

Country Day Montessori PTO
Minutes
September 1, 2009

Meeting started at 6:35 pm by Head of School Betty Williams.

Ms. Betty welcomed everyone and thanked us for our support of our children and the school. She presented the current enrollment at The Country Day School, which is 121 students. The enrollment in the 2008-2009 school year was 110 students at the start of the year and 120 at the end. Ms. Betty went on to present more good news, Primary Teacher; Ms. Rhi is getting married in March. Unfortunately she will be leaving the school in December. Ms. Betty assured the PTO that she has a good replacement teacher already lined up. Additionally, Ms. Betty had another happy/sad announcement, which was to announce the retirement of Ms. Betty Segal at the end of this school year. Ms. Betty Segal has given 19 years to the children of the Country Day School and will be deeply missed. A retirement party is planned for April. Ms. Betty Williams is in the process of hiring a new Kindergarten and already has a specific candidate lined up.

The first parent information meeting of the year was announced. It will be held on Friday September 18th and it will discuss how the school experience is not just about the children.

Ms. Betty briefly discussed the accreditation process that the school is undergoing. Representatives from the accrediting body will be at the school on Thursday October 1st, and possibly October 2nd. Ms. Betty would appreciate any parents that can come on campus from 1:30 to 2:30 on October 1st, to meet the accreditation team. She asks only that we be honest and truthful when discussing any school issues with the accreditation team.

Finally, Ms. Betty discussed the flu issue that has been in the news. She informed us that NEISD has already seen instances of the flu and is urging everyone to practice good hygiene habits, such as hand washing. She wants parents to know that the Country Day School staff is discussing the issue and will prudently decide on matters such as closing the school or individual classrooms, due to flu. Additionally if the Accrediting association, health department or other such entity deems that the Country Day School should close, then it will. A parent raised the question, would such school closures count toward the 17 allowed school absences? At this time Ms. Betty was unable to answer that question, but promised to give it some thought.

Ms. Betty introduced PTO president, Rose Saenz and turned the meeting over to her. Rose, thanked all those in attendance for coming and showing their support. Rose then introduced the other board members.

Secretary, Tricia Love was introduced and she summarized the minutes of the May meeting and informed all that these and all other minutes can be viewed by looking at the PTO page on the school website.

Current member-at-large and vice-presidential nominee, Joan Martinez was introduced next. Then, member-at-large and treasurer nominee, Rosie Casillas was

introduced. Then members-at-large Gigi Garcia and Shari Lawrence were introduced. Special thanks to Shari, who was outside watching the children.

The Treasurer's report was given by Mike Hudson, member of the auditing committee. He discussed the auditing of the books and how our accounting procedures can be improved. He stated the balance at time of audit was \$3530.70 with expenditures of \$1997.83 (paying for musical instruments) giving us a current balance of \$1532.87. We have some funds that are still incoming, from dues and the book fair. Mike indicated that we will now be auditing the books semiannually to keep better track of our funds. He will be working with the new treasurer on obtaining our 501c3 status. He predicted that our PTO should achieve its tax exempt status within the next 90 days. This will allow any contributions to the PTO to be deducted on taxes. This should cost the PTO approximately \$300, which has already been approved.

Next, Rose discussed the current projects that we are fundraising for. First, we are still raising money for the playground. Thanks were given to Mike Hudson and his family for the play structure that they donated to the school. He not only donated the structure but also helped set it up at the school. The money we raise for the playground goes to updating and maintaining playground equipment. The second big ticket item that has requested PTO funding comes from Ms. Betty Williams and is for help with the purchase of new computers. Ms. Betty is purchasing six new computers and would like help from the PTO to purchase two more. She anticipates a cost of \$500 per computer with monitor. A father, Robert, volunteered to help with researching the purchase of computers. The PTO voted and all were in favor of purchasing the two computers requested by Ms. Betty. We also discussed the possible needs of the teachers and school. The importance of getting the teachers to use the request forms to make their requests from the PTO was emphasized. Also the idea of item donations by individuals was discussed. One parent made the suggestion of having a giving tree with teacher requests on it in December as a way to give more directed holiday gifts to the teachers.

Gigi Garcia, member at large and nomination committee chair began the nomination and voting process. She started with Vice-President. She read the description of the Vice-Presidents duties and then opened the floor for any additional nominations. No new nominations were made, so the vote was called for. Joan Martinez was unanimously voted in. Next, the description of Treasurer was read and the floor was open for any additional nominations. No new nominations were made, so a vote was called for. Rosie Casillas was unanimously voted in.

Newly elected Vice President Joan Martinez presented the fall PTO calendar.

September 1st: first PTO meeting

September 28th and 29th: PTO selling school lunches (Chicken Nuggets, fruit and lemonade / \$3)

October 6th: PTO meeting

November 3rd: PTO meeting

November 20th: Fall Festival Salsa sale and bake sale

December 1st : PTO meeting

December 7th and 8th: PTO selling school lunches (Cheese Pizza, carrot sticks and Lemonade/ \$3)

The issue of a food service permit was discussed in regards to us making and selling school lunches. Parents, Elle and Desiree indicated that they may have the necessary certifications and if so they should be involved with the school lunch fundraisers. Secretary, Tricia Love discussed the need for volunteers, specifically in committees that will help the PTO accomplish its goals of supporting the students, teachers and the school. The committees are: Nominations, Fundraising, Hospitality, Auditing, School Beautification, Library and Class Liaisons. Descriptions of each committee were given and then sign-up sheets were passed around.

Finally, the meeting was opened for questions. The student directory was discussed and the deadline for submission of information was extended to the end of the third week of September. The book fair was discussed and Rose indicated that the results of book fair will be presented at the next PTO meeting. The idea of a safety committee was discussed and the thought was that this would fall under the school beautification committee. Mike Hudson asked Ms. Betty if the PTO could have a school email address and she agreed. This should hopefully be established as PTO@countrydayschool.net.

The next PTO meeting will be held on October 6th at 6:30 pm.

The meeting was concluded at 7:45pm.