



Roy Cloud School - 2018-2019 School Year

PTO Meeting Notes September 20, 2018

Call Meeting to Order/Welcome/Introductions – Yvonne Sarles

- The PTO meeting started at 6:32pm in the school library.
- For attendee list please see Appendix 1.

Treasurer's Report - Jim Balestieri

- Jim discussed August expenses and income. Expenses were minimal, consistent with previous years. Income was dominated by the Direct Donations campaign.

Principal Report – Principal Diane Prystas

- Principal Diane Prystas started with thank yous:
 - Thanks to the PTO we have 2 new projectors available for school use. New iPad and chromebook covers have also been procured for students.
 - Thank you to the garden fairies that cleaned up the quad. There are no more weeds and beautiful new stepping stones. The next phase is putting in some landscaping.
 - She also had help going through the emergency shed as we get ready for a number of emergency drills. It was helpful to see what was in there, how organized it was, and to assess what needs to be refurbished. She is looking into having water in the classrooms and will assess what food we want to have on hand. The [Great ShakeOut](#) earthquake drill is Oct 18 and we will be testing a number of systems.
 - The teachers had professional development today with the technology coach. Thank you teachers for your attendance.
 - Mrs. Moser (2nd grade teacher) also shared her thanks for the Education Outside program. She and her students love it and Heidi von Briel, the parent who spearheaded bringing Education Outside to Roy Cloud, has been so supportive and helpful.
 - Diane closed the thank yous after mentioning that Heidi and Amy Truesdale organized all of the “pull outs” in the schedule so we always know which class is where (garden, library, art etc).

- Principal Diane Prystas then acknowledged the concerns she has heard about ending the Reading Specialist program and explained her decision.
 - In the spring Superintendent John Baker observed that classrooms needed more rigor and current instructional practices. Diane also assessed the number of students receiving reading specialty care and it was only approximately 40 students. The Reading Specialist removed the students from the classroom and regular instruction to provide additional reading support. In addition, due to a shortage, she was frequently pulled to be a substitute teacher and thus had to cancel her reading instruction plans with students. The decision, made by Diane and John, is an attempt to serve a greater number of students and is consistent with her philosophy that the best instruction students can get is from their teachers.
 - Diane has been working with teachers to revise classroom reading instruction. Some teachers want additional materials, others want more professional development, others are asking for permission to use specialty materials for accelerated readers. Diane is also working with the school psychologist (which Roy Cloud shares with another RCSD elementary school) to develop a plan to identify learning disabilities earlier. She is concerned that the past practice of frequently removing kids from the classroom for special teaching can mask the signs of a larger learning disability.
 - In the meantime and consistent with standard practice, students are getting reading instruction in the classroom for 2-2.5 hours each day. Students are in guided reading groups, organized by capability. Those students that have more difficulty reading should be getting slightly more time (~10 minutes) with the teacher via their categorized reading group. The other students work independently while that is happening.
 - Parent question: how are teachers going to have time to work with students that need extra help (and those that are advanced and need more challenging work) when the classrooms are so large? Answer: Diane replied that they are working to build student stamina so they can spend more time working independently.
 - Parent question: If more funds were made available would you hire a Reading Specialist in addition to the Technology Integration Coach? Answer: Diane replied No. Teacher comment: A third grade teacher commented that she misses the reading specialist especially when she has 1 or 2 students in 3rd grade struggling with reading strategy because they are only reading at a 1st grade level.
 - Parent question: Is the extra time for reading instruction only for the struggling readers? Answer: Diane replied that reading groups happen for all students at all levels, but yes, the readers that need more help get more time with their teacher via their reading group.
 - Parent question: Will you please confirm if this was an operational decision or a financial one? Answer: Diane confirmed the decision was not financial - the district and administration has decided not to have a Reading Specialist at Roy Cloud this year.

- There will be a deeper discussion at the Principal Meetup next week and there will a district rep there to answer questions.
- Principal Diane Prystas spent some time introducing the purpose of the new Roy Cloud Technology Integration Coach.
 - Jennifer Nguyen is the first Roy Cloud Technology Integration Coach. Jennifer is a certificated teacher and she is here to coach the teachers on how to integrate technology into their instruction. This includes helping reading groups and helping get kids into Google Classroom. She isn't a computer lab person – she doesn't monitor it. Her role is to coach the teachers. She will model a lesson and then the teachers will do their own instruction. She has experience in integration of technology. Diane wants to increase the rigor of all instruction at Roy Cloud, add to what we are doing, and make it more current, which all comes from feedback from the recent climate survey taken by parents and students. Her goal is to keep students at Roy Cloud after 2nd grade. Please join the Principal coffee next week to learn more.
- Principal Prystas introduced her Monthly Meetup - it is a monthly coffee meeting (bring your own!) immediately after the school assembly in the library.

Vice Principal's Report – Vice Principal Kristy Jackson

- Vice Principal Kristy Jackson was not in attendance and Principal Diane Prystas shared some news on her behalf.
- Thunderbolt Valet has started under Kristy's supervision. There are students at both school entrances helping students exit cars safely at morning drop off. A teacher is present supporting the student valets.
- Middle school behavior at lunch and recess time has become an urgent safety issue.
 - Kristy put out a last minute call for parent support in the newsletter. There was an incident this week when a large percentage of the 8th grade student body got out of control at lunchtime. There are 4-yard duty helpers at Roy Cloud everyday, plus Legarza physical education support, plus both Kristy and Diane but it was still difficult to resolve the commotion. There is damage to the playground structure as a result and the "swarming" behavior of dozens of Roy Cloud's oldest students was alarming.
 - The administration is looking for new ways to organize lunch but in the meantime we are asking parents to visit the school during lunch and help with student supervision.
 - Many parents expressed concern about the lack of communication with students and parents about this incident, acknowledging that general descriptions and comments about the incident are possible without violating student privacy. Parents asked for mechanisms to be reminded of what behaviors are expected at lunchtime so they can reinforce them at home with students, and to be notified when there are large-scale breaches of behavior norms. A text message to parents was proposed. Parents also recommended an assessment of the lunchtime rules for

middle school and perhaps the creation of a lunchtime code of conduct for middle school. Diane said she would consider all of these ideas.

- A parent question about mobile phone use rules on campus prompted a lively discussion about what the documented and unspoken mobile phone use rules are and apparent conflicts. Diane clarified that students may use cell phone after 2:50 on campus, only to confirm pick up time or location with their parent.

Associated Student Body (ASB) - Anna Rivoli & Michelle Ortez

- This is week 2 of enrichment work for ASB students. They have been divided into committees led by Commissioners and are starting leadership conversations about the many different ways to be a leader. The Community Service committee is going to do Project Giving Kids (PGK).
- First morning assembly is next week (K-8). The school spirit committee is planning something for the assembly and is working on a Quad bulletin board about Kindness.
- This year's [CASL](#) trip happens during spring break but may still take students if there is interest. Can only take half the ASB students due to size constraints.
- There are going to be spirit days in the future. There will also be Boo grams for K-8. They have also been working on the announcements.
- Michelle is collecting names from teachers for K-8 classroom representatives and they will have meetings on Thursdays after school, once a month, for about 10 mins. If your child is chosen you will be notified by email.
 - Parent Question: Will you please work to make this accessible to students who leave campus for PCC? Michelle: Yes, I can inform teachers that students who attend PCC are not disqualified and can talk to PCC about having the van wait.
- Winter Wishes – ASB wants to collect wishes from students – can be big or small and make some of them private. ASB may try to fund the wishes but could we come to the PTO for funds? The kids would like to be able to give back to their community. At the CASL camp over the summer they did this and the kids were able to grant the simple wishes. Sensitive gifts could be given privately and anonymously.
 - Parent Todd Gumbrecht says if there are real community needs PCC wants to know about it – please let him know so he can bring it to PCC leadership.
- Yvonne ended this portion of the agenda with a thank you, on behalf of the PTO and parents, to Diane, Kristy, and the teachers for working so hard during these first weeks of school and for leading and managing through change to support our students!

Direct Donation (DD) Report - Jolie Kalvaria

- Direct Donation has raised \$104,000 to date - 52% of our goal!
 - Still really early in the campaign – continuing the same tempo as last year and will end the campaign at the end of October.

- Participation is different thus far; last year at this time we had 20% participation and now tracking only at 15%.
- New this year is the Lightning Circle There are 40 families so far who have given at least \$1,000 per student.
- Really going to push participation in the coming weeks - any amount a family can give will be greatly appreciated. We are also pushing company matching too – it was 35% of our final fundraising last year.

Miscellaneous - Yvonne Sarles

- Becca with Education Outside was in attendance and said she can't wait to be outside with kids and talk about science and environmental literacy. She was greeted warmly and enthusiastically by many of the parents in attendance.
- Digital sign removal for Eagle Scout project
 - The digital sign at the Jefferson entrance is permanently broken. Jen Clark's 8th grade son needs to complete Eagle Scout project. He would like to remove it and do some pretty landscaping in its place - a bench for students to wait safely for rides may also be possible.
 - VOTE: the PTO voted unanimously to approve this plan!
- Subsidizing 4th grade Sacramento field trip
 - This annual trip is a big expense for families. The total cost is \$119/student. The first payment is right before the holidays (\$50) – could PTO cover that and the rest covered by families? It will cost the PTO \$5,400.
 - The PTO supports the 7th grade Yosemite trip by providing \$6,000 in funding.
 - PTO scholarships are available to any families who need it.
 - VOTE: YES. Teachers will message this in classroom communications so some parents can know that they will pay the full amount anyway. Teachers can convey that the PTO paid the first installment. Todd also suggested it be mentioned on the "invoice."
- 8th grade planning committee help needed (7th grade lead needed to organize volunteers for events) – please contact Nancy Boswell. Nancy needs help! Please help spread the word.
- Thank you to Jen Clark, Lucy Wicks, and Julie Ray for organizing and hosting the movie Angst at the Fox Theatre. It was a fantastic event!
- Mary Beth gave an update on school supplies and no cost fundraisers.
 - Box top is going to start soon. We raised \$800 last year. There will be classroom prizes!
 - Our [Good Eggs](#) fundraiser has started – the "Roy Cloud" code is live now! During October and November 5% of purchases goes to the school and new customers get \$15 off their first order. If 20+ new families sign up, school gets a \$500 bonus
 - Sports Basement is moving into ToysRUS and Roy Cloud is signed up to receive benefits. The Sports Basement program will waive \$25 fee the first year of

membership, you get a certain percentage off each purchase and then they give money to Roy Cloud. Stay tuned for more info!

- Other events coming up are HoneyBears for Christmas trees plus a big push for AmazonSmile before black Friday.
- School supplies got a lot of good feedback. Already thinking about how to improve it. For example am coming up with solutions for how to reduce the waste and connect school supplies to families that need them.
- Directory Spot is still under construction. Still need class list info from the District so everyone can be broken out by classroom.
- Reminder that the teachers receive a stipend – they submit receipts to Jim and it happens automatically. The stipend was recently bumped up to \$500 from \$400. For larger expenses/needs teachers can apply for a PTO Grant. They have to fill out a descriptive form and turn it in for PTO approval. For example, a 6th grade teacher is bringing an Olympic champion into her class to serve as a mentor for the entire school year. Each grade also receives field trip funds.

Adjourn Meeting - Yvonne Sarles

- Meeting adjourned by 8:03pm.
- The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 6:30pm in the school library.
- Future PTO meeting dates are listed on the [PTO website](#).

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

1. Julie Brown
2. Jan Scorville
3. Nancy Sarmia
4. Jennifer Clark
5. Gerd Stieler
6. Principal Diane Prystas
7. Anna Rivoli
8. Michelle Ortez
9. Rochelle Romer
10. Lori Solorzano
11. Hannah Moser
12. Monica Koltermann
13. Becca Nelson
14. Jean Yang
15. Yvonne Sarles
16. Jim Balestrieri
17. Lucy Wicks
18. Elizabeth Albanese
19. Leanna Staben
20. Manja McMills
21. Meghan Pirozzoli
22. Cameron Hoffman
23. Amy Truesdale
24. Todd Gumbrecht
25. Jolie Kalvaria
26. Casey Wright
27. Alicia Truby
28. Mary Beth Milionis
29. Roger Dettloff
30. Belinda Mendez
31. Christina Granato

NOTE: This meeting attendance sheet may not be complete. It is possible the sign in sheet was not fully circulated and/or signed names were illegible.