

PTO Meeting Minutes

1/18/2024

Attendance: Sasha Farrell, Beth Myers, Mrs. Ellis, Kari Zhe-Heimerman, Lee Kennard, Ashley Kennard, Amanda, Karly Grifasi, Meg Lyttle, Vanessa Jones (teacher rep), Justin Pritchard, Matt Fuller, Brigit Burt, Mr. Wright, Emily Thorson, Eric Ferguson, Sarah Brown, Alex Waldauer

Student council update

- Student Council member Bobby Myers provided an update on student council activities. Student Council meets 2-3 times a week.
- Bobby was inspired to run because he felt there are lots of students who need something from the school, and he wanted to help them. The election process included student-recorded videos of speeches that were sent to all the classrooms.
- Current student council activities include:
 - Raising money for field trips
 - Increasing recess opportunities for 6th graders and middle school, including linking to Lexia PowerUp Literacy
 - January 31: Panera fundraiser
 - The 6th grade class is raising money to go to Albany and see state legislators
 - A winter supply drive for We Rise Above the Streets – giving out winter items to kids in need. Student Council is looking for donations of new socks and winter items, and the collection deadline is January 29. There will be a box in the main office, main doors, etc.

Principal's report

- Context on student council
 - Student Council was active pre-COVID and restarted last year: the goal is to provide students with leadership experience and serve as a bridge between students and families
 - Future plans include expanding student council to cover the younger grades as well
- Update on recent events at Ed Smith
 - January 10: Otto the Orange visited PreK – 2nd
 - January 11: Winter band and orchestra concert

- o January 12: an impromptu visit on the 12th from S.U. Coach Brown and Mayor Walsh. Coach Brown said he hopes for more S.U./Ed Smith interaction in the future
- o January 16: Buddy Day. Kids partnered and chatted with kids in different grades. Kids loved it and it will be back in the spring.
- o January 17: Family Math Night, where families did crafts and learned about math standards at SCSD
- o Recent safety assembly for middle schools (grades 6/7/8)
- Upcoming events at Ed Smith
 - o January 25: Choral concert, note it starts at 7pm rather than 6:30
 - o January 26: Internal concert for students, all grade levels, in the cafeteria
 - o CBT (testing) simulations for grades 3-8. Helps them become more comfortable with the process when testing begins at end of March
 - o Professional development for second-grade teachers, teaching them skills to help second-graders with the transition from second to third grade.
- Staffing updates
 - o Ms. Bartlett is the new full-time art teacher, switching from part-time to full. She was previously here part-time, and is replacing Mr. Sniper (retired).
 - o Ms. Clausen (second grade) is on leave and has been temporarily replaced by Ms. Rashid.
 - o Ms. Young is back!
- Other updates
 - o At some point soon there will be a scanner at the middle school entrance.
 - A letter about this will be going home next week.
 - There will be in-school discussion with the students, including opportunities for them to ask questions.
 - o Third quarter started on the 16th, and honor roll/merit roll/etc will happen after winter break

Mr. Wright: Update on the Black History program

- Kids really love this program
- Program will be February 26 at 9am
 - o Unveiling the Forever stamp of John Lewis, and a person who marched with John Lewis is going to come and speak about him during the unveiling
 - o Record exec Jason Geter will also visit and speak
 - o Ed Smith alums will be speaking

President's Report

- Kari motioned to approve previous minutes, Sarah seconded, all approved

- Eric provided updated on his four pillars
 - *Increase volunteer base*
 - PTO continues to reach out to other parents
 - *More opportunities for parents to be in the school*
 - Chat with your student's teacher about opportunities
 - Volunteer for the Ed Smith carnival
 - *Promote school to friends/family/neighborhood*
 - Chat with your friends about upcoming preK-2 winter literacy event, promote Ed Smith
 - PTO can always give tours
 - *Recess*
 - Reminder about sending winter clothes for recess
 - Please contact the PTO if you have any questions about your kid and recess. Important to keep raising this as an issue.
 - Idea: get parent support at recess or potentially at lunch. Eric to follow up with administration.

Treasurer's Report

- We made \$670 from Giving Tuesday

Funding Requests

- Grade 6: \$450 for tickets to the Mets game, June 12 for education day. Tickets are \$575, the money would help with the tickets.
 - Kari motioned we give them the full \$575, Karly seconded, motion carries
- 6th/7th/8th: \$450 for Black History Luncheon
 - Brigit motions, Beth seconds, motion carries
- Grade 3: \$298.52, end of year class picnic for 64 third-graders
 - Amanda motions, Beth seconds, motion carries
- Mr. Wright: \$661.20 to cover cost of dancer/choreographer, and additional flight costs (Black History month celebration)
 - Emily motions to approve, Kari seconds, approved, motion carries
 - Thoughts on next year: possibly have a subcommittee from the PTO to help organize the celebration, have a more precise budget
 - Try to get SCSD foundation grants, Karly can work with Mr. Wright

Middle School Report

- Upcoming musical (Newsies): April 4th and 5th
- Beth distributed a draft of the fundraising request for Newsies (ad in the program or donation) for feedback.

Good of the Order

- January 27: PreK-2nd Literacy event 10am – 12pm
 - Open to current students and potential Ed Smith families
 - Librarian from Soule reading a story, crafts, snacks, PTO table
 - Please share with neighborhood friends who have young kids
- Max Ferguson, 7th grade offered a suggestion: there is a netted-off part at the top of the gym currently being used for storage – could we put weightlifting equipment there for middle school use
- Lee wants to make an SMTC request for painted curb extensions (plus bollards and cones) near Ed Smith to help slow people down. Funder is AdaptCNY
 - Would like to request the Ed Smith PTO to make the formal request
 - We would need a one-day insurance policy for the project
 - The city helps, but it is volunteer-implemented
- Gifford Foundation Mini-Grant: possibility of using it to send out flyers about Ed Smith
- Eric thanks all of those who attended in-person and online for all or part of the meeting
- Eric motioned to adjourn, Lee seconded, motion passed