

PTO "Community Conversation" January 13th, 8am in Lincoln Library

Welcome by Belinda Hsu, PTO Co-president

Kathryn McHugh, PTO treasurer shared update on PTO budget.

Notes from discussion facilitated by Anna Housely-Juster and Cecilia Casagrande:

1. Anna shared "Guidelines for Sensitive Conversations"
 - a. Listen to Understand (be open to hearing new information and new ideas)
 - b. Engage in active participation (share what you wish to share; take initiative to learn on your own)
 - c. Acknowledge differences and similarities with respect; listen deeply
 - d. Speak from personal experiences (use "I statements" when expressing thoughts)
 - e. Take risks to confront, honestly, your own biases and prejudices
 - f. Honor confidentiality
 - g. "Ouch" then educate (it is incumbent upon someone who was unintentionally hurt to speak up and to use opportunity to educate)
 - h. Have fun! (one in the group suggested this go to the top!)
2. Others from group added on:
 - I. Self-reflection and acknowledgment happens during sensitive conversations
 - J. Love within community needs to be priority
 - K. Think about actions/long-term changes that can come from conversations
3. The following thoughts were brought up during the conversation around inclusion in our community:
 - a. We need to spread the word to our community that our members love each other and school is a safe space
 - b. We want our kids to know that their parents are committed to inclusion and diversity
 - c. The initiative needs to be grass-roots: the message shared with the entire community to make sure everyone feels heard and represented.
 - d. There needs to be communication between the efforts of administration, teachers, and students
 - e. Our community's many diversities are its strength: income, religion, race, culture, national origin, sexual orientation
 - f. LISTENING is the objective
 - g. Ultimately we want the conversation to involve action steps
 - h. Self-reflection on our similar emotions and reactions can heal conflict
 - i. Art can celebrate uniqueness and commonalities... a great way to bring people together and it's fun!