

**PTO Minutes**  
**2/8/2024**

**Attendance:** Alex Waldauer, Emma Flint, Ashley Kennard, Sarah Brown, Meg Lyttle, Lucy Bissett, Beth Myers, Emily Thorson, Vanessa Jones (teacher rep), Matthew Fledderjohann, Mrs. Ellis-Smith, Eric Ferguson, Justin Pritchard, Lee Kennard, Stephanie Hitztaler, Sasha Farrell

**Principal's Report**

- NWEA assessment the past few weeks
  - Adaptive tests on English and Math for K-8; questions are adjusted dynamically based on students' abilities
  - It is given three times a year (this is the winter one)
  - Schoolwide goal is to have 100% of our students get assessed; school actively reaching out to the handful of students who have not yet been tested.
  - Results show where each child is relative to their grade level and predicts growth over a 3-4 year period, which helps teachers differentiate instruction
  - The final assessment window will happen at the end of the year and can help inform students
  - We will have those results by Monday. All families can go online (SchoolTool) and get their students' information. Teachers can help.
- Upcoming events
  - Nottingham concert on February 15
  - Student Council has planned a spirit week for next week.
  - Friday Feb 9: "PS I Love You Day," a mental health awareness day.
    - Staff and students are encouraged to wear purple.
    - The day will include music and positive affirmations between teachers and students.
  - Ramadan: prior to the March meeting; Eid March 11
    - Celebrated by ~17% of Ed Smith students
    - This year: we will put a specific plan in place to help students who are fasting, including a place to pray throughout the day
  - February 26: Black History Program, 9am – 11am
- Update on recent events
  - Parking Lot Fundraiser: The District gives schools opportunities to the downtown parking lot and help park cars during big S.U. basketball and

football games, and the school gets to keep the money. Mrs. Ellis and Vanessa Jones made \$270!

- o Panera fundraiser brought in \$496 for the sixth grade team
- o Popcorn fundraiser raised \$2000 (6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>)
- o After-school robotics team is going to regionals – hooray! We will be celebrating them.
- Question from Eric: how can parents volunteer in lunch or recess?
  - o Reach out to teacher
  - o Or you can reach out to the grade-level admins and let them know how/when you want to volunteer: Mrs. Ellis-Smith, Dr. DiBello (K-2), Stewart Amell (3-5), Karen Earl (6-8)
- Question from Beth Myers: Is there any thought to supporting teachers during Ramadan?
  - o Ms. Ellis will look into this further. Some teachers use vacation/sick days during this time.
- Lucy Bissett talking about Sunshine Committee:
  - o Ask for donations from teachers/staff to support staff during times of crisis or celebration.
  - o They give flowers, gift card, etc.
  - o District asked someone to oversee anything where money is involved with staff.
  - o Could the PTO potentially handle this? They could put in comment and then they could add it to their budget
  - o We just need to figure out how to get it back into their account
  - o Lucy and Justin to discuss best ways for her team to manage their account with PTO oversight.
  - o PTO board will review request from sunshine committee regarding Venmo and oversight. We will circle back with Sunshine Committee.

### **Approval of January Minutes**

- Lee Kennard motions to approve January minutes, minutes are approved.

### **President's Report from Eric Ferguson**

- There were several wonderful musical performances this past month (chorus, orchestra, bands, grade-level music classes).
- Literacy Event on January 27<sup>th</sup> was very successful.
- Spirit Gear sale going on now.
- Chess club registration is open for the next six-week session.
  - Lee talked about how chess club is going. He and Bob appreciate all the volunteers.

- Eric is proposing a change to the bi-laws so that the board can approve up to \$250 funding requests instead of \$150. It requires a 2 week notice for this type of vote, so we will vote on this at the March PTO meeting.
- Eric reviews his 4 pillars: increasing volunteers, more opportunities for volunteering in the school, spreading the word about our school, and making sure kids are getting their recess time.

### **Treasurer's Report**

- Some of the major expenses this past month were the food for the literacy event, renewing our PTO insurance, and paying for the second grade nutcracker field trip.

### **Funding Requests**

- Lucy Bissett (k teacher) requests about \$20 for pencil grips for students.
  - Matthew Fledderjohann motions and Alex Waldauer seconds, all approve.
- 7th Grade is requesting \$1000.21 for a field trip to Clinton Square Ice Rink on Feb. 16.
  - Ashley Kennard motions, Beth Myers seconds, all approve.
- Ms. Juman requests \$2,115 to send all middle school students who participate in chorus, band, or orchestra to a live performance at Syracuse Stage.
  - There is discussion about why not all students are going and what grade levels it should be. We want to make sure it is an equitable experience for all students and making it for just eighth grade would help make it sustainable moving forward.
  - Brigit Burt motions to approve \$3,200 to cover all middle school students going, but encourage Ms. Juman to take all students of whatever grades are included, and propose that it is an 8th grade event each year.
  - Alex Waldauer seconds, all approve.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

Matthew Fledderjohann motions to adjourn, Lee Kennard seconds, all approve.