



Roy Cloud School - 2017-2018 School Year

PTO Meeting Notes

29 August 2017

Call Meeting to Order/Welcome/Introductions – Yvonne Sarles

- This first PTO meeting of the school year started at 6:30pm in the school library.
- PTO President Yvonne Sarles led the group in introductions. For attendee list please see Appendix 1.

Redwood City School District Superintendent John Baker – remarks

- [Superintendent John Baker](#) attended the PTO meeting to give background and a preview of a meeting taking place tomorrow (Wednesday August 30, 2017) in the MUB regarding K- 2 class sizes.
- Background:
 - Dr. Baker and Principal Dana Hardester described the great lengths the district and Roy Cloud administration staff go through to budget and plan for student enrollment. Current enrollment is reviewed in October and funding for the next school year is based on attendance on one specific day. They make their best assumptions about how many people will move out of the district, enroll in charter or private schools, and those who will return to school the next year (Dana is diligent about surveying and following up with current parents about their plans to return and future parents about their plans to start Kindergarten).
 - Despite these efforts, parents may make unexpected last minute decisions and new families move into the neighborhood. So the first 10 days of school are closely observed for enrollment issues (either under or over enrollment) and to determine if there need to be student and/or teacher moves/release. Dr. Baker has been carefully reviewing numbers at our school and at schools across the district and he will make a determination/recommendation for the School Board. When considering class size has to take into account the overall budget picture.
- Issue: Despite all best and valiant efforts, the number of incoming neighborhood 2nd graders was underestimated. And now Roy Cloud has more 2nd grade students than classroom space (reportedly 9 more than the maximum 28 students per classroom allowed).

- Proposed Solution:
 - A third dedicated 2nd grade classroom will need to be created and that will be built from the current 1st/2nd grade combo class.
 - The 1st grade will need to create a 4th dedicated classroom to accommodate the 1st graders in the combo class. The district found the funding to hire a qualified and temporary 1st grade teacher
 - A local philanthropist gives the district \$750,000 annually for professional development for teaching and administrative staff. Due to one person taking a half a year of leave, there are leftover funds that the district has permission to use for this temporary 1st grade teacher at Roy Cloud.
- Methods:
 - How students will be shuffled within 1st and 2nd grade classrooms is not known but will be discussed at the meeting tomorrow night. There is at least one other school with more 1st graders than they have space for - they and others may be leaving their neighborhood school and coming to Roy Cloud.
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 - Dana doesn't want to disrupt current class communities too much but kids are resilient and she is confident it will all work out well.
- Timeline:
 - Volunteers to move classes may be solicited on Thursday.
 - New student / teacher assignments will be shared with parents on Friday September 1.
 - These 1st and 2nd grade classroom changes will start Tuesday September 5, 2017.
- Impact on other grades:
 - There will be no changes to the current Kindergarten classes which have 21, 22, 25 students respectively (considered under enrolled due to parents not bringing their children into school for a number of reasons including pulling them back to preschool).
 - There will be no changes to the grades 3 and 4 combo class.
- On a related note, Dr. Baker mentioned he has received a number of emails (jbaker@rcsdk8.net) relaying concerns about high class sizes and questions about the combination classes. He is sorry for responding with generic emails -the attorneys really recommend that generic response but he is happy to speak freely in person or by phone (650-482-2230).
- As an aside, Dr. Baker mentioned in passing that Redwood City Education Foundation is talking to Google.org about bringing a large scale STEM project to all of the district schools.

Principal's Report – Principal Dana Hardester

- No additional update

Teachers Report - Anna Rivoli

- On behalf of all teachers, Ms. Rivoli thanked the PTO for the annual teacher stipend; is an important and helpful resource for school purchases. And thanks too for the great back to school lunch.
- The middle school teachers would like to thank Amy Truesdale for arranging for middle school room parents.
- If there are extra PTO funds the K-2 teachers would like a copy person and Ms. Rivoli (and perhaps other teachers) would welcome a standing desk.

Direct Donations Update - Jolie Kalvaria

- [The 2017-2018 Direct Donations Campaign](#) is off to a great start! Jolie expressed her thanks to the Direct Donations Team and to everyone who has made their donation so far and shared some great stats as of August 28, 2017:
- Collected thus far: \$48,000 (plus a potential additional \$10,000 in matching funds).
- Progress toward donation goal: Without matching funds we have reached 27% of our goal!
 - Last year at this time we were only at 15% of our goal.
- Progress toward 100% participation: With 66 donations total, 12% of Roy Cloud families have given thus far.
 - Last year at this time only 7% of Roy Cloud families had donated.
- Looking ahead:
 - September: poster displayed in each classroom. Plug at Back to School Night. Donation forms and PTO brochure will be sent home with every student in Thursday folders next week along with special note in eBlast to be on the lookout for forms. Teacher email at the end of the month about PTO funding.
 - October: Reaching out to each classroom through room parents and Facebook postings. Main campaign target end is October 31.
 - November: [GivingTuesday](#) text campaign. Try to beat the \$17,000 collected on this date last year.
 - December: Year-end push! Reminders about tax deductible donations.

Back to School Night – Yvonne Sarles and Principal Dana Hardester

- [Back to School Night](#) will be Tuesday, September 5. Back by popular demand, the evening will be broken into two shifts. Schedule:
 - 5:00 - 5:30 - Welcome in the MUB
 - 5:30 - 6:30 - Visit classrooms for Grades 1-5
 - 6:30 - 7:00 - Welcome in the MUB
 - 7:00 - 8:00 - Visit classrooms for Grades 6-8
 - (Kindergarten had their Back to School Night on the first day of school.)

- Remember that Roy Cloud will have early dismissal at 1:30 p.m. for all grades on September 5 so teachers can prepare for Back to School Night.
- PTO President Yvonne Sarles will make welcoming remarks in the MUB and talk about who the PTO is, what it does, what programs it supports, and other general information.

60th Birthday Party - Virgie Germano

- [Roy Cloud's 60th Birthday Celebration](#) will take place Thursday September 28th 2017 from 4pm-8pm. This event is taking place instead of the usual school year kick off event Hot Rod Night.
- There are flyers and banners posted on school grounds and in the neighborhood to help advertise this fun community event. There are also great t-shirts for sale!
- There will be a live band, cotton candy, popcorn, basketball hoop, rock-climbing wall, slime-making station, dunk tank, pie in the face game and more!
- 8th graders will be selling tickets for games and activities to offset the cost of the event.
- 7th graders will be fundraising with a yummy bake sale.

Library Renovation Update – Assistant Principal Kristen Fielding

- Last year's "Fund a Need" (a specific fundraiser at our annual auction aimed at one time/one year specific purchase or improvement at Roy Cloud) was to renovate the library and upgrade the computer labs. \$67,000 was raised at the auction to support the library refurbishment.
- Over the summer the library was repainted (paint was donated), re-carpeted, and 35 new Mac minis were purchased for the upper computer lab.
- In the next few weeks there will be new furniture in the main library plus new stools and swivel chairs for the lower lab.
- We hope to have it all done by the 60th Birthday Party so there can be a grand opening!

Auction Update – Avis Hains

- Please save the dates for our [Annual Fundraising Auction](#)! It will be Saturday February 24, 2017 at [Domenico Winery](#) in Redwood City. There isn't a chosen theme yet but the venue is beautiful and is undergoing further improvements. It will hold 200+, about the same number as last year.
- Ticket sales will start in November. The team thinks unlimited beer and wine is appropriate so there will be a \$10 increase to ticket cost.
- Volunteering opportunities – we have a lot of help but still need people to help organize teacher parties and outings, classroom gifts, and to help with the silent and live auction donations. Want to volunteer to help? Have something to donate for the auction? Please contact: roycloudauction@gmail.com.
- This years Fund a Need should be selected soon. The Auction Team wants to be able to announce something when the November ticket sales start.

- What is a Fund A Need? In addition to the parties and auction gifts you can sign up for, there is an opportunity to donate for a designated need for the school. It is typically a one-time deal – funds captured for a specific purpose and need to be used that year. Ideally it benefits all students. Coming up with the idea takes a collaborative effort of the teachers, staff, administration, and the PTO.
- Avis asked if the Administration could generate a list of Fund a Need ideas from teachers that could be voted on by parents at the 60th Birthday Party? It would be a way to get parents involved and excited. But that timeline may be too fast.
 - Principal Hardester thought that may be too fast but offered that we could ask parents to make suggestions and then share those with teachers. Avis expressed concerns that could generate unrealistic expectations among parents about what could be done.
 - Dana does have a list of possibilities generated from years past that could be a starting point.
 - Dana and the Auction team will discuss it over the next two weeks and narrow down the plan.

Garden Update - Yvonne Sarles

- Yvonne reported that the garden was in really bad shape this summer. Since then it has been cleaned out and now is ready for the next step. Do the teachers have interest and time to use the garden? There is a parent interested in being a garden coordinator. It would be nice to have something the kids could really engage with but it needs to start with teacher interest.
- There may be a call to parents in the next week to see if they have interest in helping classes work with the garden.
- Meg (Pirozzoli?): A local Jewish preschool has a great garden and curriculum – their gardener may be willing to talk about it and maybe help for a fee. Yvonne thanked Meg for the suggestion but wants to start first with gauging teacher interest.
- Lucy Wicks asked if any of the after school programs (childcare and/or enrichment) use a bed(s) if interested? Dana – maybe, if there are extra beds and if authorized by the school.

Thunderbolt/communications update - Staci Homrig

- Staci is responsible for assembling the newsletter that goes out via email on Thursdays and Sundays. The newsletter goes to all grade levels but she can also send grade specific updates. This will be really helpful for middle school grade level communications. But just can't send it to specific classrooms.
- The district has been slow to get the emails to Staci but now she has them – they just need to get formatted.
- Sign up genius links can be put in the newsletter every week – will really help get the word out for various opportunities.

- Staci found old photos of Roy Cloud at the Redwood City library and she has been posting them but is slowly running out of material. If you have old Roy Cloud photos please send them to Stacy [via email](#).
- If you have any kids that want to write for the newsletter – budding journalists – let her know. We can share more information and make it a lively and robust “newspaper”.

Other Items & Questions - All

- A Parent asked Principal Hardester about the status of the lunch shelters.
 - Dana reported that 2 outside lunch shelters, which are a “quick start” project funded by Measure, are being constructed and assessed for safety and ADA compliance. They will hopefully be installed by December. The lunch shelters may not hold all of the kids – may still need to use the MUB. But it will really cut down on noise.
 - The other Measure T “quick start” project for Roy Cloud is air condition for the second floor student classrooms. Like the lunch shelters the AC too was supposed to be completed by now but the district had a problem with the contractor and so had to put it back out to bid. Work will be done in the evenings and that work should start in September.
 - Progress on Measure T initiatives at Roy Cloud School is reported on [the district website](#).
- A Parent asked what systems are in place to volunteer to help?
 - You can go to the [Volunteer section of the PTO webpage](#) and email the heads of the different event committees.
 - A parent suggested a volunteer coordinator to help parents navigate all of the different ways they can contribute. Yvonne agreed this would be a great position to have filled by the end of the year.
 - Event leads will also send out emails with sign up genius volunteer slots for specific events so people can sign up for really specific job roles at specific dates and times. This is also something Staci can put in the newsletter.
 - Lucy Wicks reminded Principal Hardester that she developed and submitted a proposal for how to structure a day to pull in and orient new parents on how to volunteer new volunteers. She thinks it could create a good volunteer culture at Roy Cloud and she will resend it to Dana.
- A Parent (who serves as a room parent) asked what the rules are regarding room parent communication via Shutterfly; some teachers are hesitant to use it out of concerns for student privacy.
 - Principal Hardester says this concern comes from warnings by the district’s tech department and concern about sharing student information. In primary grades shutterfly is accepted because it is leaned so heavily upon, but they really try to phase it out for older grades. Going forward, if a parent is invited and volunteers to

join shutterfly that can be considered implicit approval by the parent. But upper grade teachers may choose to forgo its use entirely.

- Staci's ability to direct communications to specific grades will help room parents support their teachers and communicate effectively with parents.

Adjourn Meeting - Yvonne Sarles

- Meeting adjourned at 8:10.
- The next meeting will be September 26, 2017 at 6:30pm in the school library.
- Future PTO meeting dates are listed on the [PTO website](#).

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

1. Yvonne Sarles
2. Michelle Ortez
3. Anna Rivoli
4. Louie and Maria Matta
5. Barbara Gillespie
6. Dana Hardester
7. Kristen Fielding
8. Staci Homrig
9. Jim Balestieri
10. Cameron Hoffman
11. Jolie Kalvaria
12. Jen Clark
13. Mary Hockaday
14. Jan Scoville
15. Vicki Davis
16. Jennifer von Bleichert
17. Kortney Opshaug
18. Grace Rewak
19. Meghan Pirozzoli
20. Mary Redner
21. G. Sheene
22. Carmen Perez de la Cruz
23. Janine Zacharia
24. Dave and Mercedes Kwiatkowski
25. Danny Hsu
26. Irina Ruvinsky
27. Victoria Melamed
28. Nooshin Kaviani
29. Rochelle Romer
30. Alex Dendy
31. Vassia Tegoulia
32. Gilte Jensen
33. Stephanie Chen
34. Belinda Mendez
35. Ting Wang
36. Amy M.
37. Angela Malenfant
38. Alicia Thiby
39. Virgie Germano
40. Veronica Spencer
41. Christine Sochoux
42. Christina Granato
43. Avis Hains
44. Lucy Wicks
45. Emily Chapman
46. Casey Wright