

October PTO Meeting (10.28.21)

Attendees: Sarah Brown, Ashley Bloomer, Lee and Ashley Kennard, Nicky Fonger, Susan and Matt Fuller, Breanne McDonnell, Eric Ferguson, Karly Grifasi, Meg Lyttle, Ali Jackson Popp, Maura Ackerman, Kedera, Kari Zhe-Heimerman, Katie McDonald, Jonathan Hecht, Meghan Murphy, Alex Waldaeur, Brigit Burt

Principal's Report

- Worked on creating consistency of expectations for Parent/Teacher Conferences—look forward to parent feedback

Question about parent-teacher conference. Is anyone coordinating the middle school conferences? Given a large time block to sign up, have not gotten confirmation of when they are signed up. Kari said it's only 7th and 8th grade, 6th grade is doing it differently. Barber will check with middle school teachers to make sure they can get back to parents with a confirmed meeting time.

- Parents will receive Digital Equity Survey from NY State—will not come out electronically
- NWEA testing—parents won't see score on report card from this testing session (next report card will, testing is supposed to show growth)
- Setting up Title 1 sessions

President's Report

- Approval of September Minutes---Eric motioned to approve, seconded by Karly
- At last meeting portable mics were approved, purchased 23, amplify their voice and project to students while wearing masks. Follow up; teachers have expressed gratitude for the devices.
- Positive news---kids needs were not being met at recess. Kids were expressing frustration that they didn't have enough items to use—could only use chalk. Asked teachers what they could use for recess, made a wish list off of teacher's needs, just delivered today. Thank you to parents who purchased items for students and classes to use!
- There is still a need for coloring books and crayons. 3rd grade classes specifically are asking for them.
- Last minute request from middle school, looking for donations of individual wrapped snacks for 10/29—no candy.

Treasurer's Report

- There were a few Venmo contributions
- Expenses—portable mics \$880, books for middle school classroom
- Mascot money was approved at last meeting, but website they had looked at did not seem reliable. Mascot money is on hold until they find the right mascot.
- Brigit brought up that \$1500 was approved for portable mic orders, but we only spent \$880 so we have money if anyone else needs mics in future.
- Budget questions—does profits off spirit gear seem too high?
- Book Sale budget questions from Jill—planned for the fact that we don't have the book donations we usually have, we have enough books for fall. We got donations of books to assist with adding to book fair stash.

Superintendent Parent's Council Report

- Addressing bussing and shortage in transportation dept. Alicea gave numbers—190 routes needed to support needs of district, right now we are at 163 routes. Still need about 40 drivers to be able to get up to 190 routes. Does not account for drivers who are out on quarantine or sickness. School schedules have had to be altered (middle schoolers starting later)
- Hoping to go back to normal schedules in January.
- Contact tracing—looking at unmasked contacts for tracing or needing to quarantine. Looking at seating charts and time unmasked when deciding who needs to quarantine.
- Health Services is really pushing for more families to sign their kids up for Covid testing.
- Question from Ashley Kennard--Any talk about quarantine rules changing when vaccines open up for ages 5-11? Was not raised at this meeting, but did discuss wanting to have vaccine clinics at the schools.
- Question about why afterschool program was delayed. Is it due only to bussing or staffing? Bussing. Frustration expressed over late start to afterschool program.

Fundraising updates

- Spirit gear sale—ends 10/29, might have another sale in spring; new vendor is easy to work with. We have some random extra items in storage, and could order extra gear in spring. Could there be a possibility of ordering and keeping extra basic items like t-shirts available for teachers when they want them? From Karly—possibly given as staff appreciation gift. Decided to order more t-shirts to keep in stock for teacher sales and in-person sales.
- Do teachers get listserv emails? Not unless they sign up. Maybe check on a way to make sure that teachers get the gear sale info.
- Wreath sale is in the works. Evergreen wreaths will order online and pick up in school parking lot.
- Plug for parents signing up and using Amazon Smile and Box Tops

Playground and Outdoor Space-Ashley Kennard

- Positive updates—group weeded playground right before school started, and district delivered new mulch
- Update from district on playground where bridge is missing—parts are ordered, but on backorder
- Ashley Kennard met with Barber to discuss outside space, and consider how kids can get more outside time. PreK-5 is supposed to get 20 minutes outside for recess daily. Recess not allowed to be withheld as discipline. How can we promote getting teachers to take kids outside for recess more often? Potential fundraising as a PTO to add a play structure, geared towards PreK-2. Just proposing ideas right now. If we had a separate space where different grades didn't mix then maybe more kids could be outside for recess.
- Would like to create a committee for the playground—contact Ashley if interested in joining playground committee. ashley.e.kennard@gmail.com

Sensory Pathway-Susan Fuller

- Pre-Covid, was working with Mr. Lawson (former elementary vice-principal) on developing a sensory pathway in the school, was at grant-writing stage of

planning. Covid derailed, along with Mr. Lawson moving to another position. Other elementary schools have a sensory pathway. Wants to know if PTO is interested in assisting in this.

- Ideas: could connect with Jowonio about guidance, or connect with the SCSD Education Foundation. Possibly reach out to one of the teachers and ask them to present more information about this at next meeting.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:48pm. Next meeting is Thursday November 18th 7pm.

Minutes submitted by Ashley Bloomer