

December 14, 2023
Ed Smith PTO meeting - Full minutes

Attendees: Principal Ellis, Eric Ferguson, Kari Zhe-Heimerman, Justin Pritchard, Alex Waldauer, Mary Juman, Ellen White, Sarah Workman

Online: Carol (Branch manager of Petit library), Sarah Brown

Principal's report

- SCSD partnership with Police Department for Police and Me program: police officers met with 5th grade students to de-stigmatize police
- SCSD partnership Office of Family Engagement with Police Department: police met with 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders on school safety; will present to upper grades in January
- Home to school contract will be sent out to all families; contract is an annual commitment to share information on how Title I funds are spent
- Upcoming Office of Family Engagement event on Sat. Dec. 23: Free bicycle giveaway
- Office of Social Security Administration donated laptops and devices: administration is working to identify high need families to be distributed prior to winter break
- Lockdown drill occurred on early release day and was communicated by district
- *Accountable Talk* staff professional development underway: moves towards model of teacher as facilitator to encourage students to engage more deeply; model stems from panorama surveys from last year where students asked for more opportunities for collaboration; Centered on 3 buckets:
 - Accountable to the community: building classroom community that is safe for all students to share their thoughts
 - Accountable to the knowledge (content) where students are demonstrating their understanding across subjects
 - Accountable to reasoning where students encouraged to develop higher-level evaluative skills
- Teachers and students monitoring goal-setting, ongoing
- Ashley Kennard: continue to hear from families that kids are not going out for recess (long-term concern); one reason cited was lack of winter gear—PTO closet has an abundance of winter gear if that is an issue; what can we do?
 - K-5 recess built into curriculum
 - 6-8 recess opportunities increasing after voicing concerns
 - Ms. Ellis will look into issues (gear, personnel, etc.)

Mary Juman

- Teaches pre-K through 5 general music + 6-8 chorus; 6-8 also offered orchestra and band program through music team; Ms. Juman's 5th year at Ed Smith
- Foundational pieces were missing from Ms. Juman's K-12 music education: comes from growing up in small town in Mohawk Valley without the foundational pieces
 - Equity piece is very important (learned this from 22 years of experience at Dr. Weeks) – all kids must have the same opportunities

- K-5 everyone performs; 3-5 performs twice, chorus performs twice
- Musical (April 4th and 5th) selection tied to equity: everyone can choose to be a part of musical (Newsies Jr. selected for this year based on shows with wide access for students to perform); Marisa Guzman set to do choreography; Anne Cofer from OASIS will assist with crew; looking to increase tech capacity
- Philosophy is to create a safe space for kids to explore dancing
- Update: Took 14 students to audition to all county chorus – students have to sing in quartets or trios; 6 kids from Ed Smith received spots
- 2nd grade attended Nutcracker; very valuable experience, but very few scenes performed

PTO President's Report

- Kari motions to approve minutes; Alex seconds; Nov. meeting minutes approved
- \$500 in additional funding requested for travel and hotel for guest speaker for Black History Month celebration (total of \$1,000, to also cover dancer/choreographer)
 - Sarah Brown: Original \$500 for choreographer needs to be submitted as formal funding request
 - Kari motions to approve request, pending formal submission of funding request for \$500 for dancer/choreographer; Ashley seconds; approved

Treasurer's Report

- Talent Show concessions very successful!
- For concessions, will continue to discuss how to reduce potential noise/interruptions for concessions at upcoming concerts and musical
- Book giveaway was a success! Will plan for a second this year

Middle School Report

- Pls donate cookies, frosting, or sprinkles to 8th grade for next Thursday, Dec. 21st
- 8th grade made \$87 at Tully's fundraiser
- Student council updates:
 - newsletter will be out before break – Ms. Dodge interfacing with teachers to see what content is requested
 - student council members will attend January PTO meeting
- Ms. Juman will formalize proposal to take middle school music (orchestra, band, or chorus) to take them to see the musical *Once* at Syracuse Stage
 - 8th grade parents considering various fundraising efforts to supplement cost; request to PTO forthcoming
- Ashley Kennard: following up on potential places for student council to donate to and wants to suggest Westcott Community Center (food needed)

Good of the Order, President:

- Eric: What motivated your attendance at today's PTO meeting? How did you learn about it? Signed up for e-list via QR code at ice cream social; had been thinking about it. . . received and read email
- Jan. 27 Winter Literacy Event for Pre-K – 2nd grade, 10 am – 12 pm, for prospective families
 - Will be staff there to walk through registration process
 - Ashley will reach out to Quinn at Petit
 - Questions/registration will be in cafeteria
 - Craft in cafeteria
 - Pre-K and K classroom tour option
- January PTO meeting student council members will attend
- Additional suggestions for student-facing activities
 - Alex: Paws program – dogs could come for reading hour
 - Ashley: Author visit?
 - Related suggestion: (for Kari) Can we get student council to write letters to the editor support county plan to expand Petit?