



BRENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Brent PTA Board Meeting **Wednesday, September 7 2011** **6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Attendees: Jason Townsend, Daniel Holt, Denise Diggs, Kevin Moore, Lisa Perry, Greg Herrick, Melissa Williams, Paul Sherman, Peter Young, Brian and Barbara Williams, Ben Feldman, Heidi Johnson, Allison Lewis, Diana Williams, Michelle Dinks, Sarah Eubank, Bessie Thibodeaux-Belcher, Donna Holley-Beasley Elizabeth Vogel-Rogers, Sarah Eubank

1. Brent Elementary SY2011-2012 Updates

Principal Peter Young

- A. LSAT met and established goals for the year.
 - Goal #1:
There will be 100% parent participation at quarterly parent/teacher/student conferences.
 - Goal #2:
Percentage of families participating in at least one Brent PTA General meeting will increase.
 - Goal #3:
LSAT will meet at least quarterly. Currently scheduled to meet eight times this school year.
- B. Back to School Night
 - Parents appreciated a clear vision and mission for the school.
 - Parents were pleased with communication that night and thus far.
 - Based on feedback, there is a need for a “new parents only” session from 6:00-6:30pm followed by an “all parents” session for next year.
- C. We will be conducting a middle of the year survey for all parents and staff.
- D. School information such as Tuesday News will only be sent home with the eldest student in the household starting next week. This will allow us to decrease cost on printing/paper use.
- E. Cafeteria Expectations
 - Peter Young discussed cafeteria etiquette. Five goals will be highlighted, these goals were outlined in a video made by Sarah Eubank.
 - Cafeteria Expectations Video shown to all PTA Board members.
 - Cafeteria goals include: 1) Use indoor voices. 2) Stay in your seat and eat at the table. 3) Use your walking feet. 4) Raise your hand or use your signals to request help from a teacher. 5) Wait for the trash can and carefully throw away your garbage. Enjoy your lunch!
- F. Questions/Comments for Mr. Young:
 - Did parents bring children to Back to School Night? A few. We will ensure that advertising next year says parents only.
 - The quality of the Public Announcement system is poor. We need to purchase a new one.
 - More time with the teachers was needed to allow for parents with multiple children to visit all rooms.

2. Pulse Check

PTA President Jason Townsend

- A. What are we hearing from our parents and students?
 - Drop-off and pick-up is working well, good communications.
 - Additional volunteers from 8-8:45 am are still needed.



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- Current plan is for Brent staff to continue to support through the year but we do need additional parent volunteers to take shifts.
- Presence of Brent staff provides a smooth transition to the day. I love seeing the bright-colored vests that identify helpers. It provides a consistent message to all.
- Would it be possible for the Aftercare staff to wear the brightly colored vests as well when out on the playground? This would assist parents in knowing who to contact regarding signing out of children.
- Clarification on pick-up procedures at 3:15? Currently, Ms. Copeland's room is the only room where parents can pick-up their child in his/her assigned room. All other children remain in their classroom and then are dismissed to the playground. If it is raining, Pre-school K will be picked up via the outside doors. 1st-5th grade will be picked up in the all purpose room. Ms. Copeland's children will remain in her room for pick-up.
- What is the plan for rainy days from 8:00-8:40 am because the cafeteria is too chaotic to leave young children? Currently all of the children are placed in the all purpose room. Teachers are not required to assume responsibility for the children before 8:40 on school days. This is a bigger problem that the PTA Board needs to discuss and establish a plan for now and in the future.

Action Items

1. Peter Young to coordinate with Ms. Neal to ensure access and wearing of vests for all Aftercare staff.
2. Need to request additional volunteers for drop-off from 8:00-8:40 am. Donna Holley Beasley to address with room parents via e-mail and Jason Townsend to address at next week's General PTA Meeting. Allison Lewis to ensure that need is clearly identified on the Brent website.
3. Need to clearly articulate the drop-off and pick-up policy for SY 11-12. Peter Young will address at next week's General PTA Meeting.
4. PTA Board needs to discuss and establish a plan for rainy day procedures (8:00-8:40 am). Jason Townsend to add to next month's agenda.

3. Class/Individual Picture Day Sep 14th

Peter Young & Denise Diggs

- A. Pictures will be taken from 8:45-12:00 on Sep 14th.
- B. We are need of additional volunteers. Currently we have 4 volunteers. We need 10 parents to work in four hour blocks. We really need volunteers to make this day a success. Denise Diggs is the point of contact

Action Items

1. Allison Lewis to ensure that volunteer request to be posted on Brent website.
2. Peter Young will call with a parent reminder/volunteer request.

4. Classroom Parents Update

Donna Holley Beasley & Diana Williams

- A. All but four rooms have volunteer parents. Some rooms have additional back-ups.
- B. We requested Museum Room parents at the same time.
- C. We will be having our "Meet and Greet" meeting on Sep 13th.
- D. Current plan is to have all "Specials" staff funnel requests to Donna for dissemination out to all classroom parents.



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Action Items

1. Donna Holley Beasley to request additional classroom parents at next week's General PTA meeting.
2. PTA Board members to notify Donna if they are approached by any volunteers.
3. Donna Holley Beasley and Diana Williams to conduct the Room Parent Kick-off on Sep 13th. Will provide an update at next month's meeting.

5. Presentation of Brent School Calendar

Daniel Holt

- A. Proposed school calendar discussed.
- B. Publish Party date changed to Nov 29th due to potential conflict with Thanksgiving holiday.
- C. The Brent Staff Holiday Party date is not confirmed.
- D. Brent website has Google calendar that can be downloaded to your calendar. Goal is to have field trips added to this as well.
- E. Finalized calendar will be posted in two days.

Action Items

1. Daniel Holt to meet with Peter Young to finalize the school calendar.
2. Allison Lewis will post on Brent website once available.

6. Fall Festival 22 Oct

Bessie Thibodeaux-Belcher

- A. This will be the 6th annual Brent Fall Festival. It is not meant to be a fundraiser. We usually break even on the day.
- B. Requires PTA funds up front to pay for Frager's and Astro Jump equipment.
- C. This is an ideal event for pre-school and K children and is open to the neighborhood.
- D. We need to identify a chairperson-in-waiting as Adondra Woods' child will graduate from Brent this year.
- E. We are in need of volunteers to assist with prep and day's events.

Action Items

1. Bessie Thibodeaux-Belcher to provide Allison Lewis with event information to be posted on Brent website.
2. Bessie Thibodeaux-Belcher or Adondra Woods to discuss event at next week's General PTA meeting and to request volunteers.

7. Communications

Allison Lewis

- A. PTA e-newsletter to be sent out monthly, not biweekly as originally planned. Topics highlighted will complement activities from the school calendar.
- B. Please spread the word about the Goggle calendar.
- C. Throughout the year, Allison will be requesting articles/input on events related to the school events. She would like to have teacher input as well.
- D. Oct 5th is International Walk to School Day. Allison would like to sign Brent up for this event. School grants are available for school patrols etc. Group agreed that this would be a good event that ties in with our drop-off/pick-up policy and our Green team efforts.
- E. Paul Sherman: Is there a way we can use the grants to allow access to the parks across the street from the school? Allison Lewis to investigate.



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Action Items

1. Allison Lewis to send out first e-newsletter next week.
2. Allison Lewis to apply for International Walk grants.

8. Spring Gala

Lisa Perry

- A. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year and showcases Brent to the community.
- B. The chairperson ideally would be a program manager type.
- C. Specifics on the Spring Gala Chairperson PD will be sent by Lisa Perry to Allison Lewis for advertising.
- D. The biggest role for the chairperson is holding volunteers accountable.
- E. Paul Sherman suggested vetting candidates to ensure the right match.
- F. Ben Feldman suggested that PTA Board members think of potential candidates and discuss with them prior to next week's General PTA meeting request.

Action Items

1. Lisa Perry to discuss event and need for chairperson at next week's General PTA Board meeting.

9. Museum Program

Paul Sherman

- A. Our committee has been working hard over the last two months. Summary sheet reviewed on accomplishments.
- B. We will be having a fundraiser event Nov 5th at 11:00 am—Rocknoceros concert. This event should raise approximately \$1800.
- C. Our Committee will likely need funds upfront for fundraiser, exact amount TBD.
- D. We are planning on advertising on the MOTH website as well as this event is open to all.
- E. Need to sell 130 tickets to break even, can accommodate approximately 400 people.
- F. Tickets will need to be purchased for all children that are able to walk.

Action Items

1. Paul Sherman will identify upfront costs required and will brief the Board at our next meeting.

10. Budget Review

PTA Treasurers Brian & Barbara Williams

- A. Draft budget discussed. We are currently \$65K short. Where do we find the funds?
- B. Enrichment program basically balances out, not a money maker. Current balance reflects the registration fees that have been received. We have not paid all of the vendors to date.
- C. Question about the \$55,800 cost for a music program teacher. Discussed that DCPS funded 5 out of 6 specials. The cost of the PE teacher salary was rolled into the DCPS budget for this year. The plan is to roll the cost of music specials teacher into next year's budget. We were unable to do so this year due to an overall decrease in funds per student received from DCPS. Daniel Holt: Originally we thought that the PTA would only need to cover \$30K of the music teacher salary but a \$20K shortfall occurred due to a lack of funding for the reading intervention program. Brent's budget needed to cover this shortfall which means the cost of sixth special (music) is \$55,800 for PTA vice \$30K. There was discussion around the desire not to lock the PTA budget into funding large amounts such as a teacher salary and that the decision to do so was neither discussed nor agreed upon at earlier PTA meetings this summer. It was agreed that many of our "specials" are what make Brent unique and appealing.



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- D. We appealed to the Chancellor that the sixth “special” position be covered by DCPS but were denied. We will continue to work towards having it covered next year.
- E. Two years ago we received 77% of our funding per pupil which was above the school-wide average. This year it was 25% of our funding per pupil which was below the school-wide average. Our current enrollment is 347 even though we are being paid for our allotted 299 students.
- F. There was concern expressed over presenting a budget that shows a loss on Brent Merchandise? It was explained that last year t-shirts were used for free giveaways, if a child was sick etc. We did not have a clear inventory. General consensus was that questions will arise related to this matter. Currently, Kathy Sherman is running the program. She has taken inventory of our supplies and is using PayPal for payments which should limit revenue loss of inventory and due to lack of payment via bounced checks.
- G. The bottom line is we are \$65K over budget. What do we cut?
 - Four options discussed in detail.
 - Peter Young volunteered to cut the following: \$20K for textbooks which will be covered in next year’s budget, \$4K for staff holiday party, and \$1600 for DCAS giveaways.
 - We will likely need to do a forced balanced budget now and revise it in six months.
 - Teacher’s professional fees discussed. Michelle Dinks provided the group with an overview to what Teacher’s College is and what fees are required. It was decided that some of the professional development expenses could be reduced.
 - Field trip cost discussed. Michelle Dinks provided the group with an overview on field trip costs and what field trips typically require bus transportation which is what drives up the cost.
 - Paul Sherman provided a detailed breakdown of how a cut to his Museum Studies Committee budget would affect his Committee’s effort overall.

Next PTA Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 5th from 6:30-8:30pm