



Bishop School PTO Meeting Minutes - December 2, 2020

Location: [Zoom](#)

Attending: Principal Mark McAneny; Assistant Principal (AP) Eva Liner; PTO Teacher Representative Caroline Thom; Linda Suzuki (Clinical Director, AYCC); and Colleen Leger (Director, AYCC). PTO Board Members: Co-President Christina Marko (2nd year); PTO Co-President Laura Tikonoff (1st year); Treasurer David Brecht (2nd year); Class Parent Coordinator Lindsay Sweeney (1st year); Communications Coordinator Amanda Maltais (1st year); Fundraising Coordinator Tai Sokoloff (1st year); and Recording Secretary Neshe Gafuri (2nd year). Total of 28 members of the community attended.

Introductions: Christina (PTO Co-President) welcomed all in attendance. AY 2020-2021 PTO Board members introduced themselves to the audience.

October 2020 Meeting Minutes: Christina Marko proposed a motion to approve the October 2020 Meeting Minutes. Principal Mark McAneny seconded the motion and minutes were approved by a majority vote. These minutes are posted on the PTO website.

Principal's Update:

- School year continues to go well.
- Students in both models are happy and engaged.
- Teachers continue to build their remote teaching skills, delivery and instructions.
- Principal continues to monitor programming and frequently visits classrooms. Principal also continues to look for community building opportunities.
- Planning first Bishop den meeting of the year before the holiday break over Zoom.
- Reviewed quarantine guidelines following Thanksgiving travel. Many families traveled and communicated appropriately with the school.
- Nurse Martin has been exceptional working with families, especially those that travelled over Thanksgiving.
- The Bishop community has been wonderful throughout the school year.

AP's update:

- Overall remote academy (RA) is running smoothly. Feedback received has been helpful and much appreciated.
- AP has remotely visited RA classrooms and students are engaged.
- Materials distribution has worked well with recent changes implemented so that families come to the cafeteria door. This allows staff to remain indoors during winter weather.
- Some requests for switching from Hybrid to Remote and vice versa. Any switches are permanent for the remainder of the year. There are waiting lists for many grades.
- RA continues to look at programming/activities for RA students to feel part of the Bishop community.

- AP reiterates that teachers, students, and families have been amazing and offers much thanks.

PTO Teacher Rep's update:

- Thanked PTO for fall teacher checks. Much appreciated by the staff.
- Emotional support dog, Elena, has been a wonderful asset to the school and is visiting as many students/classrooms as is safely possible.
- Teachers will be sending sign ups out for January conferences soon.
- Report cards will be going out electronically by December 18th.
- Laura Tikonoff requested that Caroline bring any unmet teacher needs to the PTO board as they arise.

PTO Invited guest speakers, Colleen Leger & Linda Suzuki, from AYCC presented on Youth and Families Mental Health & Wellness:

- AYCC is celebrating its 50th year in the community this year.
- AYCC is an outpatient mental health agency located behind Robbins Library in the Whittemore Robbins House.
- They have 20-25 clinicians serving 350 families per year. Last year alone, they had over 7000 sessions.
- AYCC is a division of the Health and Human Services Department within the Town of Arlington.
- They work with children ages 3-21, as well as adult caregivers.
- They primarily provide mental health counseling, psych evaluations and medication treatment to their clients.
- Pre-pandemic counseling sessions primarily took place in the Whittemore Robbins House. Since March 2020, 99% of sessions are telehealth. This has mostly been effective for their patients. They expect this to continue in some capacity post-pandemic as well as it offers access to patients who may not be able to physically visit the clinic.
- There are two clinicians assigned to each public school. They see patients 1-2x/week. Some of these patients have been identified by school staff as needing counseling services to address conditions that may be affecting their school performance.
- AYCC's mission is to offer services to any child and family in the community in need irrespective of whether they attend schools in Arlington or live in Arlington.
- AYCC also serves families regardless of their ability to pay. AYCC accepts most insurance. In addition, if families are uninsured or underinsured, AYCC has grant funding to cover their needs.
- In addition to our schools, AYCC also works closely with pediatricians. They also have community resource specialists and case managers on staff and are able to assist any Arlington resident under the age of 60 with issues such as housing instability, food insecurity, access to state benefits or inability to meet their basic resource needs.
- In closing, the guest speakers thanked the PTO for the opportunity to come to the Bishop PTO meeting to speak about AYCC services.
- Audience member asked about a letter received by some families re: PTSD screening. This is simply a screening tool to identify students that may need support and alerting their families to available resources.
- Another audience asked about re-entry into in-person school for Remote Academy students. A general understanding is that safety precautions will remain in place and modified as needed by the schools to continue to protect all students. Parents should talk to their children about returning to in-person school.
- Christina thanked both guest speakers and mentioned that the PTO is happy to publish AYCC resources in the PTO newsletter.

Treasurers Update:

- Gave an overview about fundraising and spending for the month of November.
- Provided an update on the vacant co-treasurer position due to former co-Treasurer Lindsay Pacheco leaving our community.
- For those interested, a copy of the PTO budget can be found on the PTO website.

Co-Presidents Update :

- The Annual Fund raised \$25K to date and exceeded the goal, but the goal was set lower than previous years.
- \$7K deficit in what was expected to be raised from Fall events and thus PTO planning to do a Readathon in the new year.
- Directory Update: Low participation to date. Need more participants to create a meaningful directory. More information in the newsletter and from room parents.
- Stronger Together campaign. Lindsay Sweeney created a new logo. Sign to be made for the front of the school. Further logo usage TBD.
- Thank you notes received from Aly Frank, Jennifer Murphy, and Gabby Ambrosino. Laura Tikonof read the notes to the community.
- PTO Grants funded in October/November:
 1. Vocabulary Spelling City (5th grade)
 2. Flexible seating for some hybrid classrooms.
 3. Monitors were donated and distributed to those teachers and staff interested.

Meeting Adjourned

NEXT PTO MEETING: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021 @ 7PM

Minutes by Neshe Gafuri, PTO Recording Secretary