

Oxford PTA Meeting Minutes October 15, 2014

- I.- Meeting called to order, approximately 15 people in attendance including Principal Beth Rhine, PTA President Sabrina Leunig, PTA Treasurer Zoe Scheffy, PTA Secretary Amy Feldman.
- II.- Zoe distributed and conducted a brief budget review highlighting:
 - one more month returns (\$4,900 so far)
 - roll-over funds from district (\$6,750 returned to us)
 - \$850 in PTA dues collected so far
- III.- Gaby provided an update on Harvest Faire preparations noting that volunteer scheduling and most donations coming along well but the donation of sausages and grills fell through at the last minute. A call for those present to consider reaching out to any contacts who might be able to help shore up food donations and/or grills for the event was made.
- IV.- Anna Rainer presented on the art program at Oxford, starting by expressing her appreciation for the PTA funds that support the program. Anna's presentation touched on the following:

*The philosophy that guides her practice as an artist and art educator emphasizes the importance of making mistakes, risk-taking, perseverance, valuing process over final product and seeing each unique work as a success.

*The underlying belief that the limits of language do not define the limits of thinking.

*The importance of 'arts integration' and contextualizing what is going on in the classroom while providing experience with different forms of art.

Anna also showed examples of a first grade autumn trees project and used the example to underscore how a project was able to:

- connect directly to science and literature in the classroom and to the children's experience of every day life
- build subject-specific vocabulary
- encourage risk-taking and perseverance
- work on sequencing and following a multi-step process
- build fine motor skills

Anna closed with slides from a third grade project and described the process the students had to work through and the thinking behind Anna's selection of the project.

V.- Robin Hartley presented on the technology program at Oxford, also supported by PTA funds. She discussed the following three as goals for the program:

- *The importance of building fluency with technology to enable students to create and to be creative.

- *Helping students learn to use technology to conduct good research.

- *Building the skills needed to effectively use computers (including typing).

Robin also walked through the school's new library website and the many links and resources it connects to—useful for students, teachers and parents:

<http://library.berkeleyschools.net/oxford-library>

Robin's time is spent mainly with 3rd, 4th and 5th grade classes, working with each for approximately 45 minutes a week, but she also conducts teacher trainings and consults with grade-level-teams during common planning time. There are currently 2 carts with 30 Chromebooks each at the school.

Responding to a parent's questions, Robin also noted the following:

- *There is a difference between active and passive use of technology when considering the negative impacts of screen-time. She values using technology as an active tool for information gathering and to support creative production.

- *At this stage, Robin pre-determines and carefully curates the sites students are able to access for research. Teaching students to evaluate their sources and make independent choices about where to gather research will become a bigger part of the technology curriculum as they get older.

VI.- Jared Sanders presented on the physical education program at Oxford, also supported by PTA funds. Jared focused on his goals and objectives, which include:

- *developing bodies and minds (perseverance, focus)

- *building confidence and feelings of self-efficacy

- *developing locomotor skills, fine motor skills and body control

*focusing on games/sports that can be carried over to recess time and that can be self-sustaining by the students once learned (i.e. not requiring ongoing adult guidance)

*having fun with a goal of building positive associations with physical activity and healthy habits

Jared also noted that he collaborates with teachers to make connections between the cognitive and physical needs of individual students and works to bridge the school day with the afterschool program for the students he supports in that setting.

VII.- Sabrina opened the floor to comments or concerns (none were raised) and quickly reviewed upcoming events as listed on the agenda.

Motion to approve September meeting minutes as distributed was approved.

Meeting adjourned