



Dowling PTO 2020–2021: Everything you need to know

What does the Dowling PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) do?

- 1** The PTO hosts events to **foster community** and **create fun experiences** for Dowling students and families. We are not sure what events will look like this year given distance learning, but we will do our best to get creative and engage our amazing school community.
- 2** The PTO **raises money for students and teachers**. We purchase supplies and other equipment for students that are not covered in the school budget. We also provide mini-grants to teachers to allow them to plan field trips or other enrichment activities that would not otherwise be possible.

The PTO doesn't exist without your involvement, so we really need your help!

Supporting the PTO means you are supporting students and ensuring they have important enrichment opportunities. There are many ways you can support the PTO. **Choose the way that works best for you. Here are options to consider:**

Attend PTO meetings. This year PTO meetings will be held virtually the second Tuesday of each month from 6:00-7:30 p.m. October through May (exception: no meeting in December). Virtual meeting details will be shared via Membership Toolkit and the Parents of Dowling Elementary Students Facebook page. All are welcome!

- 1. Why should I attend?** To learn about what is happening at Dowling and how students are being supported. Dr. Winfield and teachers from various grades often present at meetings. Additionally, meetings are a great venue to share your thoughts and meet other parents.
- 2. Do I have to be a member to attend?** No. PTO at Dowling is an open group and no membership is required. You are welcome to attend as many or as few meetings as you would like.
- 3. If I attend a meeting, will I be obligated to join the board or volunteer at events?** No. There is no pressure to join the board or volunteer for anything unless you want to (we promise!).

Join the PTO board. There are 3 board positions open for the 2020-2021 school year: co-chair, co-secretary, and co-treasurer. General board member responsibilities include attending monthly PTO meetings, promoting communication and parent engagement, and supporting events. See the back side of this handout for details about the open board positions.

Join an event committee. There are separate sub-committees that plan and support many of the community-building and fundraising events we typically hold throughout the year at Dowling. We are not sure what events will entail this year given distance learning, but we will keep you posted! See the back of this handout for details.

Volunteer. PTO-sponsored events can't happen without volunteers. You will receive emails/messages throughout the year with details about volunteering for events. Registration is easy via Dowling's communication app, Membership Toolkit. You can volunteer at as many or as few events as you would like. Again, we are not sure what events will look like this year, but we will keep you posted.

Donate money. Don't have time to volunteer or attend PTO meetings but want to help? This option is for you! Your donations help the PTO provide food and supplies needed to host various events throughout the year. Any money raised above and beyond food/supply costs goes right back to the students. Donate money **any time** here: www.givemn.org/organization/Dowlingpto.

Questions? Comments? Ideas?

Email the PTO board: board@dowlingpto.org

Stay informed & engaged:

View the Dowling School calendar:
dowling.mpls.k12.mn.us

Receive updates & contact other families by joining: Membership Toolkit app & the Parents of Dowling Elementary Students Facebook page

What does PTO fundraising support?

Historically, PTO has supported the following:

- Field trips
 - Arboretum
 - Dodge Nature Center
 - Museums (Bakken, Mill City)
 - Theaters (Stages, Ordway, Children's)
 - Raptor Center
 - Three Rivers Park District
- Books and classroom supplies
- Upstream Arts program for special education
- Plant Mobile & Zoo Mobile visits
- Environmental Education supplies
- Playground equipment (e.g., Gaga Pit)
- We will gather input to determine ways to support teachers and students this year.

2020-2021 PTO meeting dates:

10/13/20: 6:00-7:30 p.m. **03/09/21:** 6:00-7:30 p.m.
11/10/20: 6:00-7:30 p.m. **04/13/21:** 6:00-7:30 p.m.
01/12/21: 6:00-7:30 p.m. **05/11/21:** 6:00-7:30 p.m.
02/09/21: 6:00-7:30 p.m.

**No meeting in Sept. or Dec. Meetings will be virtual.*



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PTO board: All interested parents and teachers are welcome to be a part of the PTO. The PTO is led by a board (2 co-chairs, 2 co-treasurers, 2 co-secretaries). General structure of board positions:

- Each board position serves a 2-year position.
- Year 1: You are in a supporting role to the person in the lead role. Your role the first year is to learn from the lead and support them in performing the role.
- Year 2: You become the lead and the new supporting co-[position] learns from you.

2020-2021 PTO board positions & duties:

Co-chair: Lead co-chair: Paige Ware
Supporting co-chair: OPEN

- Provide oversight of the activities of the officers and committees.
- Develop agendas and facilitate meetings, ensuring active members receive reminders.
- Respond to questions, comments, and complaints. Serve as the liaison to the front office, working together with all team members.
- Maintain a current copy of the bylaws.

Co-treasurer: Lead co-treasurer: Jason Hoyme
Supporting co-treasurer: OPEN

- Maintain and balance the PTO checkbook and other financial records. Maintain an accurate account of receipts and expenditures, presenting at monthly meetings.
- Sign checks to make disbursements as authorized by the Board in accordance with the budget.
- Schedule a review of financial records when there is a change of treasurer at the end of the budget year, by either an external auditor or no fewer than three members of the PTO.

Co-secretary: Lead co-secretary: Kim Whaley
Supporting co-secretary: OPEN

- Record minutes and attendance at each meeting and post them on the school website and shared folders.
- Submit information to the Green Gazette newsletter.

Want to learn more about the board? Email: board@dowlingpto.org

PTO sub-committees: These committees plan and lead the larger events typically held during the year. They are a great way to get involved and share your talents. Again, we are not sure what events will be held this year due to distance learning, but these are examples of events that have been held in past years.

Fundraising Event Committees:



Celebrate Dowling: Evening fundraising and social event just for adults, complete with music, drinks, appetizers and a raffle. This event will NOT be held this year.



Read-a-Thon: Our biggest fundraising event of the year. Last year we raised almost \$20,000. During the Read-a-Thon students track reading minutes and raise money for Dowling. It is a fun way to get reading! TBD whether we will hold this event this year.



Used Book Sale: This event kicks off the Read-a-Thon and typically raises \$1,000. Families donate their used books (an environmentally-friendly approach) and students visit the book sale to buy books they can read during the Read-a-Thon. Each student receives a coupon for a free book and additional books can be purchased. TBD whether we will hold this event this year.



Carnival: This event is a fun way to end the school year by gathering with friends and family to enjoy music, games, food, and prizes. TBD whether we will hold this event this year



Dowling Socials: Socials are gatherings, parties or activities that serve as mini fundraisers. Parent volunteers plan (who, what, when, where) and host an event (donate their time and cover the related costs). Participants pay a reasonable fee to attend (fees are donated to the school). Socials have included food making parties, adult-only gatherings, and grade-level or family activities. TBD whether we will have Dowling Socials this year.

Non-fundraising Event Committees:



Fall Get Outdoors + Campout: The Fall Get Outdoors event brings families together to enjoy the fall weather together. The Campout is the perfect way to enjoy Dowling's beautiful grounds, eat S'mores, play outdoors and camp overnight. This event will NOT be held this fall.



Green Team: Helps our events move toward zero waste. Helps improve composting and waste management at Dowling. Partners with the Environmental Education teacher to enhance the student Rot Ranger program, host a seed & plant swap, and more!



Year Book: Creates the annual yearbook by gathering and organizing pictures to preserve memories for students, staff, faculty, and families.

Want to learn more about a committee? Have a creative idea about how we can engage our school community during this unique year? Email: board@dowlingpto.org