

Inspired Families Association Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2015

<http://www.inspiredfamiliesassociation.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/inspiredteachingIFA>

1. Social Committee update, Carmen Rottenberg and Ana Rodriguez

The Fall Fest was a great success, thanks to so many family volunteers. The next social committee event will be a chili cookoff fundraiser for the IFA in January or February.

2. Recruitment Committee update, Johanna Olexy and Mary Pitts

The school has schedule four open houses for this year, running November through February. EdFest, the city-wide school expo, will be at the DC Armory on December 12. The recruitment committee seeks parent volunteers for all recruitment events, as well as to help distribute information and fliers across the city in advance of ITS open houses.

Questions for the recruitment committee:

- Would it be possible to have a FAQ to distribute at EdFest and/or open houses to answer some of the most commonly asked questions by age group (early childhood, elementary, middle school)? This would help with questions about potty training, food provider, school start and end times, aftercare, etc.
- It would be helpful to have recruitment materials include details about bus lines that serve ITS and metro accessibility.
- There is no open house for families that match with ITS after the lottery season – it would be helpful to those families to have more spring open houses.

3. Fundraising Committee update, Merry Alderman Ritsch, Rebecca Kahl, and Lucy Newton

- Giving Tuesday is December 1. This is the IFA's primary fundraiser for the year, as nearly all other activities by the fundraising committee support the school rather than the IFA. Please consider supporting the IFA and activities such as the Fall Fest, childcare at meetings, and staff appreciation meals by making a donation to the IFA on December 1.
- Last year, the Inspired Giving Drive raised more than \$87,000 to bring a music program to ITS, and all students now have music class at least weekly.
- This year, the fundraising committee has a goal of raising \$95,000 and the campaign will celebrate the school's fifth year with the theme, "Give Five to Reach \$95."
 - The campaign will likely operate more like a typical annual campaign and focus on supporting a number of overall needs and initiatives at ITS this year. Ideas so far include leveled reading texts for classrooms, a sunshade to support an outdoor classroom, and teacher salary support.
 - Families will be encouraged to start a family Razoo giving page and to consider giving to ITS throughout the year rather than just once in the spring.

- The Inspired Evening will be May 14. The committee is planning to sell ads for the Inspired Evening program and is planning to have more extensive silent auction offerings next year. Contact one of the committee chairs if you'd like to get involved!
- ITS is part of the Combined Federal Campaign this year. For federal employees who participate in workplace giving, our number is 73758.
- Monica Leibowitz is taking over small fundraising activities, including Amazon, Target, and Box Tops. Please remember that some of the shopping rewards cards (Harris Teeter, etc.) require you to sign up every year and select a recipient for your rewards. More information about small fundraisers, including links to make Amazon purchases, is on the IFA web page here: <http://www.inspiredfamiliesassociation.org/fundraising.html>
- A parent suggested that the IFA participate in fundraisers at local restaurants – for example, &Pizza was recently hosting a fundraiser where they donated a percentage of the evening's sales to a local elementary school. The Brookland Busboys and Poets and the new Chick Fil A in Columbia Heights are also good ideas for fundraisers. If any parent would like to help coordinate ITS restaurant fundraisers, please get in touch with one of the fundraising committee chairs.

4. **Beautification Committee update, Stephen Sipos**

- The service project to clean up the school grounds at the beginning of Fall Fest was a big success. Kids and families had fun and our Edgewood neighbors noticed the work that ITS families were doing around the school grounds.
- For the winter social event, there will likely be an indoor service project – to be determined.
- The beautification committee is working with the school to get more trash/recycling cans placed outside.
- A DC recycling representative came to ITS and was impressed by the book “recycling” area in the front of the school; she is working to put together a Recycling Handbook for charter schools.
- A parent asked if ITS had considered composting waste. The school and beautification committee is looking into the feasibility of composting – there are neighbor concerns about the types of bins and potential location of waste. The committee will provide any updates as they are available.

5. **Strategic Planning update, Massie Ritsch**

- The strategic planning committee held a parent forum October and is trying to host a second parent forum in December. So far, about 60 faculty, school administrators, and families have provided input to the strategic planning committee. There was also an opportunity for older students to provide input to the committee at a lunch roundtable.
- To provide input to the committee, send an email to strategicplanning@inspiredteachingschool.org

- There will likely be a strategic planning survey or other data collection instrument sent to families near the end of 2015. Please keep an eye out.

6. Transportation

- Kiss n Go still needs volunteers. Sign up at: <http://bit.ly/kissgofall2015>
- Please travel west on Douglas Street. Respect crosswalks. Don't make u-turns in the middle of streets in the school's neighborhood.
- ITS is on the waiting list for a crossing guard at the intersection of Lincoln, Douglas, and 2nd Street. Several parents have organized a written (and online, to come) petition to send to the mayor, Council Member McDuffie, and others to try to expedite the process.
 - Parents asked if it was possible to get a more permanent place for school buses to drop off; they idle in the street sometimes for up to 10 minutes, and impede all traffic.
 - The ANC representative, Sally Hobaugh, is also supportive of traffic calming and crossing guard efforts for this intersection.
 - There may also be an opportunity for DDOT to evaluate the intersection and determine if it is an appropriate place for a flashing light, streetlight, or other traffic calming measures.
- Families, please speak to the drivers of cars if you see them parked in the crosswalk or an intersection. Pictures of cars, with license plates obscured, can also be helpful in making the case to DDOT that the intersection is unsafe.

7. Edgewood Field Renovation, Lori Hardenbergh

- The Edgewood Field is slated for renovation by DPR. The schedule is not certain yet, but construction will likely begin in the summer/fall of 2016 and take about one year.
- The construction cost is estimated at \$15.6M.
- There is a community meeting on 11/18 from 7-9 pm. It is important that families attend and communicate their wishes about the renovation to the people running the meeting.
- As of now, the Edgewood recreation center is slated to be entirely rebuilt, to be two stories, and to triple in size. The architect is aiming for a LEED Gold certification. The renovation will include new playgrounds, new tennis courts, new basketball courts, and new fields.
- Families who filled out the survey last spring about the renovation expressed concern about the use of the field during construction, availability of after-school programming post-renovation, and a desire for playground equipment more suitable for big kids. There were also concerns about the potential for the grass field to be replaced with artificial turf.
- Moody Nolan are the project architects.
- A parent, who went through this feedback/input process when DPR was renovating the Harry Thomas rec center in Eckington, encouraged families to come out and participate.

He said that the architects and DPR really listened to stakeholders and took their feedback into account as they were revising the project design.

8. IFA At-Large Board Vacancy, Mary Pitts

- The IFA Board is seeking a volunteer to fill a vacant at-large seat. Interested individuals should send an email to: info@inspiredfamiliesassociation.org to express their interest. Please include your name, your child's name and grade(s), and a brief statement about why you'd like to join the IFA Board.
- The Board hopes to fill this position in December; please express interest by November 25.

Submitted by Mary Pitts, Secretary and adopted by the IFA Board, 11/12/2015.