

Ed Smith PTO Meeting September 17 (Zoom)

Attendees (Based on Chat Participants)

- Allison Nast
- Amy Brazell
- Amy Moon
- April Beier
- Ashley Bloomer
- Brenda Provost
- Christopher Hanson
- David and Erika Hegland
- Elena Williams
- Emily Hart-Gorman
- Eric Ferguson
- Gentry Hearn
- Gregory Lawson
- Hande Salman
- Jeffrey Tamburo
- Jill Ferguson
- Julie Gozan
- Kaitlin Gallagher
- Karen Cordano
- Kari Zhe-Heimerman
- Karly Grifasi
- Kate LaClair
- Laura Hearn
- Laura-Anne and Jonah Minkoff-Zern
- Margaret Martin
- Maribel Arce
- Matthew Fuller
- Maura Ackerman
- Meghan Murphy
- Michael Grifasi
- Moira McDermott
- Nicole Fonger
- Sarah Brown
- Sarah Hamersma
- Tanisha Williams
- Tanya Bowen

Principal's Report—Barber

- Introduced and thanked Emily Hart-Gorman (parent facilitator)
- Wednesdays are asynchronous learning. Apologies for the unclear/no communication. All grade levels. PE decided to go above and beyond and put out a meeting for PE after the robocall that said there were no meetings
- Meal distribution: gave days and times; info on [district website](#)
- Laptops and hotspots are available. All they have to do is call the school. Currently in wave 3.
- Middle school schedules: in a normal year, issues with schedules are fixed behind the scenes on the first day. This year everything is posted so parents can see that there are issues. The district is helping with schedule glitches.
- Elementary schedules: Padlet on [Ed Smith webpage](#). We are listening to your feedback: email addresses are now on the Padlet.
- Talking Points is a text-based system. You can also email teachers. Soon teachers will be posting times when you can reach them and office hours.
- Training for teachers continues. There have been glitches here and there. We knew some of these things would happen, having watched districts in the South etc. that opened sooner.
- “No other industry could have learned and adapted as much and as quickly as teachers.” Praise and thanks for teachers in the chat.
- Tech support: For families, can make an appointment. Info on the website or call the school.
- Still waiting for materials from the district. As soon as received, will bag them up for pickup.

- Trying to establish new norms. Students are going to be excited to play with these new tech toys. Teachers are teaching kids how to be online.
- Virtual after-school programs are coming. No other details just yet.
- Likes the feedback loop cycle. Have to have it to make this work. Please continue to talk and email.
- Upcoming Zoom chats from Barber on the hybrid model. Can't provide details on this at this time.

Emily Hart-Gorman

- Family engagement rep at Ed Smith. Also a SCSD parent. Meets with Barber daily, sometimes multiple times a day.
- Can contact Emily with concerns, questions, any school-to-home issues

President's Report—Karly Grifasi

- [About the PTO](#). For all families of students at Ed Smith. Fellow board members:
 - Julie Gozan: Vice President. 7th grader and 11th grader at Nottingham. PTO is committed to equity, access, and inclusion.
 - Kari Zhe-Heimerman. Other half of the VP. 4 Ed Smithers from 8th to 2nd. Excited so many participants tonight.
 - Michael Grifasi, PTO Treasurer.
 - Ashley Bloomer, K and 4th grader, corresponding secretary.
 - Jill Ferguson for Eric Ferguson
 - Lesley Porcelli
 - Meghan Murphy is new teacher rep.
 - Karen Cordano, past president
- Mission of the PTO: How will this benefit the students at Ed Smith?
- How do we build community virtually? Usually have Carnival, ice cream socials, etc. We will rethink this year.
- Don't need field trip money, so fundraising will have different priorities
- Restructuring meetings: Give more people more opportunities to engage, etc.
- Zoom is helpful—engagement with more families that we have not engaged before.
- Contact Kate LaClair to be added to the listserv.
- New website: edsmith-pto.org

Treasurer's Report—Michael Grifasi

- Closing out activities from last year to today.
- Almost all of fundraisers exceeded expectations, including laptop drive in the spring.
- Agreed through voting and various meetings to push the laptop program: Purchased over 100 Chromebook-type devices and distributed. Expenditure on laptops: \$24,000
- Have to vote on proposed budget for this year. A lot of zeros top to bottom for the proposed budget because we really don't know what we will be able to do. Assuming no Carnival. Hoping to consider online events: talent showcase, ski gear, art auction.
- Bulk of previous years' expenses in school support column was for field trips.

- Ideas for fundraising and/or expenses?
- Money in savings (Chiefs). Could be used if there are needs that go beyond what we will be able to do via fundraisers.
- Q/A: No more fundraising for laptops at this point because district is providing them. Have some donations for school supplies if there is a need.
- Vote on budget in chat: Unanimously approved

Fundraising—Kari Zhe-Heimerman

- New fundraising committee: Call for volunteers to join the committee.
- First meeting Thursday, Sept 24, 7-8p
- Email Kari. zheheikm@lemoyne.edu
- Will put zoom link to the meeting on the listserv
- Throughout the year, will report to full PTO meeting

Open Discussion

General WCNY Content

- Q: WCNY recorded segments: Will they be introducing new content or reinforcing content that is being taught in meetings?
- A: Reach out to individual teachers.

Prioritizing Assignments

- Q: How can we prioritize assignments?
- A: Karly offered what worked for her in the spring: Talked to the teacher about her kid's individual learning needs and capacity. Echoed by teachers on the call. Meghan Murphy: Has brought up the idea of a checklist to do each day by the end of each week. Offering to Emily to take that conversation up to more teachers. Agreement from parents in the chat (e.g., weekly goals/competencies).

Volunteer Opportunities

- There may be volunteer opportunities to help with distribution of printed materials from the district and school supplies including donated packets from Staples.

Option to Change Formats

- Q: Option to switch at end of semester? Unclear still, Karly thinks parents can re-evaluate in January

Support for Parents

- Q: Is there a working parents group organizing to provide support of any kind? Kindergarten and other younger kids have limited ability to use the computers; parents have to manage some of the tech support stuff and can't get work done.
- Nothing sponsored by PTO at this time.
- Meghan Murphy: Some teachers have expressed willingness to provide virtual tutoring, could free up parents to do more work.
- April Beier: Centers around town doing drop-in hours; can share more information if it would be helpful

- Kari: Office of Family Engagement is another good resource
- Ashley Kennard: Teachers sharing links to help students go back and forth between platforms
- Emily: Suggest talking directly to the teacher as a starting point
- Mrs. Moon: Working on sharing information/links over Teams to streamline; specials is more of a challenge
- Emily: Teachers are still getting new information and trying to keep up with everything, work in progress, teachers are working hard to make this better, administration/district/Mr. Barber takes the feedback seriously and makes it actionable

Middle School Home Room

- Moira: When is home room starting for middle school?
- Kari: Eighth-graders don't have home room at the moment due to scheduling situation, should know more next week
- Emily: Confirms that eighth-graders will have home room (as well as sixth and seventh grades)

Canvas and Padlet Comments

- Moira: Comments are enabled on padlet but no one responds—suggests turning them off; suggests turning off “observers” in Canvas

ELA/Social Studies Curriculum

- Sarah Hamersma: Concerns about consolidation of ELA/social studies time
- Emily: Suggests talking to Karen Earl and Mr. O'Leary about curriculum concerns or district office (Laura Kelly's office)

WCNY K-2 Content

- Christopher Hanson: I have a question regarding the WCNY content. We have been having some difficulty locating the right content on the WCNY website for Kindergarten students. We have found “K-2” content, but so far it seems to be much closer to 2nd grade level rather than Kindergarten level. Is there a way the content could please be better labeled so it is clearer which program is right for each level and each day? And who might be the best person to contact about that?
- Karly: Again suggests contacting Earl/Laura Kelly regarding curriculum concerns
- Meghan: Teachers have been in contact with WCNY to clarify class naming/descriptions/dates

Microsoft Teams

- Sarah Brown: Who should get feedback regarding Teams? Challenge with seeing the whole class at the same time
- Emily/Mrs. Moon: Contact Mr. Barber and Mr. Larson
- April Beier: Also depends on what device you're using
- Tiffany Gratien: Also depends on version, browser/app, etc.

- Emily: Recommends downloading the app instead of the browser; every child has access to Office 365 (including Teams); [library page](#) has a log-in (use student email) for Office 365 apps
- Emily: You can schedule a private virtual tech support appointment; link on the district home page

Motion to Adjourn

- Michael Grifasi: Motion to adjourn
- Many: Second the motion