

Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 24, 2014, 8ñ9am

Attendees: 13 attendees, including Family Liaison Nicole Sullivan

Weekend Backpack Program:

The Cambridge Weekend Backpack Program sends meals home on Fridays to Cambridge Public School students whose primary source of nutrition is the school cafeteria, currently serving more than 200 students across the city. Bags are discreetly sent home with students. Families that are in need of this program should contact Nicole Sullivan (nsullivan@cpsd.us or 617-349-6538). Here at the Peabody, we have reached our capacity for helping families for this year.

For this year, the program leaders decided to focus on the families we are now serving and shoring up supply chains and distributor relations. There is a website through which we can donate, run through the Margaret Fuller House. Alison Goldberg will share the specifics for donating online.

Peabody community members interested in helping should contact Ellen van Bever.

The need for clean, plastic bags with no holes for the food was discussed. A box will once again be placed in the lobby for families to donate clean, gently used plastic shopping bags to the program.

Field Trips:

We discussed the need for chaperones to help with field trips. Attendees asked that teachers be more specific when asking for chaperones: giving ample lead time with notice, specifying how many chaperones are needed, letting each chaperone know that they will be going on the trip, etc. Nicole Sullivan will ask Jen Ford to include these specific requests regarding field trips in her weekly newsletter to teachers. Nicole Sullivan offered to include the need for chaperones on field trips in the *Peabody Planet*, along with encouragement to caregivers to talk to their child's teacher about such needs.

Room Parents:

The topic of reintroducing Room Parents to each classroom was raised. The specifics of what a room parent would do would depend largely on the teacher's needs. The room parent could act as a liaison between the teacher and other parents to help disseminate classroom needs (supplies, chaperones, class helpers, etc.) as well as help with school-wide events such as the Staff Appreciation lunch held every year. Becky Harmon is going to create a 1-page sheet with more information and share with us in the next week.

BOKS:

In 2013 The Connection brought BOKS (Build Our Kids' Success) to Peabody. BOKS is a research-supported initiative developed by Reebok that promotes the profound impact of physical activity on a child's mind, body and community (website: <http://www.bokskids.org/>). BOKS takes place in the Peabody gym on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00ñ8:40am.

BOKS began on Tuesday, October 14 and has gotten off to a strong, fun start! K-5 students may participate but parents must fill out a one-page participation form.

Additional volunteers are needed! No formal training is required, just enthusiastic adult hands. You may volunteer one day or both. Please come to an upcoming BOKS session if you haven't filled out a form but would still like your child to participate or if you'd like to get involved; introduce yourself to Paula Akiba and Susan Hargrove.

As of today, there are 20 kindergarten participants, 15 first graders, 8 second graders, 8 third graders, and 4 fourth graders. Increase in participation is expected as weather becomes colder. Though we previously discussed gaining use of the Gately gym for BOKS it was decided that it's best to keep the

children and BOKS leaders together.

Cafeteria Help in the Morning:

Peabody students dropped off after 8am may go to the cafeteria. Ms. Ford reported that she is short-staffed with cafeteria chaperones. Ms. Ford is seeking parents to assist with child supervision in the cafeteria before school starts. **Please contact Nicole Sullivan if you are able to help.**

Welcoming Families Program:

Last spring Deirdre Logan organized a system to welcome new families in their first year at Peabody School. Deirdre heard from more than 20 established families willing to volunteer, and matches were made with eight new families opting to be paired with an established family.

Deirdre worked with the front office to send out another request and pair families accordingly. There were no new families to join the program. Volunteers should stay tuned or contact Deirdre (Deirdre.Logan@childrens.harvard.edu) with any questions.

Important note: Caregivers wishing to volunteer, in any capacity, must complete a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) form, which takes two minutes to complete in the front office.

Next Connection Meeting:

Friday, November 21, 8am, at Peabody School library

Please contact Co-Chairs: Ellen van Bever (envanbever@gmail.com) and John O'Neill (joneil@hammondre.com) with questions or to get involved with any of the below activities.