

December PTO Meeting (12.16.21)

Attendees: Sarah Brown, Eric Ferguson, Kari Zhe-Heimerman, Ping Damiani, Tanisha Williams, Kelley, Tarrie, Meg Lyttle, John Hecht, Victoria Leggett, Katie McDonald, Allison Nast, Christopher Conker, Julie Forget, Julie Gozan, Ashley Kennard, Lesley Porcelli, Nicole Fonger, Breanne McDonnell, Ashley Bloomer, Elizabeth Quinn, Katie McDonald, Michelle Wranesh

Preceded by Title 1 Meeting, led by Mr. Barber, which ran from 6:30-7pm.

- Mr. Barber presented data about Ed Smith's Performance in ELA and Math compared to previous years and compared to SCSD's overall performance. This data will be available on the Ed Smith Website.
- Kids did not test in 2019 due to pandemic. Testing from 2020—students were only in school 2 days a week (hybrid) or remote. Lower than average data was predicted—students did not learn as well on a computer at home versus being in person 5 days a week.
- Will administer another NWEA growth assessment in mid-January. Parent meetings in future will explain NWEA data.
- Elizabeth Quinn is our instructional coach, replacing Karen Earl.

Principal's Report

- Planning January to bring back the community and make it fun for kids. Awards are happening now in classes—discussing traditions, and how to bring back these traditions. Grade level assemblies will be happening in the cafeteria. We are planning how to do the things we used to, but safely. I am listening to kids and their ideas about how to make Ed Smith fun again.
- District still has a no volunteer policy, and Barber can only work through PTO right now.
- Nicole asked about clear barrier shields and whether we have to use them. Barber said it's a district rule to use them and he has to follow the district.

President's Report

- November's minutes were approved
- Wreath sale was successful—thanks to Amy Bodow, Kari Zhe-Heimerman and Sarah Stephens
- Another fundraiser was at Honeycomb Bakery—thanks to Honeycomb bakery for supporting us!
- At November meeting, we discussed forming a committee of those interested in showing staff appreciation and improving staff morale. If you are interested in helping you can email sarahkfbrown@gmail.com to be added to the list. We will have our first meeting in January.
- Looking to form a committee to discuss how to use the Chiefs money.
- Background: money we got from baseball stocks invested a while ago. When Chiefs changed to Mets, Ed Smith received the shares, which had increased to \$24k. Last year it was voted to divide the money equally between Ed Smith, HW Smith, and Nottingham. It is in our budget, earmarked as Chiefs money. Have discussed using it as special purchases.

- If you have ideas on great needs for the school, or want to be on this committee you can email sarahkfbrown@gmail.com
- Book Giveaway—A book for every student, usually every year there are 2 in-person Scholastic book fairs, 1 in Fall and 1 in Spring. Every student is able to choose a free book, on top of any sales. Excited to be able to have this book giveaway next week (moved to January), but will probably use up all our book inventory, so will be looking to fundraise to increase this inventory in the future.

Treasurer's Report

- Wreath sale brought in almost \$700
- Spirit Sale still has money trickling in
- Voted to reimburse Ms. Moon \$50 for last year's 8th grade graduation
- Teachers have not requested much this year, we have lots of money for teachers if they want to make requests.
- Last year there was a Book Club for all students grade 5-8. Every student received the same book—this year the book is *When Stars Are Scattered*. Traditionally PTO has covered the speaker honorarium whereas Title 1 covers the books. Asking PTO to cover the funding for speaker honorarium.
- Nicky Fonger brought up that Barber might have money that could be earmarked for the speaker honorarium, will check and see before voting. Breanne will check with Mr. Barber. Motion to vote for funding was removed.

Welcome Package for New Families

- Ashley Kennard presented the idea, which might include a flier about PTO, Breanne would include other info, maybe an Ed Smith water bottle, pencil. Something small to welcome them to the school. On average, 30 to 40 new students to the school a year. Idea was to have the package premade, and Breanne could pass these out to them.
- Discussion about whether it would cost money, will work to use resources and materials that we already have, like water bottles, pencils, before spending money.

School Climate Committee Update

- Survey was distributed to all students in the school, asking questions such as “I feel safe at school”. Very strong data, showed disproportionality in disciplinary data. If you have questions about school data you can check with Nicky Fonger nfonger@syr.edu. There is money to support school-wide efforts for school climate. Ann Rodak has the data from the surveys, Nicky will check to see if data can be shared with PTO.
- Student coalition on race and equity—Mr. Wright is leading the effort to recruit middle school students to prepare a presentation at an upcoming staff meeting. Spearheading efforts to hear student voices regarding race, identity.

Community Outreach

- Rhonda Vesey leading an effort to build a donation project to help out with the tragedy in Kentucky. Rhonda will craft a flier and send it out to PTO, then get it out in teachers boxes (was tabled when school had to go remote).

- Westcott Community Center said they are available to help with volunteers, crossing guards. We can reach out to them.
- Barry Park Association is trying to get back up and running. Might be opportunities to partner with Ed Smith. In addition to Fun Run, maybe partnering with Ed Smith about doing a 5K.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:43pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday January 20 7pm.

Minutes submitted by Ashley Bloomer