

May Meeting Minutes 2025

PTO Monthly Meeting

May 14th, 2025 - Countryside Library and Google Meet Online

7:00pm - 8:34pm

Attendees: Principal Herlihy, Tera Hinckle, Adam Lipson, Melissa Monorokos, Maria Kerchi, Steve Lee, Chelsea Boughan, Erin Geraghty Kapoor, Julie Winsett, Sahar Zaheer, Casey Allen, Amye Kurson-Collins, Janet Jackson, Beth Harmon, Amanda Wong, Jess Lourie, Barbara Mauger, Jill Harris Tucker, Brigid Tsai, Allison Levin, Melissa Hagerstrom, Heidi Schmerbeck, Rohit Anand, Adam Bernstein, Narmeen Dashoush, Noorie Abbasi, Tayyaba, Harrison Tsai, Denitsa B, Nanda Campbell, Sue Johnson

7:00pm-7:10pm Principal's Updates: Principal Herlihy

-Building Project Updates: Monday at 10:30am will be ground breaking ceremony. All parents are welcome. 5th grade has MCAS that day. Mayor Fuller, Superintendent Nolin, MSBA members will be present. Construction people onsite have been great. Trying to keep the noise down, returning balls that go over the fence, fixing the fence.

-Arrival & Dismissal Update: This has been going well. Practiced new fire drill routines. Vans have been using the new loop. Hard to get to the playground after school. Cannot keep building open for people to walk through. Can ask if we can remove fence by wetlands so people can get to the playground.

-Kindergarten Screening: Will have 3 classes for next year. Screening this afternoon. 5/28 K orientation day. Meet and greet with families. Beth H the welcoming committee will be there. Will try to organize meetups for K families over the summer. Sahar Z will help out.

-Placements for 2025-2026 School Year: Working on placements, but will need to wait until the end of the year for staffing changes. This has been the trickiest year to plan with so many unknowns. Trying to move people into other open positions. Reorganization in math and literacy programs are happening. Reach out to city councilors to advocate for needs. Lenny Gentile and city councilors came to CS and Angier. Wanted to know how education has changed. Want to bridge the budget gap. Kids are starting to worry about the school year ending.

-Upcoming Events:

6/4 Field Day at Newton Highlands playground

6/4 Zara W & Griffin M- Annual Art and Music Show

6/5 Cove Day for 5th grade

6/12 Springfest at Memorial Spaulding

7:10pm-7:40pm Discussion Topics: Adam L, Maria K & Tera H

-Board of Directors Election for 2025-2026: Adam L, Maria K & Tera H

Maria K will be moving on to middle school next year. Adam L is not running for a position to give new people a chance to volunteer. Will be around for conversations if needed for help. New framework is being used for this election. Will need to work out the kinks. The PTO board will be formed first then committee co-chairs will be assigned which are not tied to votes and will be advertised to the CS community after Directors at Large get first dibs.

Co-president nominee: Steve L - 3 years in the PTO and has been on the EC with 5 presidents. Wants to give support and guidance.

Co-president nominee: Melissa H - Excited for a meaningful role and to contribute more.

Treasure nominee: Rohit A- works in corporate finance. Easy way to contribute.

Co-clerk nominee: Casey A- 2 years as the fundraising chair. Great way to know people and be a part of the community. Happy to take notes.

Co-clerk nominee: Denitsa B- Has a 1st grade. Involved in the PTO for 2 yrs. Looking for a formal role. Very organized.

Co-fundraising nominee: Stephanie L- Has twins in kindergarten. Has been working in the fundraising/non-profit space for 17 years. She is currently an Associate Director, Philanthropy Marketing & Communications at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. She believes that asking people to support causes they care about doesn't have to be hard or awkward - it's just a way to help people create the future they want to see.

CAS co-chair nominee: Heidi S- Has 3 kids. Does CAS for K and 1st grade and is also a room parent for K and 1st grade.

Co-room parent coordinator nominee: Erin K- Has a 4th grader at CS. Was the treasurer and room parent coordinator at Horace Mann. Is currently the co-clerk at CS. Feels the room parent coordinator helps be a liaison between the parents and PTO. Helps to welcome all families to the CS community and can be a resource for questions.

ELL nominee: Brigid T- Is a K room parent, CAS coordinator and welcoming committee. 20 years in global communications. Importance of clear accessible communications in all languages.

Director at Large nominee: Adam B- Has a 2nd and 6th grader. Has been the fundraising chair, bylaws committee and runs Field Day. Follows city politics. Wants to assist and help. Is interested in the inclusion role. Can all families access PTO events? Is there a barrier to participating on PTO programming? How can we do better? See this more as a soft touch role, not an advocacy role.

Director at Large nominee: Janet J - Has been the co-room parent coordinator for several years. Is an occupational therapist and has a student on an IEP. Helps with Back To School events, Welcome Committee. Can be flexible and fill in gaps for other events.

Director at Large nominee: Allison L - Has 2 children 1 in kindergarten and 1 in 4th grade. Is currently the room parent for K. Would like to help plan the parent party and Springfest.

Director at Large nominee: Jill T- has been a D at L for 3 years. Has 2nd grader and a 4th grader. Would like to continue be the leader on Springfest and help with the 5th grade committee.

Director at Large nominee: Julie W- Has a 3rd grader and a 6th grader. Has been active in the PTO for 7 years. Was the co-clerk and is a room parent. Has institutional knowledge. Likes community service and runs the Green Team, Holiday Gift Drive and Newton Serves.

Director at Large nominee: Sahar Z- Has incoming K and 2nd grader in the SPARK program at CS. Has multiple volunteer positions within the community. Is invested in giving back to the community and wants to include all families. Would be interested in the MCF and working on the inclusion committee.

Sue J- is not on the ballot this year. Would like to give other people the opportunity to volunteer. Has been a PTO volunteer for many years as co-president, MCF chair, FunRun and Update team. Has a 5th grader and is interested in the 5th grade committee and continuing as MCF chair.

All above nominees were voted into open positions for the 2025-2026 Board of Directors.

7:40pm-8:10pm Community Events

-Springfest 6/12: Chelsea B & Jill T

Will be held at Memorial Spaulding. Will have bathroom building access. Field permit is set. There will be inflatables. Need to confirm wifi. No bubbles this year. Beth H will be creating a social story for the event.

-Field Day 6/4: Adam B

Will be held at Newton Highland Playground, all grades from 9-11am. Volunteers will be there all at the same time 8:30am - 11:30am. Waiting to finalize and will send out details this Sunday.

Action Item/To Do: Send out information in Update this Sunday

-5th Grade Experience - Community Service Project Update: Barbara M, Jess L & Sangeeta J
Community service project is underway. May 30th bag items. No parents at this. Within budget. Can send Steve reimbursements. Julie W brought in a 5th grade experience shirt.

8:10pm-8:25pm Additional Updates/Recap on Past Events

-CS Garden Planting Recap 4/12: Julie W

Planted the garden. Harvest party will be next month. Thanks to the 5th, 4th and 3rd grades.

-Newton Serves Recap 5/4: Julie W

Went well. Good turnout with a lot of new families. Did a deep clean of the library and art room. Cleaned up ELL room and teachers lounge. Planted flowers.

-Room Parent Year End Teacher Gifts: Janet J & Beth H

Do we collect separate for 5th grade gifts? 5th grade committee has enough money. Do we collect for the building?

-Parent Party Recap/Auction Update: Melissa M & Amye K

Parent party was a success. 40 people attended. Was good food and good company. Thanks to the committee for all the hard work. Looking at March for the party next year. Auction website will be up and running until Sunday. Good opportunity to raise added funds. What happens if it expires? Donate it back.

-Fun Run & Raffle Recap 4/16:Sue J

Was a success! Raised \$14,300. Check will be coming this week, Incentives- registering put name in with teacher prizes. If you raised more money you will be eligible for more prizes. Prizes were picked in After Care. Has to be done after school hours since it's fundraising. Can we do a run and a separate fundraiser?

-Teacher Appreciation Week Recap: Melissa M

Teachers were super happy. Thanks to all on the committee.

-School Supplies Update: Chelsea B

Working with Emma on teachers lists

8:25pm-8:30pm Misc Items, Discussion

Input/Ideas