

# New NE School Parent Group Meeting

## MINUTES

12/3/2008

7PM – 9PM

MARY LIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

<b>MEETING CALLED BY</b>	Pre-Planning Parent Group, now New NE School Parent and Teacher Organization
<b>TYPE OF MEETING</b>	Organizational Meeting/Committee Reports
<b>FACILITATOR</b>	Pre-Planning Group Steering Committee
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Mary Stouffer
<b>TIMEKEEPER</b>	Mary Stouffer
<b>ATTENDEES (PER SIGN IN SHEET)</b>	Ashlie Anderson, Preeti Ayyangar, Graham Balch, Abby Bennett, Tanya Bertsch, Tonya Biyad, Marilyn Blanton, Kathleen Bradley, Jason Brewster, Linda Chapin, Erlese Caruth, Carmon Collins, Marie Cumbest, Aaron & Deborah Danzig, Susan Edlein, Kelly Fortin, Kris White Fruth, Beth Gibson, Laura Gillett, Dawn Harrison, Clay Howell, Ana Islas, Rena Jalil , Karlene Joseph, Lynne Kushner, Tim Langan, Joe Laster, Susie Lazega, Elizabeth Ross Lieberman, Rick & Jennifer Lockridge, Maria Martinez, Linda Merrill, Rebecca Mick, Brenda & Malcolm Miller, Elizabeth Mothershed, Leslie Muscarella, Hillary & Stuart Nelson, Annie Nichols, Sheri Pair, Dana Persons, Jim Pettit, Akanke Pruitt, Clare Richie, Arthur & Zhenya Royter, Guido Sacchi, Tamila Salinas, Todd Sharp, David Sims, Liz Soto, Cameron Stoeckel, Mary Stouffer, Jayne Treater, Karen Van Atta, Asha Kumar-Veerawamy, Troy Von Kutzleben, Denise & Will Wingate, Karen & Jeff Woodward, John & Andrea Zern

## Agenda topics

**7:15-7:20PM**

**WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

**CLARE RICHIE**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Clare introduced herself then caught the audience up on the first meeting on 10/27 at Ponce de Leon library where the preplanning group tried to capture the enthusiasm of the parents and break out into committee groups.	
	The committees formed at the first meeting on 10/27, then met to bring more information to the table for the 12/3 meeting. The main idea was to do research. Clare said, "tonight, in addition to hearing from committees we'll take a step back and begin work on our vision for the new school and next steps for forming the New NE School Parent and Teacher Organization." Clare then suggested we all meet each other by going around the room and stating our names and children/grade level. All present did so.	
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	Clare concluded that although initial committees have formed there are opportunities galore for parents to get involved and lots to get done.	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

**7:20 – 7:35PM**

**VISION INTRODUCTION & EXERCISE**

**GRAHAM BALCH**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Graham introduced himself and noted that he is a current teacher at Grady High School.
	Graham discussed the importance of a mission statement as it provides a framework for all aspects of the school from fundraising and curriculum to transportation. He cited the mission statement of the Friends School. One of the keywords in their mission statement is environmental stewardship. They had used Sally Foster as a fundraiser, but once they realized that the wrapping paper was not recycled they switched to an organic coffee fundraiser.
	Graham encouraged the group to write down keywords and submit them for initial tally at the end of the meeting.

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	Graham concluded on the importance of the mission statement and noted that the top voted keywords would be selected for inclusion. A survey will go out before the next meeting in January.	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Submit "keywords" to Graham Balch or Kris White Fruth	Vision Committee	12/6 Midnight

**7:35 – 8:10PM**

**PARENT TEACHER GROUP PRESENTATION**

**JEFF WOODWARD**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Jeff stated "when APS selects the principal, we want to be ready to help" from decisions on computers to what our playground will look like, etc...All PTAs and PTOs are nonprofit corporations. The Georgia PTA wants to wait until the full student body is there in August/September 2009 so in efforts to be an organized group, the PTA/PTO committee decided to go with a Parent Teacher Organization so that leadership can be determined fairly via elections. That way, elections can be held in January to name 8 people to the board.</p> <p>A PTO member can run for president or one of the 7 at-large board positions. You have to be a "paid" PTO member to nominate, run or to vote in the January elections. Dues are \$5 per person and the membership and nomination forms are available in the Yahoogroups files section (and attached with these minutes). The board will work from January through September to get ready for the school year. The ballot will be posted 2 weeks prior to the January meeting on January 8th or 9th. You can nominate by email or mail until nominations are closed (2 weeks prior to the election at the January meeting). You can also vote during that 2 week period by email or mail or in person at the January meeting.</p>
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There are three time periods to consider: (1) The PTO will operate in the initial term, January – September 2009 (2) In August/September we will know who all the parents are at the new school; therefore, the board elections for the school year will be in August/September 2009 (PTA or PTO) (3) The next elections will be in April/May 2010 as is customary for the normal school year.

The vice president elect position is a two-year term as they will roll into president the following year in order to maintain consistency. All other positions are for one year. This one year term is such because a two-year requirement may dissuade certain people due to the long commitment (and we want to be as inclusive as possible). PTO members elect the board (president and top 7 vote getters), but the board determines among themselves who will fulfill positions such as, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. so while it may be important to elect at least one board member with financial experience for Treasurer, it is not a requirement. The benefit of a board is that decisions are made by the board and not just the president. The board liaisons or committee heads do the "real" work and report up.

An audit or review requirement will be determined by the amount of money the PTA/PTO has. The independent 3<sup>rd</sup> party auditor cannot be a volunteer and must be paid (fair value).

If the board decides, there will be a nominating committee, but the nominating committee does not determine the slate. The nominating committee, in this instance, would search out and encourage people to run, but the entire PTO voting body will determine who is elected to the board by the most votes.

The timeline and all information is set forth in the bylaws which were approved by all attendees present: all voted "yes", zero "no" votes and zero abstentions.

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	
Nominate from now until 2 weeks prior to the January 22 <sup>nd</sup> meeting – forms are attached and in the Yahoogroups Files section	

<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Nominate from now until 2 weeks prior to the January 22 <sup>nd</sup> meeting (email or mail)	All paid members	January 8
Vote for the board (email, mail or in person)	All paid members	Jan 9 – Jan 22

**8:10 – 8:15PM**

**COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION & ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

**DEBORAH DANZIG**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>		
Deborah Danzig introduced the committees and noted areas that need assistance.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>		
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>		
Fundraising committee is looking for a business liaison	Lynne Kushner	ASAP
Communications committee is looking for a lead	Ida Centner	ASAP

**8:15 – 8:25PM**

**RESOURCES/FACILITIES/LAND USE**

**CAMERON STOECKEL**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20+ members</li> <li>• Cameron Stoeckel and Deborah Danzig facilitating group</li> <li>• Concentrating our work on 6 areas</li> <li>• Introduction of sub-committee heads and give brief update of work to date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Resources - Technology – Guido Sacchi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall objective is to have school open with best in class technology services and capabilities</li> <li>• Guido currently working to identify what APS will provide in a broad number of areas including computer lab, classroom workstations, Promethean Boards, software, wireless, training and support, etc.</li> <li>• Established lots of good contacts and has been told APS's plan will be forthcoming shortly</li> <li>• Additional next steps are to define our "desired state" (to present to principal for input / feedback), determine the gaps between desired and the APS plan, and determine method to fill the "gaps"</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Land Use/Historic Property – Tim Langan &amp; Teresa Groshans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working to understand details of building plans and neighborhood restrictions and what this means for our potential use of greenspace (including rooftop garden and land-based garden)</li> <li>• Kelly Fortin has scheduled a meeting on January 22, 2009 at MES in the auditorium with the architects and the APS construction manager on the design features of the new school, including LEED certification</li> <li>• Tim made contact with Regina Brewer who is on the Urban Design Commission (and President of ML PTA) and she is receptive to sharing info on the UDC process with us as well</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Playground – Jenn Ballentine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APS current plan is to relocate existing structure at K campus and to enlarge the fenced area around it. Site plans indicate there will be a play field next to the structure</li> <li>• Feedback to date indicates APS will not provide additional playground equipment</li> <li>• Working to understand the potential to upgrade the play equipment to be more suitable for all grade levels</li> <li>• Jenn will coordinate with Fundraising committee and is exploring various other options for funding</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Church Relationship – Mary Stouffer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gym contract still work in progress</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Cafeteria – Teresa Groshans &amp; Leslie Muscarella <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teresa will schedule a visit to MES Cafeteria (need to go through APS nutrition)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Focus is on recyclability of trays, silverware, milk cartons as well potential for green cleaning products
- Also exploring future potential for a farm to school cafeteria program
- Library – Su Anderson & Paige Cucchi
  - Have contacted Warren Goetzel, APS Media Center Coordinator. Plans for media center will be developed once principal is chosen
  - Met with Betty Meek, MES Media Center Coordinator to get information on desired book / child ratio, etc.
  - One for Books – Program historically associated with MES Scholastic Book Fair. Parents can add a dollar or more to their order to donate to a pre-designated “cause”. MES has agreed to designate the new school as the recipient of this money this year. It will be used for the leveled book room Exciting news!
- Resources – Other – Kate Hurley
  - Identifying other resources school will need to open and work to ensure all are in APS plan
  - Furniture is one area we have identified
  - If there are other resource related things we have not mentioned, please forward ideas along to Kate

**CONCLUSIONS**

- Next meeting scheduled for January 12, 2009 at 7pm at Atkin’s Park– we welcome any new members who would like to join our cause!

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

**8:25 – 8:30PM**

**FINANCE/FUNDRAISING**

**LYNNE KUSHNER**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Lynne stated that initially the fundraising committee wants to focus on a few main initiatives: (1) Annual Fund – letter to go out in January 2009 (2) Spring Mixer – casual, admission fee (3) Bricks	
The Annual Fund letters need to be distributed widely so Lynne suggested email and canvassing of streets as well. Kris White-Fruth also suggested contacting street captains in VH to get to those who may not know about the new school. The bricks have to be coordinated with the architects for installation (these would be founding bricks located somewhere on the school grounds, potentially the rooftop garden or another location). More information on bricks will be forthcoming in January.		
Lynne also discussed a Grand Opening Weekend prior to school opening to get everyone excited and build community with a portion as a fundraising effort.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	Lynne was very excited about the fundraising possibilities and noted that the mission statement and principal will also influence the types of fundraisers that will occur.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Looking for someone to build business community relationships	???	ASAP

**8:30 – 8:40PM**

**STUDENT TRANSITION/SCHOOL SPIRIT**

**BECKY MICK**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Becky is very excited about garnering spirit around the new school. She mentioned having five (5) mixers for every grade level over the summer so that the children can familiarize themselves with potential classmates.
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Becky would like to get a graphic designer lined up so that as soon as the Principal is on board and the name is decided, the committee can hit the ground running.

**CONCLUSIONS** The committee would like to meet again in January.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

8:40 – 8:45PM

**TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY**

**MARY STOUFFER**

**DISCUSSION** Mary discussed information found out to date as noted below.

QUESTIONS/NOTES – TRANSPORTATION	DATE	RESPONSE/ACTION ITEM
CONTACTED ANNE FAUVER, OUR ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL PERSON, TO CHECK WHETHER SHE WOULD HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE NEW NE ELEMENTARY SIGNAGE.	11/08	SHE SAID THAT APS WOULD BE IN CHARGE OF THAT
CONTACTED SHARRON PITTS AT <a href="mailto:SPITSREZONING@ATLANTA.K12.GA.US">SPITSREZONING@ATLANTA.K12.GA.US</a> TO SEE WHO WOULD BE THE CONTACTS FOR TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY FOR THE NEW NE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.	11/08	NO RESPONSE – SHE POSSIBLY DOES NOT CHECK THIS ANY MORE
CONTACTED CHARLOTTE PARTRIDGE AND GLORIA MURDOCK, CURRENT TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISORS FOR MES, TO ASK WHO WOULD BE DOING THE STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE NEW SCHOOL.	11/08	NO RESPONSE
CONTACT HAROLD WALKER, DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION		TO DO
ONCE WE FIND OUT WHO IS DOING THE PLANNING FOR THE NEW ROUTES, WE CAN HOPEFULLY GET THE DEMOGRAPHER TO PROVIDE THE ADDRESSES TO APS TRANSPORTATION TO DETERMINE STOPS. WE FIRST HAVE TO SEE WHAT "MANUAL" WAY THEY HAVE TO DETERMINE THE STOPS TO SEE IF WE SHOULD ASSIST WITH OUR MAP POINT, ETC...		WILL HAVE AN UPDATE ON THIS, IT LOOKS LIKE WE MAY HAVE SOME OUTSIDE HELP IN THIS AREA
SUBMITTED FOLLOWING QUESTION TO DR. BEVERLY HALL IN ADVANCE OF THE 11/19 CINS MEETING AT TOOMER ELEMENTARY:  SUBJECT: EXPECTED BUDGET CUTS  GIVEN THE RISE IN GAS PRICES, WHAT IS APS DOING WITH TRANSPORTATION TO OPTIMIZE ROUTES AND STOPS TO SAVE FUEL COSTS. ARE THERE STANDARDS FOR "DISTANCE FROM STOP TO HOME"? ARE THERE PLANS TO PURCHASE FUEL EFFICIENT OR NATURAL GAS BUSES?	11/19/08	HER ANSWER WAS THAT APS TRANSPORTATION WAS GOING TO CONTINUE WITH MANUAL ROUTING DUE TO COSTS AND WITH REGARD TO SAVING FUEL SHE SAID THAT APS WAS NEGOTIATING A FUEL CONTRACT AND IS UPDATING THE FLEET.
<b>QUESTIONS/NOTES – SAFETY</b>		
NEED TO FIND OUT WHO TO TALK TO AT APS ABOUT DRIVER/PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE		TO DO
KELLY FORTIN NOTED "NO SIDEWALK" ON WEST DRIVEWAY TO REAR OF SCHOOL		SHE HAS MENTIONED TO ARCHITECTS

With regard to Safety/Technology, Todd Sharp mentioned that we should have a way to get information out to parents in the case of emergency or other time sensitive nature (safety messages/notification system).

**CONCLUSIONS** Our committee needs additional volunteers to help with pedestrian safety, looking into crossing guards, etc – Safety liaison with APS

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
January 15 Meeting – location to be determined	Mary Stouffer	December 2008

Start bus stop parameters to provide to bus route planners and distribute to Yahooogroup for comment	Mary Stouffer	December 2008
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**8:45 – 8:50PM**

**AFTER-SCHOOL & AFTER-PROGRAMMING**

**ELIZABETH MOTHERSHED**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Elizabeth noted that The Children’s School and The Glenn School (on N.Decatur Rd.) have said that they will pick up at the new school. She also noted that APS will provide transportation back to Mary Lin and Morningside for after-care programs there for the first year only. We are also trying to have an on-site after care program in place the first school year. We have one program interested in being the on-site program already.</p> <p>Elizabeth also noted that there will be opportunities (given the approval of the principal) for after school volunteer-led activities, such as, Math Superstars, Chess club, etc...and there is a possibility for paid service providers, karate instructors, yoga, music, etc to host classes at the school. This would be a win/win as parents would not have to drive to these same activities and it may encourage a greater class size for the respective teacher.</p>	
Tanya Bertsch offered to start a Girl Scout Troup at the new school.		
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	Elizabeth encouraged involvement in these endeavors and noted that all activities were dependant on principal selection.	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>

**8:50 – 8:55PM**

**VISION COMMITTEE WRAP-UP**

**KRIS WHITE-FRUTH**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Kris listed the top 25 words that attendees submitted over the course of the meeting and noted that the top 5 words would be selected for the formulation of the mission statement.</p> <p>Words can be emailed to Kris at <a href="mailto:kwhiteusa@gmail.com">kwhiteusa@gmail.com</a> or Graham Balch at <a href="mailto:graham.balch@gmail.com">graham.balch@gmail.com</a></p>	
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	The words are due by Saturday, December 06, 2008 midnight.	
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
The mission statement will be formulated	Vision Committee	December 18, 2008?

**8:55 – 9:00PM**

**CONCLUSION, NEXT STEPS & NEXT MEETING**

**ELIZABETH ROSS LIEBERMAN**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<p>Elizabeth noted what a great job we did at staying on schedule and commended the committee leads for great information. She encouraged committee leads to post information about their meetings to the Yahooogroup.</p> <p>Karen Woodward commented that the principal position was announced in October. The interview process has not yet begun, as the principal selection community panel has to first be oriented by APS. Karen introduced the following community panel members who were present at the meeting: Susie Lazega (MES PTA President, Virginia-Highland), Karen Woodward (Local School Council, Virginia-Highland), Cameron Stoeckel (Local School Council, Virginia-Highland), Susan Edlein (Midtown), Karen Van Atta (Poncey-Highlands) and Elizabeth Mothershed (Druid Hills).</p>	
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An attendee noted that there is a calendar to post to Yahoogroups as well which will send out an email reminder in advance of the meeting.

Tonya Biyad asked if there would be a Renzulli Lab at the new school?

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	Elizabeth noted that the next meeting will be January 22, 2009 in the Morningside Auditorium. Perkins & Will will be presenting. In order for them to be most productive, please submit questions before hand to Kelly Fortin at <a href="mailto:guensler@bellsouth.net">guensler@bellsouth.net</a> . Questions may still be asked at the meeting, but this will allow the architects to research beforehand instead of having to get back with us.
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<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
<b>PTO Meeting and Elections/Presentation by Perkins &amp; Will (New NE School architects)</b>	<b>New NE School PTO</b>	<b>January 22, 2009 – Morningside Auditorium</b>
<b>Submit questions for architects in advance</b>	<b>Kelly Fortin, <a href="mailto:guensler@bellsouth.net">guensler@bellsouth.net</a></b>	<b>January 15</b>