate the Newsletter as a PTO responsibility. It will now be handled through the office. The PTO President will still contribute “PTO News” to the newsletter.

Teri Ault will be finalizing the hand printing of the second stairwell for meeting the fall goal for Box Tops collection after spring break. It was decided to eliminate Campbell’s Soup Label collection for next year since each label only results on one penny for our school. The Box Tops continue to generate over \$400 each year.

The website will be undergoing some updating by school accountant Ken Henshaw and Gordon Cook. Jen Schnider will step down as webmaster after spring break. We thank her for all her hard work on the site. Shaun Vecera will supply some links to educational sites on Montessori methods.

Shaun has also agreed to lead a book discussion group to help parents become more familiar with the Montessori method. He will pick a book for the spring and see if there is interest.

Gordon indicated the vision committee is discussing having new parents come to a Montessori Method meeting in addition to the New Parent Orientation. The method meeting would focus strictly on Montessori concepts and would be a parent only event.

Also, PTO President, Colleen Schilling indicated there is a book check out program for parents interested in learning more about Montessori. She will put some information in an upcoming newsletter on where the books are located (the lobby) and how to check them out (a sign out sheet).

Jennifer Teghament provided a list of work that needs to be completed in the workroom. Teacher representative, Jenny Bowman agreed that a request form would be an easy way for teachers to indicate what needs to be done in their classroom. Colleen will make this form and Jenny will run it by the teachers at their next meeting. We will have a central place to put the completed requests. Parents will come in to volunteer time and choose a request to complete. Simple instructions will be provided on the form so parents will not have to interrupt classroom activity to complete their work. We will have this project up

and running this spring to work out any problems. It should be a helpful way to free up teacher time in the classroom.

Colleen indicated that the Chili Supper was a big success. The White Bean Chicken Chili entry from the PTO won first place and ran out quickly. We have noted the amounts of chili that needs to be made for next year so we do not run out again. The PTO will be taking over coordinating this activity for next year in an effort to free up more time for the teachers. We made over \$900 for the playground soft surface. It was also decided that the raffle will be a part of the supper next year but raffle items will be solicited from local business not parents.

Gordon reported that the Board of Directors will have 2 or 3 positions open for the spring. Their general meetings are every other month on Saturday mornings. More information will follow in the newsletter.

We have begun our new officer search for the 2005-2006 school year. The information in the newsletter has not generated a lot of interest; however, Shaun Vecera has agreed to take over as President next year. Cindy Hill has volunteered to be Vice President and Julie Smith will take over as Room Parent Coordinator.

We are still looking for individuals to fill Secretary, Treasurer, Staff Appreciation Coordinator, Ice Cream Social Coordinator, and all the Fall Carnival Committee members positions before the end of the school year. Kim Kopt indicated her husband Mike might be interested in the Back to School Clean Up Day Coordinator position.

Colleen will be putting together a flyer describing duties of each open position to go home in Friday folders. She is also revising the Parent Volunteer Form which will go home in enrollment packages. All parents are asked to complete a new volunteer form each year so keep everything current.

Colleen then lead a discussion on a new meeting date for next year. It was decided to move our time to the second Thursday of each month still at 7PM. This new date will take effect in July for our summer meeting. July 14<sup>th</sup> at 7PM. For the remainder of the school year we will continue to meet on the second Tuesday.

Several people reported that most classrooms are not doing the Spring Party this year. We agreed to remove it from the beginning of the year sign up sheets. Colleen will provide an updated copy of these sheets for discussion at the next meeting.

Jenny indicated that the 2 and 3 day summer school options as discussed at the last meeting did not hold much interest for the staff. The summer program this year will be similar to last summer.

Gordon will be discussing with Mr. Knipfer the possibility of children singing to the parents as discussed at the last meeting. He will report back at the next meeting.

Spring picture day will be April 5<sup>th</sup>. Colleen will use the volunteer forms to solicit 4 parent volunteers for help out in the AM and PM.

Arbor Day is April 26<sup>th</sup>. We had planned to use the money collected from can recycling to plant a tree. Gordon reported that the tree fund has over \$700 in it and we have a plan and pricing from Forevergreen Nursery to add trees to the front of the building. We may plant a symbolic tree with the children on Arbor Day and let Forevergreen plant the rest.

Administrative Professionals Day is April 27<sup>th</sup>. Colleen will discuss with Cindy Kuehl what would be the best way to recognize Judy this year.

A brief discussion of 5 year old time was held. The program will continue next year in the same fashion as it did this year. There will be a few staffing changes for next year, Jane, Cindy and Tennille will continue as full day lead teachers. Sarah will continue as a half day lead teacher. New half day leads will be Maris and Wanda. There will be three new assistant teachers hired.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 7PM. Everyone is welcome to attend.