Parent Association of the Lab School (PALS)
Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2014

• Reviewed PALS Purpose
  o Community Building Initiatives
  o Support Teachers & Staff
  o Support Fundraising Efforts
  o Advise in major school decisions if needed
• Big Picture:
  o Planning work has started on visioning for an institute of child development that would include a new lab school and school of child development. Parents will be surveyed to identify areas of opportunity. PALS agreed to meet with planning committee members at a meeting to be scheduled to discuss the concept and share individual views. It will be a great opportunity to think BIG (e.g., Lab School 0-12?)
  o The Lab School is going to seek NAEYC Accreditation and Parent Aware certification is a part of that process. Lab School families will start to see some of the work around that process.
• Upcoming Calendar:
  o Family Creativity Night: (10.14.15 from 6pm-7:30pm) Notices have gone out to families. Outdoor activities planned. Great opportunity for families to get to know one another.
  o School Portrait Days: (11.4 and 11.5) Pictures will be taken at the beginning of classes. Parents are asked to stay for a few minutes to help facilitate the photo shoot so it can be completed in an efficient manner. Room Parents should plan to be on hand and ask parents to stay and help.
  o December Class and All School Activity Planning: Room parents will help coordinate activities, typically 2x per week during break. Sheila will send out master class room email lists to room parents for ease of communication.

PALS Chair Nanci McMenomy discussed the following volunteer opportunities and distributed sign-up sheets for the following fundraising events:

• Gym Jam – to be held on Bierman field in Feb 2015. The event raised $1.5K in 2013 for large motor play equipment. PALS is recruiting volunteers to help coordinate planning the event. It is all laid out in a planning notebook and generally requires a few calls to secure the venue, and contact the athletic department coordinator to arrange for student-athletes to participate. Lab school families may invite neighbors and friends. Alumni come back for the event and lots of college athletes participate as part of their community service obligations.
• Spring Soiree- to be held at the Dodge Nature Center on 4.25.15. The event raised $11K in 2013 for scholarships for families to attend the Lab School. The majority of funds are raised through a silent auction. Monthly planning meetings begin on November 3rd and (all are welcome to help in many ways that do not require attending the monthly planning
meeting – contact Kirsten Kavanaugh). In addition, talents are also welcome (e.g., live music).

- Kiln – Sheila and the team (led by Elizabeth and Ross who cleaned out an old closet) have found a spot for a kiln that the School could use for projects. The electrical set-up work will cost $1,700. Ideas were discussed about how to raise the needed funds – including sponsoring “clay” pieces of the students to either take home or decorate the School, fundraising pottery class and/or field trip to the Northern Clay Center. Volunteers were requested to lead an effort for fundraising. Sheila mentioned that there may be interest in some of these activities from Staff and the University art community as well.

- Teacher Appreciation:

  Parents will be asked to sign-up to bring in food for the Fall and Spring Luncheons. Teachers/Parents will work together on appreciation gifts for the student teachers at the end of session. With Room Parent Leadership, parents are being guided to coordinate group teacher gifts at the end of year (ex: donations toward gift card and some personalized project (e.g., picture mosaic). Parents who wish to give mid-year gifts are asked to be discreet.

Sheila led discussion on the following topics:

- Interest in shared/group messaging/email service such as Big Tent. Responses were mixed with some saying that they would prefer Facebook or email. And that if one site were to contain all the Lab School info (bulletins, updates, etc.) that may make some more willing to go to a portal. Sheila will review previous survey results that may have more directional feedback on general interest.

Other:

- Volunteer sign-up sheets for dishwashing for the quarter were made available on Google docs. Room parents are asked to check the sign-up sheets each week and find parents to fill in any empty dates.
- A new school newsletter is in process. Each teacher has a section. Parents are asked to provide constructive feedback for improvement. A parent authored section may be a future opportunity.
- Lab School is looking at a limited logo clothing line. Please share ideas with Sheila on items that would appeal to parents and kids.
- Strong message to GET INVOLVED. There are many opportunities for parents - with a range of time commitments.