

Phoebe A Hearst Elementary School
Parent Teacher Organization

PTO Meeting (Closed)
March 11, 2026
Library - 6 pm



Attendance:

Present:

President: Erica Clayton

Vice President: Lorry Marvin

Treasurer: Anastasia Dolotov

Secretary: Nichole St. Germain

Teacher Representative: Jeanna Chasko

Communications: Amanda Panton

Hospitality: Kearsten Shepherd

Garden Chair: Melissa Miller

Fundraising Coordinator - Fonda Trimble

Home Run Reader: Jenny Close

Members at Large: Rachel Connor, Allison

Dorsey, Jason Hechtkopf, and Carolyn

Chu.

Our Organizations Agreements: Individuals agree to be respectful of others, engage in collaboration and communication, and listen to who is speaking without interrupting. Because this meeting will be short and focused, please keep dialogue on topic and brief.

Call to Order - President called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

- **Approval of Draft Agenda** - Motion to amend the minutes to add the Nominations and Elections Committee to the agenda and Allison Dorsey to Science Night. Allison motioned to approve the revised agenda. Amanda seconded. Ayes carried the vote.
- **Approval of February 11th Minutes** - Melissa motioned. Lorry seconded. Ayes carried the vote.

- **President Report:** Erica Clayton
 - Welcome & Reflection - What makes you feel lucky? Members shared their thoughts.
 - General Updates
 - Erica shared a reflection from her graduate school advisor who compared education to a river - teachers are only part of students' lives for a short time, but the constant movement brings new ideas, creativity, and joy. She encouraged the board to embrace change, upcoming elections, and new opportunities to serve. She encouraged members to think about ways they may want to serve on the board in the future and to reach out if interested in learning about different roles.
 - Erica expressed appreciation for how well the board functions and the positive momentum within the community.
 - **Art Program Update:** Students now have a new art teacher, Liv Moe, a prominent member of the Sacramento art community working with NorCal Arts. Thanks to the hard work of our members Mrs. Fahey, Anastasia, and Denae students are now receiving weekly 30-minute art sessions. Previously, art instruction with Ms. Jane was offered every other week, so this increase allows students to engage with art more regularly through the end of the year. We are very excited for students to have this expanded opportunity. There have been many conversations around the importance of arts education and the challenges involved in bringing consistent art programming to campus. The topic of VAPA funding continues to be part of an ongoing discussion. While we are grateful for the progress that has been made, we recognize that maintaining strong arts programming requires continued advocacy and attention. A meeting with the VAPA department is scheduled for this week to continue the conversation.
 - **Website & Calendar:** The website and calendar updates have been delayed. Two parents have volunteered to help manage the website and calendar updates. The group discussed creating a clearer process for submitting information for the website. Member question: Would it be helpful to put this information on the marquee?

- Prop 28 was not previously included in the budget because the district was holding our school site funds. These funds are not transferred to the PTO, but are shown for context as they support programs the PTO helps fund.
 - Prop 28 guidelines require 80% of funds be used for teachers, with a 20% allowable for support (supplies/materials/residencies). Funds allocated to staffing must go to teachers unless reallocated to support.
 - Prop 28 Program Year 1 - staffing is \$65,057, \$10,912 was allocated to Phoebe for the current music teacher. We are requesting that the remainder, approx. \$55,000 be moved to support to help cover NorCal residencies, this can be done with a waiver.
 - More information is expected after the VAPA meeting this Friday regarding whether Prop 28 Program Year 1 staffing funds can be moved to support.
 - Prop 28 Program Year 2: \$63,610 is allocated to staffing and must be used for teachers unless reallocated to support.
 - Prop 28 is expected to be ongoing funding. Art classes may not be weekly for every class, but would rotate and be every other week, similar to the schedule we had with Ms. Jane.
 - Appreciation was expressed for Anastasia, Denae, and Maria for their work navigating and advocating on behalf of the students and community.
- **Rollover Funds:** Current rollover is \$39,000. Board preference is not to keep large rollover balances; funds should benefit students now. Discussion regarding possible allocation of rollover funds:
 - Campus Improvement Requests: Mr. Eisner - volleyball stands: approx. \$1,000 per pair (needs 2 pairs), recess cart: approx. \$1,500, and Gaga Ball pit: approx. \$5,000 each (request for 2). Discussion noted recess space is challenging and these items would benefit many students. Additional requests: Phoebe mascot, umbrellas for outdoor areas (we do have potential funds reserved for campus beautification),

speakers on campus, and a suggestion to host another movie night or community event, which families enjoy.

- **Sly Park:** Previously covered by the district and continued due to COVID funding. Future funding may need to come from parents or PTO. Approximate cost: \$500 per student. A scholarship fund exists for families needing support. Any decision to fund this would require board discussion and vote.
- **Long-Term Funding:** Possible support for teacher curriculum resources not provided by the district, estimated cost: \$20,000 annually. The district is piloting a new curriculum next year, with potential rollout the following year, though funding uncertainty may affect timing.
- **Facilities & Space Updates:** STEM room and art room will remain in place for now. In the interim, some programs are using the stage. Long-term plans may involve using a portion of the library for RSP/testing/OT services. Possibility of adding a storage shed on campus was discussed. Board members will gather requests and “asks” to create a full list of possibilities, monitor Prop 28 developments, and evaluate funding priorities together. A more detailed budget discussion will occur in May once final numbers are available. The May meeting may be extended to allow time for deeper budget planning and decision-making.
- **Committee Reports:**
 - **Skate Night:** Allison Dorsey - Confirmed for April 21. The event is mostly organized and everything is being coordinated on the website. We will need help passing out wristbands on the day of the event.
 - **The Event:** Anastasia Dolotov/Kerry Sokol - Tickets are expected to go on sale March 18, or March 23. Volunteers are needed to help secure donations, especially brewery or alcohol donations. A shared spreadsheet will be sent so members can help secure items.
 - **Garden:** Melissa Miller - The garden program is starting back up. Sign-ups will be sent out this Friday, and students will begin visiting

the garden again next week. The schedule may need to be adjusted for minimum days, possibly with shorter sign-up slots. The recent garden workday went well, with 11 adults participating. Another workday is being considered for Sunday, April 12. Several volunteers have expressed interest in returning, and the hope is to involve more families and students. For the upcoming Friday workday, volunteers are needed to help spread wood chips. Seasonal maintenance is also underway, including fertilizing the grass strips in front of the classrooms, which typically happens this time of year. One of the campus chickens, Raven, recently passed away. The chickens are older and have been part of the campus for quite some time. Members discussed introducing new chickens to the garden. A parent who helps with the garden, raised a concern about chicken care during school breaks, which will need to be addressed moving forward.

- **Science Night:** Kelly Hall/Sarah Zorn/Melissa Miller/Allison Dorsey - The new date for Science Night has been approved for April 17 from 5:30-7 with set up 4:30-5:30. Sarah is currently working on securing the necessary facility permits. Two food trucks have been confirmed: Drewski's and a burger truck, they have kid-friendly options as well. The committee has reached out to UC Davis for the biology bug display, but they are currently understaffed and unable to participate in events. Outreach has also been made to the robotics clubs, STEM groups, and local community colleges to participate with demonstrations or vendor booths. A bug specialist has been confirmed, and a member offered a Tesla coil for display. Planning is continuing and the event is coming together well.
Science Fair Component: Mrs. Dewald is introducing an optional science fair component connected to Science Night. Slides have been created to share with students and families explaining the process. There will be a Google sign-up page, and students who participate will be eligible for prizes organized by grade level, depending on participation. Mrs. Dewald is excited to discuss the scientific process with students during STEM classes.

- **Hospitality/Teacher Appreciation Week:** Kearsten Shepherd - Teacher Appreciation Week will take place during the first week of May. The daily activities coordinated by room parents will remain the same as in previous years. We still need to confirm specifics for door decorating. The committee is planning to move away from the Chalk the Walk (the sidewalk chalk/notes of appreciation) and instead create a message wall near the cafeteria where students can write notes of appreciation to teachers. There was also discussion about shifting away from physical school gifts and instead providing teachers with gift cards using the funds that would normally be spent on items. The committee is exploring the possibility of having a local business host a pop-up coffee stand for a few hours during the week, offering a limited menu for staff. Pastries would also be provided. Permits and administrative approval will be needed for this. This year's theme will be "Wicked – Our Phoebe Teachers Are Oz-some."
- **Nominations & Election:** Lorry Marvin - Isaac & the Noms & Elections Committee is reviewing the nomination and voting process to make it more streamlined.
 - Changes include: Simplifying the nomination form so encourage more people to submit and streamline voting so there is only one form to complete.
 - Election Details: Voting will not be online, to encourage engagement at the meetings. Voting will be the night of the election- possibly also at drop off and pick up. Clear communication will be provided to make the process easy for families and community members. Nominations are announced two weeks before the election, and the election date is shared 30 days in advance with the community (already done as it's been on our website all year).
 - Committee Status: By bylaws, the committee requires 3 members; currently there are 2 members. The VP & President can provide input, but cannot serve on the committee. A member volunteered to help through April. We will need

additional support, if you are interested in joining the committee, please let us know.

- Discussion: If someone is elected, but does not win the position they ran for, there is discussion about whether they can be placed in another board role. All parents or guardians of students at Phoebe Hearst, as well as staff, are considered part of the PTO by the bylaws. The election committee has the authority to make adjustments without changing the bylaws; any major changes will be brought to the board for input. The committee will continue refining the process, with updates expected between now and May. Information will be shared in advance of April 8 so the board and community can provide feedback. Please send Isaac, Lorry or Jason your hopes and wishes so we can continue to update this process.

Additional Updates:

- **Home Run Reader:** Final reading month of the program. Last submissions due April 5. Game day will be scheduled soon.

Adjournment - Kearsten motioned. Anastasia seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.