

**Jefferson Elementary PTA Meeting  
March 13, 2008  
School Library, 6:30-8:00 pm**

All PTA meeting notes are available at:  
<http://jefferson.berkeleypta.org/communications/ptaMeetingNotes>

**Thank you's**

- *Dinner tonight:* Patricia Mok
- *Getting Mayfair going:* Kira Reoutt
- *Getting sand for the sandbox:* Aaron Glimme

**Update from Berkeley Federation of Teachers**

- Cathy Campbell, president of BFT, visits to give an update on the contract negotiation process between Berkeley Unified School District and BFT. She has visited pretty much every PTA in the city. The collective bargaining process began in December and the contract expires in June 2008. Each side is represented by a committee. If the sides do not reach agreement, then a mediator is called in. This happened the last time the contract was negotiated 3 years ago. Last time the parents expressed that they would have liked more information as the process went on. The BFT is a union and hence is quite limited as to the ways that they are allowed to communicate to parents. Parents can opt in to the email updates by emailing [bft4tchr@lmi.net](mailto:bft4tchr@lmi.net). Information is also available at the website <http://www.berkeleyfederationofteachers.org>. It also seems possible that the process may be interrupted by the state budget crisis.
- California has a revenue crisis, and Governor Schwarzenegger has proposed a budget that will substantially reduce education funding. Since California is currently 46<sup>th</sup> in the country in per pupil education spending, these reductions are unacceptable. Due to this crisis, 55 notices of potential layoff went out last week to teachers and employees in the school system. Please send letters to the politicians encouraging them to find other solutions. It would also be helpful to encourage others to do the same, especially in conservative parts of the state. In addition to staff reductions, Jefferson School will probably lose a lot of money that is currently being used to fund programs. The BFT website has more details and also sample letters.

**T-shirts**

- Cathy Malmrose seeks input on whether new t-shirt designs should be created. The current idea is to seek the students' submissions for a picture of a dragon.
- Rosa Parks had a great idea where every Friday is designated as a day to wear the school t-shirts. It makes for a nice community building feel. Here at Jefferson we might do the same idea for Thursdays with the assemblies.
- It is noted that a Chinese dragon may be only relevant to the 4 bi-cultural classrooms. "Our school rocks" is suggested as an alternative, but Cathy feels that based on her exploratory conversations there did not seem to be much energy behind that. Principal Riddle is supportive of our school rocks since it is a theme that is being pushed in the school. Somebody also suggest "be kind, be safe, do your best work". Cathy heard that a dragon theme was used in the past and those particular shirts sold out. In the end, Cathy just wants something that the kids really associate with and think is cool to wear.
- If funding is approved, then the team will aim to have these available for Mayfair.
- Ideas, questions, or volunteers, please contact [malmrose@gmail.com](mailto:malmrose@gmail.com).
- ***Jay motions that the PTA authorizes a \$1,200 expense for a small t-shirt run.***
- ***Seconded.***
- ***Motion approved.***

**Mayfair Planning update**

- There are a lot of people pitching in already BUT there are still some key positions missing. The two highest priority are plant sale coordinator and cake walk coordinator. Please contact Kira Reoutt at [kiwiroot2000@yahoo.com](mailto:kiwiroot2000@yahoo.com).
- The centennial quilt is displayed. It will hang in the school. There is a second quilt which will be raffled off in a separate raffle. It was considered to have it in the silent auction, but the raw materials are about \$250 and hence it might be too pricey for there.
- An idea is discussed to disentangle the quilt raffle from the Mayfair. Maybe make it an event at the end of the year or as a fundraiser for the Coloma trip next year.
- A competing idea is discussed to make it a one day raffle with tickets sold at Mayfair and the drawing also held at Mayfair. Either way, the quilt should be displayed at Mayfair to encourage ticket sales since it is a beautiful quilt.
- The quilters will work with the Mayfair committee to finalize the details.

### **Parent Education event**

- Angela Tyler will be presenting a parent education event designed to ease the task of getting your child to do homework. The event will be at Jefferson School on March 25<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00 and is open to all parents, including those outside of the Jefferson community. More details can be found at <http://jefferson.berkeleypta.org/#talks>.

### **Treasurer's Update**

- At the last Board meeting the treasurer expressed disappointment that a budget was made for the year and that in the last meeting the PTA then went and spent a lot of un-budgeted money. His suggestion is to form a budget committee to get started now on what next year's expenditures will be. It is suggested that this budget committee also establish a process for exactly how to handle mid-year spending requests.
- The budget committee will try to establish the process and will work to create a draft budget that will be used to initiate the budget discussion. All actual budget decisions will take place in PTA meetings.
- Anybody who wants to be on the budget committee should send email.
- Also, the school community recently met and exceeded the PTA fund-raising goal!

### **Walkathon**

- Last year the Walkathon raised \$9,000 for the school. This year it will be Friday April 11<sup>th</sup>, the Friday after Spring Break. About 40-45 volunteers are needed. Contact Victoria Eisen at [victoria.eisen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:victoria.eisen@sbcglobal.net).

### **Principal's Update**

- This is a stressful time for the staff because of the notices of potential layoffs. Please remember to say a nice word or do a nice favor for the teachers.
- Next year it will be even more important to coordinate all of the spending sources into one holistic spending plan because if the budget goes through then the school really will lose a big chunk of money.
- The school site survey went out. About 140 surveys came back in. It is clear that the community really loves the school, and many good ideas for improvement were received. The results from this survey will be shared with parents and will be used to influence the spending plans for next year.
- The Black History Block party was a very fun event!
- The Chinese New Year's performance was great! It's really healthy for the kids, and the staff is working to figure out how to do more stuff like that next year.
- The look of the schoolyard during recess has really changed. There are now 5 people on the yard at noon and a lot of healthy activities. The teaching staff has really noticed the change and has expressed their pleasure to Principal Riddle.
- Principal Riddle corrects a mis-perception about recess - it is not true that the children can not play tag anymore. It *is* true that there are no games allowed where people are targets – like dodge ball or anything else that involves hitting people with stuff.

- Principal Riddle really needs help getting the disaster preparedness going. Help right away is especially needed for the “in the bag” effort (where each student will have a small bag of personal items to be used in the event of an emergency) and assembling the classroom first aid kits.
- Thanks to Adam Sanchez we got two facilities grants. One is for the storage units in the basement and one will be used to extend the sandbox.
- Security update: So far Principal Riddle has done several walk-throughs with the facilities director about trying to close off the site during the school day. It turns out that is very hard to do within fire safety rules. However, the gate by the Cafetorium and the small gate by B99 are going to be closed during the school day going forward. Principal Riddle is aware of all the ways that the kids can come and go from the site and is working on it as much as possible.
- There will be a Service Learning project on March 18<sup>th</sup>. 12 people from Friends College will be here and will do work on the site, such as organizing the basement.

#### **Formation of nominating committee**

- Next year all of the PTA Board positions are open.
- Each year the PTA needs to form a committee to staff the next year’s PTA Board positions.
- The nominating committee is comprised of three PTA members plus 3 alternates. You can’t be on the committee if you were on it last year.
- Principal Riddle suggests sending a flyer out about both the nominating committee and the positions that are open. Eric and Aaron agree is a good idea and will take care of it.
- Patricia Mok, Eric Wells, and Catherine Betts volunteer as potential members of the nominating committee. If anyone is interested in being on the nominating committee or being a Board member next year, please contact [ericwells@gmail.com](mailto:ericwells@gmail.com) .

A volunteer is needed to supply dinner for the next PTA meeting. Contact [ericwells@gmail.com](mailto:ericwells@gmail.com) (704-1894).

#### **Announcements, upcoming events, and other business**

- Parent Education event, 3/25
- Spring recess, 3/31-4/4
- April PTA meeting, 4/10
- Walkathon, 4/11
- Parent Education event, 4/22