

Academie Lafayette Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO)

6:00 p.m. September 15, 2014 Cherry Campus

Attending:

Board Members in attendance: Jeff Johnson (President), Meghan Flavin (VP Oak), Leslie Kohlmeyer (VP Cherry), Becky Smith (VP Communications), Lynn Yarnevich (Treasurer), Heather Cochran (Events Coordinator) and Heather Dauzvardis (Secretary)

Head of School/Principals: M. Mbengue and Mme. Royce

45 members were present as indicated on the attendance sheet circulated

Minutes:

The meeting was brought to order by Jeff Johnson who introduced the 2014-2015 PTSO Executive Board members. Mr. Johnson also introduced M. Mbengue and explained that he, as stipulated in the PTSO bi-laws, will attend board meetings as a non-voting member. Mr. Johnson apologized for the oversight of his not having been included in earlier PTSO meetings. M. Mbengue welcomed those in attendance as did Mme. Royce, Cherry Street Principal.

Jeff Johnson provided an overview of the **PTSO operating structure and purpose** as outlined in PTSO bi-laws. Quarterly meetings will be based upon Robert's Rules of Order and each household is represented by one voting member. Fund raising is a key activity with monies being held by Academie Lafayette in a segregated PTSO account. Discussions about possibly seeking 501 C3 status have occurred in the past and are being re-visited this year. Monies are disbursed based upon the budget and approval by the PTSO membership. An Evening in Paris is the premier PTSO sponsored fundraiser and brings in the bulk of revenue. This year's event co-chairs are Tiffany Meeks and Darron Story.

Another key task of the PTSO is staging community-building events such as Boo Bayoo, school picnics, field days, playground mixers and teacher appreciation activities. Mr. Johnson stated that he would like to see more of the events being headed up by parents, fall under the PTSO umbrella. This possibility will be explored this year as well.

Lastly, Mr. Johnson stressed the critical role the PTSO plays in recruiting volunteers for the above activities. The PTSO Board President invited those in attendance to seek out volunteer opportunities and attributed strong parental involvement as the distinguishing asset that has made Academie Lafayette the success it is today.

The 2014-2015 PTSO Calendar was presented to the membership. Another goal this year is to combine the PTSO calendar with that of the school, including fund-raising events. The Allez 5K is being coordinated by a different parent this year and will not occur in the Fall as indicated but instead possibly

in the Spring. Mr. Johnson reported that the Executive Board has determined to move the PTSO budgeting process to the Spring to be in sync with that of the school's budgeting process. Mr. Johnson and M. Mbengue spoke to the difficulty of the AL Board not having definitive information in the Spring when the AL budget is being determined when the PTSO doesn't identify their contributions and gift until the following Fall.

Becky Smith moved that the calendar be accepted and the membership voted in favor.

Next, Mr. Johnson presented the various line items of the proposed **2014-2015 PTSO budget**.

Discussion of several items occurred with questions about the diminished amount of the PTSO's gift to the school from M. Mbengue and parent-elect AL board member Marvin Lyman. Mr. Johnson explained that while this line item is less, other budgeted items such as 10K for the Cherry Street kitchen upgrade and the increased donations for the school trips, make up for the difference. Mr. Johnson stated that while supporting the school, it is important that a fair portion of PTSO revenues be allotted to line items that are identified and voted upon by the parents. Mr. Johnson again pointed out that having M. Mbengue attend PTSO board meetings and synchronizing AL/PTSO budgeting processes will aid in coordinating our efforts.

Further, the PTSO was asked to identify options for this year's Evening in Paris "Fund a Need" and may propose the Cherry Campus kitchen upgrade. There were questions from the membership about this and whether or not a fully functioning cafeteria is the end- goal. This is not anticipated at this time but upgrades are needed to use the kitchen in any capacity and may make future discussions of kitchen purposes more realistic. M. Mbengue responded to a question about the use of microwaves to heat up meals in the classroom as this was not approved for PTSO funding. M. Mbengue said the question was under consideration and a school-wide policy to be determined.

Parents asked for more information about the process by which budget requests are made. Mr. Johnson responded that any PTSO member can submit a budget request and all will be considered. The more specific budget proposals are about items, programs and cost, the better. A question was asked about the lack of arts programs being funded while there were a number of sports initiatives that were awarded. According to Mr. Johnson, this was in response to the nature of proposals submitted and the larger number of students that would be served by the requested sports equipment, uniforms, etc. vs. the modest number of students who would benefit from the arts proposal. It was also pointed out that there are a couple of fund raisers specifically to assist art programming. Mr. Johnson encouraged parents to submit budget requests that represent the diversity of interests and needs of the school. These requests will be due March 1, 2015.

Becky Smith moved to accept the proposed budget, this was seconded by Meghan Flavin and approved by the membership.

Sheila Dougherty was invited to present an overview of the 6th grade France trip fund raising opportunities and provided the membership with a calendar of events dedicated to this purpose. The board fielded several questions about the nature of the 5th, 6th and 8th grade trips and their costs.

Sarah Guthrie, Interim Development Coordinator, gave the audience information about the school's Annual fund and Capital Campaigns.

Parent Elect Board member Marvin Lyman described his role, experience on the AL board and expectations. He encouraged parents to nominate themselves and serve in this important capacity. Mr. Johnson relayed that PTSO voting for these positions will occur in the Second Quarter meeting in November vs. during Boo Bayoo as in the past. Mr. Johnson stated that he would like to see PTSO board members remain for a two year period – subject to approval of the membership, to enhance continuity and progress toward objectives.

A parent inquired about the status of tutoring this year. Mme. Royce stated that efforts are underway to get this going as soon as possible and that test reports and other evaluative tools will assist in identifying tutoring candidates.

Mr. Johnson thanked the group for coming and adjourned the meeting.

Minutes submitted by H. Dauzvardis