

Clifton School PTA General Meeting

August 27, 2014

Clairmont Campus

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Room Rep Discussion

- Room rep orientation meetings have been held at both campuses
- Still need a room rep for Clairmont Hickory

Food Committee Update

- New menu is in place (more fresh fruits and vegetables, no more juice at snack time, Nutrigrain bars have been replaced, “homemade” muffins are now actually homemade)
- Next step – food committee will discuss feedback from teachers and kitchen staff (how the kids are liking the new menu)
- If you would like to join the food committee, please send an email to the PTA
- Cindy Britt announced that both campuses have applied for the “Georgia Farm to Preschool” program, we should know by mid-September if we were accepted: <http://georgiaorganics.org/for-schools/farmtopreschool>

Updates on 2014 Auction Money

- Clairmont Campus
 - Teacher Lounge makeover – completed 8/25, total spent: \$4561.61
 - Outdoor classroom improvement – upcoming
 - Toddler 1 and 2 playground improvement – upcoming
- Clifton Campus
 - Playground overhaul (new bikes, trikes, outdoor instruments, chalkboards) – almost complete, \$6176.83 spent so far

Treasurer’s Report

- \$107.57 earned at Burger Fi Spirit night (8/7/14)

Harvest Festival info and assignments

- Saturday, 10/25/14 10:00 – 1:00 at Clairmont campus parking lot
- \$5 per person, infants are free (covers all booth activities and entertainment), tickets will be on sale online beginning of October, will also be available at the door
- Bluegrass band, clown, class booths with children’s activities, costumes welcome
- 2 food trucks will be on site for purchasing food (breakfast and lunch will be available), some \$ will come back to PTA
 - <http://hailcaesartruck.com/>
 - <http://pressedfortimetruck.com/>
- Classrooms will do a booth with their “sister classroom” (the room you share a bathroom with)
 - We will send out a list of booth activity ideas, also check out Pinterest
 - Email the PTA as soon as you have decided on a booth activity

Question: Can we do anything to prevent multiple booths with the same activity?

Answer: Yes, we will monitor and make sure there is not overlap.

- Those that indicated they wanted to participate in the Harvest Fest committee will be contacted soon, email PTA if you would like to be added

Question: Can the PTA share that list of Harvest Fest committee volunteers with the room reps?

Answer: Yes, we will send out.

TAC (Teacher Appreciation Campaign)

- Donations from families are collected and evenly distributed to teachers and non-admin staff as a bonus
- We hope that all families donate, amount is personal choice (only Treasurer and TAC committee leader will see amounts)
- Collection will start in November and checks will be given out the 1st Monday in December at the teacher holiday breakfast

Question: Who all is included?

Answer: All teachers and non-administrative staff (kitchen staff, front desk staff, parking lot/security officers)

Question: Is the money separated by campus?

Answer: No, it is all pooled together.

Question: Do the teachers know how many families donate in their class?

Answer: We will update the room rep on the percentage that have donated in their class, but we will only really publicize the top classes (those that have 90 – 100% participation).

Question: Is this part of the classroom budget?

Answer: No, this is separate. It is up to each class if they want to give the teachers additional gifts directly from the class.

Question: How is the money collected?

Answer: Online or checks.

Question: What is the ballpark amount given to teachers?

Answer: In the past we used a formula that prorated the amount by seniority, but this will be the first year we give an equal amount to everyone. Last year the average was \$300 - \$400.

Comment: We are a nonprofit so donations are a tax write-off.

Mom's Night Out

- We want to try a mom's night out (maybe a dad's night out later if there is interest)
- Will probably try a weeknight first
- Details coming soon, within the next month

Parent Questions/Comments/Concerns

Question: Will the walks to Lullwater Park and the SACC field be re-instated for Clairmont Students?

Answer: Natalie attends the Lullwater Park meetings and they have stated it is "infested with copperhead snakes" and she is not comfortable have students in that environment. However, snakes go dormant in Sept/Oct, so we may go back to walks then. For the SACC field, it is designated for the use of the college students and we cannot control who else is in the area, so we will probably not be going back. We may start using the field right beside the school.

Question: If the walks start back at Lullwater, can they perhaps revise the plan to make them safer?

Answer: Admin has already purchased walking chains to keep classes together and they welcome parents to join the walks – the more supervision, the better.

Comment: One of the parents (Scott) works for the SACC and he can facilitate the field being reserved just for school use.

Comment: Cindy mentioned that for the Clifton site, they have learned if the teachers have a CDC badge, they can take the students through the visitor's center and use the CDC green space to play. They are working to get all teachers at that site CDC badges.

Question: It seems like there are a lot of temporary teachers in the afternoons and a lot of turnover – this is stressful to the kids and uncomfortable for the parents. Is there anything that can be done?

Answer: Natalie explains that keeping part time staff is an issue, because they are always trying to find full time work. There are consistently 5 part time vacancies at each site. They are trying to create a pool of substitute teachers. It is an issue at all childcare centers, so much so that the United Way has developed a program to help – they will provide interns.

Question: What about work study students?

Answer: Too much time they cannot work – school breaks, holidays, summers. They are also limited as to how many hours they can work and have to be allowed to take off to study for exams, etc.

Question: What about a full time employee that splits their time between 2 or more classes?

Answer: We do have that – each piazza has a floater teacher.

Question: Can there be some identification of the subs/temps?

Answer: All subs will have a sign with photo on the door and they should all be wearing nametags.

Comment: Maybe for the early and late teachers (when the kids are either in the piazza or in a different room), those teacher photos can be posted in the entry area of the piazza.

Question: For any security/emergency issues, could admin explore other options for communication aside from email? A lot of parents work in labs or healthcare settings where they do not have consistent access to email.

Answer: The school has been working with the Emory Emergency Preparedness System to learn how to handle situations. They are working on evacuation plans (using the Emory shuttles to move the kids between the 2 sites in an emergency), having emergency childcare set up for circumstances like the snow storms, and installing a panic button at each front desk. They can look into using texts or the automatic call system for notifying parents.

Comment: A parent voiced her appreciation for how they handled the security issue at the Clairmont site this week – they erred on the side of caution when they could've chosen to do nothing.

Question: Can the school treat the grounds for bugs/mosquitos more often so that we do not have to spray our children directly with bug spray every day? Or perhaps the children could stay inside a couple days out of the week to avoid exposure.

Answer: It is a state requirement that the kids go outside at least once a day. They are very vigilant about treating the playgrounds for bugs/mosquitos – they come once a month and treat again every time after it rains. There are many safe/DEET free bug sprays parents can use. They can also use the bug repellent bracelets or can choose not to do anything.

Question: Can admin send out another email reminding parents not to “piggy back” (hold door open for others they do not know)?

Answer: yes

Comment: A parent mentioned another childcare center that uses a finger swiper to identify parents after they have come in the door (and would eliminate the need to sign in children in the classroom). It would involve monitoring by front desk staff. She will find out more info and send to admin.