

**Jefferson Elementary PTA Meeting
Feb 8, 2007
School Library, 6:30-8:00 pm**

Thank you's

- *Dinner tonight:* 1st-grade room partners
- *Family Art Night:* Megan McKeon and helper volunteers
- *Kindergarten Fair and Kindergarten Night:* Patricia Mok, Jay Nitschke, and Maureen Sullivan represented Jefferson at the annual Kindergarten Fair on January 20. Nicole Pitts, Robin Henke, and one other parent represented Jefferson parents at our Kindergarten Night.
- *Garden Work Party:* Saturday, February 3, thanks to the people who worked on the garden.
- *Refrigerator:* Donated by Liza Kramer for ALP program snacks.
- *Spanish translation at tonight's event:* Veronica Urdaneta.

Counseling provided to Jefferson students by Bay Area Children First, presentation by Kaye Anderson

- Bay Area Children First (BACF) is a non-profit agency. They are located at 1400 Shattuck, next to Bel Forno. BACF has been contracted to provide mental health services to children at our school. They are currently working one-on-one but are planning to move into small groups (~ 3 kids). Kaye sees 6 kids at Jefferson on Monday. Her colleague, Anne Coyle, sees 3 more Jefferson kids on Tuesdays. They also provide service to people who are supporting the children (teachers and families). Their goal is to provide extra services and some parenting topics. Suggestions made in the meeting for parent topics are sibling rivalry and assisting with homework. Other suggestions for topics can be emailed to kayelcsw@hotmail.com or dropped off in the Bay Area Children First box in the school office.
- This is the second year that BACF has worked at Jefferson, but there has been some agency here in a similar capacity for the last 6 years. They work with students on topics such as impulse control, peer relations, personal issues (death in a family, homelessness), and social interactions. Overall, Kaye explained that they address social skills more than anger management. Since the focus of BACF is to help children become successful in the classroom, BACF is not connected with the Conflict Resolution program on the schoolyard.
- BSEP funds are used to provide this service to the school. Children are identified via teachers, Miss Delaney or self-referral. The length of counseling assistance is fully dependent on the individual situation. This spans all the grades.
- Questions about the agency can be directed to Susan Regan at baychild@sbcglobal.net or by calling 883-9312.
- Questions about BACF services at Jefferson can be directed to kayelcsw@hotmail.com.
- Parents who would like to suggest their child for assistance needs to talk with Miss Delaney or the classroom teacher.

Report on PTA After-school classes

- 140 children participate. On average each child signs up for 2.5 classes. 114 children (82%) pay and 26 (18%) apply for scholarships.
- Dance classes run by East Bay Center for Performing Arts is now handled by the PTA after-school class crew as well.
- Sabine handles the registration process. Patricia Mok is helping too. Catrin helps out with the database and other odds and ends. Lorraine does all the upfront work arranging locations and the providers of the sessions.
- Looking forward, they are talking to East Bay Center for Performing Arts for different types of dance. Also might add some academic stuff and maybe bring back Spanish classes.
- They are always looking for volunteers or ideas for other classes. Please contact any of them at bine@lmi.net or catrinbetts@yahoo.com or plmok@earthlink.net or lorraine.sandoval@comcast.net.

- Registration periods each year are roughly in Sept, Jan and March. Forms come home in backpacks and are also in the office.

Shall we stop serving dinner before PTA meetings?

- Background: PTA began serving dinner before PTA meetings last year in an effort to encourage attendance. Though it has been done for a year and a half, attendance has not increased in size, nor have new people come because of it. Perhaps the ~\$150 per month could be better spent on other things (such as translation of meetings into Spanish which brought in new families last month).
- **Eric motions to stop providing dinner before PTA meetings.**
- It is pointed out that the dinner organization effort is also using up valuable volunteer energy. Right now it has been the room parents' responsibility.
- Several parents voiced their support of the dinner. It makes attendance easier. It can be viewed as a nice benefit for the parents who make the effort to attend PTA meetings. It is helpful in the cases where the parents bring their children to the meeting.
- So how to make it work going forward? Suggestion that the PTA meeting attendees take turns bringing the food instead of the room parents. Or that the room parents tap into the rest of the grade parents. Potluck is another idea (but then people might feel awkward coming if they don't have food). Plates, napkins, cutlery, and cleanup have to be considered too. Would be good to find a method where it is not the same people who do the bulk of the volunteer work at the school also having to cover this. Suggestion that at each meeting we have someone sign up for the next meeting. The group settles on adding food and cleanup sign up for the upcoming meeting to the current meeting's sign in sheet.
- A motion is still on the table, so a vote is taken to get rid of that.
- **Motion fails.**

Winterfest plans

- Event is on track for Friday Feb 23 from 6-8.
- The parents will get a presentation by Aaron Glimme and Chris Hoffman. It is a wonderful slideshow celebrating the 100th anniversary of the school. The presentation will be in the Crowden auditorium (next door to Jefferson).
- Babysitting will be provided in the Jefferson cafeteria from 6-8.
- Sign up will be mandatory for this event. Sign up will list how many adults coming, how many children, and the age of the children. This will be used to plan for the childcare and for beverages for the adults. Sign up information should be distributed week of 2/12.

Principal's update

- The district has a \$3,000 grant opportunity. Jefferson staff is going to apply to have the stage floor refurnished and possibly replace the stage curtains. The principal asks for someone to review her grant application as a second set of eyes. The grant application has to be submitted by Feb 15.
- Beginning 3rd session of ALP shortly. Only change is that 3rd graders will be served by Stiles Hall.
- 2 weeks into universal breakfast program. 2 minor problems – spinach quiche and breakfast burrito are coming a bit too cold!
- There will be a safety event, probably in March. It will cover bike safety and walking safety. The City of Berkeley provides this.
- The children are entering a testing cycle. They just finished writing assessments. Next taking winter reading assessments. Feb and March will be problem-solving and math. 4th and 5th graders get physical fitness testing in March too.
- Next week assembly will be on Monday instead of Thursday.
- The principal received and read out loud a nice letter from Saint Mary's congratulatory about the 100th year anniversary.

Black History Month proposal

- Jackie and several other teachers want to bring attention to Black History Month. There is still some money in the assembly funds that they can use (~\$100), but they are requesting that be increased to a \$500 cap. This would likely fund an assembly speaker and classroom activities.
- A parent comments that it is frustrating that Valentines Day and Halloween get more attention than Black History Month. The principal notes that Jefferson school used to have a Living History program that focused on living African American figures and would also do something around Juneteenth Day. As funding went down and teachers got busy the Living History sort of tapered off.
- ***Chris H moves that we approve up to \$500 for the Black History Month.***
- ***Motion passes.***

Making our classrooms safer (by cleaning the basement)

- Volunteers needed to help clean the basement from 9 to noon on Saturday, February 10. We need people to go through old earthquake supplies and determine what's worth moving to the earthquake bin and what should be discarded.

Parent Education Workshops

- Parent Education Workshops are just around the corner, starting up in early March. Watch for information in backpacks.
- Workshop 1: Take Back the Night...Homework
- Workshop 2: Propel Your Child to Reading Success
- Workshop 3: Reading Comprehension

Newsletter deadline

- Friday Feb 23rd.

Announcements, upcoming events, and other business

- Basement work party, Saturday, 2/10, 9 am to noon
- Lincoln's Birthday, No school, Friday, 2/16
- President's Day Holiday, No school, Monday, 2/19
- Winterfest, Friday night, 2/23, 6 – 8 pm
- PTA Meeting, 3/8
- March newsletter deadline, Friday, 3/16
- A strategic planning process is being designed to look at school-wide needs and resources, and includes not only PTA but also site council, faculty, Betty, staff, Morris, and district personnel. Stay tuned.
- ALP: Although we can still use volunteers to help with snack supervision and in the classrooms on Tuesday/Thursday, the ALP program will not be expanding to Monday/Friday because the Cal students who were going to staff the program on those days have a scheduling conflict. Maggie Riddle continues to work with Professor Gearhart at Cal, who will schedule her class next year to facilitate her students' participation in this program.
- The January newsletter was translated into Spanish.
- Pogo sticks we voted to purchase have been bought and are on the yard.