

Mills River Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization
PTO Meeting Minutes
January 18th, 2023 @ 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Called to Order/Attendance

Jessica Lucas

- Attendance: Lauren Klocko, Tracy Klaes, Kacie Tilley, Amy McKinstry, Betsy Casebolt, Katie Rangnow, Anie Vincent, Stacey Klepp, Jessica Lucas, Kevin Ensley, Jennifer Stallings, Katie Foley, Beth Fulmer

President's Welcome

Jessica Lucas

- Hi everyone, happy January! Are we all getting through with a positive attitude? January is always rough. Thank you for being here.
- Jessica is working on writing up bylaws. She wants to have them ready by the end of February so we can vote on them.
 - o As part of this, she is also working on a "PTO Handbook" (i.e. PTO at a glance, reference to be passed down to future Board and Committee members that walks through each roll month-by-month).
 - Each Board and Committee role will need to assess their own annual tasks and responsibilities and make notes to be included in this document. We will collaborate on this at a later date.
- Valentine's Grams are coming! Jessica loves Valentine's Day!
 - o Kids will be able to send them in to their teachers or drop them off at the front office. ALL kids will get at least "Option 1" (PTO goes through and captures all kids who didn't receive one).
 - o Jessica has updated this year's information and grams. This was passed around for feedback, and everyone approves.
 - o Jessica and Betsy will meet to discuss donation signups, timeline for collections, and volunteers to assemble and distribute grams.
- Spirit Night Update
 - o Jessica has a scheduling conflict on 2/20 that cannot be worked around, so spirit night at Dairy'O will change to 2/27 (this date has been confirmed).
 - o We will need a Peach Jar flyer to advertise. Will also advertise on social media, website, etc.

Treasurer's Report

Tracy Klaes

- Bike Program Update
 - o Financials show that we have \$9,000 of revenue coming in from bike sponsors. One generous, anonymous donor has provided all bikes for us!
 - Because of this donation, we've expanded the bike program to include 50 more bikes (25 for 2nd-3rd graders and 25 for 4th-5th graders). These will be the next sizes up to fit bigger kids.
 - We likely won't have enough funds to purchase all additional bikes just yet. Tracy would like to explore pricing/what we could get from Specialized and other companies.
 - We will have to provide helmets for everyone.
 - We can get 100 helmets through an NCDOT grant, so that removes about \$1,000 from the helmet expense. The approximate cost for the remainder of helmets will be \$3,000 – \$4,000.
 - o Specialized helmets are regularly priced at \$45/helmet, we might be able to get them for \$10/helmet.
 - o The whole helmet situation is still a little up in the air at the moment.
 - o Striders have come in and Dad's group has been working hard to put them all together.
- Spirit Wear sales are great and continue to increase.
 - o Jessica suggests a campaign on red shirts for Valentine's Day. A sale.

- School store is also doing great.
 - o Updated financials show the balance must remain at \$500 at the end of the year.
- Fast pass sales were successful.
 - o Potential changes for next year:
 - Sell them at the end of the prior semester instead of the beginning of the current semester.
 - Ideally, Give Butter will allow a preview of bids online (for future sales).
- Gym fan is paid for, installed, electrical has been run, etc., but it is not in use yet.
 - o The county has decided to provide a fan for all schools without one, so Tracy negotiated with them to reimbursement ours. The intent is that we will get reimbursed. Not officially confirmed yet.

Playground Committee

Tracy Klaes & Lauren Klocko

- Tracy and Lauren presented a plan to break down the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, and HOW MUCH of the Playground/Outdoor Area Renovation. It was beautifully crafted by Tracy.
- Renovation Plan:
 - o 2 stages
 - Stage 1 – (2024) “Spend all the current fundraising dollars.”
 - The plan is to purchase the new spinning piece (like at Jackson Park) ASAP. \$32,000 is the “turn-key” price.
 - There are other plans such as: moving the gaga pits, removing fences, moving the shade structure and turning it into a sandbox, etc. This is a great opportunity to get other parents involved, so we will need volunteers.
 - Jessica’s girl scout troop is dying to build a tiny library! We can definitely get scouts to help with certain items. We should tap into this resource.
 - Stage 2 – (2025) “Get grants and spend all the future fundraising dollars.”
 - Engineer and designer are going to start with a survey of the area for a walking path.
 - o Survey will be \$4,000.
 - We will be leaning heavily into the bike program to get funds for the walking path as this will be a huge resource for success of the bike program.
 - We are under pressure to get money and a site plan going.
 - Jennifer still to meet with Mr. Auten re: her concerns about potential rubber mulch health concerns.

Purchase Request Committee

Ensley, Klaes, Klepp, Klocko, Lucas, Tilley

- Poster Maker:
 - o A second order of ink for the poster maker was requested and approved for this school year.
 - Mrs. McVey hasn’t run through 2 sets yet, but just installed the 2nd and wants to be sure we have more on hand. She thinks more gets used at the beginning of the year due to BTS.
 - Jessica found a cheaper supplier for paper. We’re now purchasing 4 rolls for \$66.

Vice President’s Report

Lauren Klocko

- Lauren to newcomers: PTO has learned from feedback that we cover a lot of new information in meetings. If new members would like to provide their contact information at the end of meetings, or chat with Lauren afterwards, she will help to answer questions or point people in the right direction for answers.

Secretary’s Report

Katherine Dare

- All current minutes were emailed to the PTO’s main email list last week.

Dads Group

Kevin Ensley

- It's cold, but the dads are awesome at opening doors and we appreciate them.
- Striders are being put together.
- Kevin and others have been working on background checks and training to receive "Volunteer" status at the school so they may come on campus more regularly to help in classrooms, help teachers, be a presence during outdoor events/activities, etc.

Fundraising Committee (The Rock & Fast Pass)

Campbell, Dare

- Notes Sent by Katherine – Spring Fundraiser – Decisions made at meeting:
 - o First of all, thank you! Last Friday at MRB wasn't ideal but ended up working well. Katherine appreciates the ladies who were able to join after having to reschedule.
 - o St. Patty's Day theme, think shamrocks and pot of gold.
 - o Tracy drafted the initial sponsorship letter and several of us have helped edit, probably too much at this point, but that letter will or has already gone out this week – \$ is due by February 8th – We will make phone calls to our list of sponsors on January 24th and 25th. We'll have a script for those making the calls.
 - Tracy does need help making calls.
 - Katie F., Jennifer S., and Kacie to help make calls on the 1/24 and 1/25 at Tracy's house.
 - Tracy is working on a "script" and everyone will get a list of people to call.
 - o Fundraising goal:
 - Goes towards playground, yes, but we want to be in-between vague and specific, we want donors to know what they're donating to, but not pin us down to an exact map of the playground just yet. Katherine wants to have a page on PTO's website for donors and for parents to access info on what is required of PTO (steps required in the process, by the County, bidding process, etc.), length of time it takes, cost of basic needed items (parents have no idea how much one piece of equipment costs) and possibly our wish list.
 - o Goals: Base Goal – \$30,000, School-Wide Incentive Based Goal, School Store Shopping for Every Kid - - Above-&-Beyond Goal, \$40,000, School-Wide Incentive Based Goal, TBD.
 - o Teacher Incentive Ideas: To be cleared with Mr. Auten and Ms. Fletcher 1st and we'll discuss those at the next meeting.

School Store

Amanda Ledbetter & Kacie Tilley

- 5th grade get-together date is TBD. Kacie has been trying to get in touch with Mrs. Fletcher.

Staff Appreciation Committee

Jaquez, McKinstry & Rusert

- Not much to report – Hot cocoa party in December went really well. Many teachers have written sweet "Thank you" notes.
- The next appreciation initiative will be in March, prior to Spring Break.
 - o Amy has a cute tag to tie onto bags of salty and sweet treats.
 - o These will go in the staff boxes. Super easy, low key.
 - o If anyone has suggestions on what salty/sweet treats can go into the bags, let Amy know.
 - o Amy will need help assembling bags in March.
- Staff appreciation week is in May – Amy has a cute idea for a "mocktail" bar with sonic ice, water, different flavors, etc. to be made in cute cups that teachers can keep.
- Jessica got her hands on a list of appreciation days throughout the year. She has or will start posting pictures of staff members on social media as the dates relate to our staff.
 - o She will go back and capture Custodian Day from back in October.

- There was a good turnout for the pre-Christmas sale!
- Next sale will be for Valentine's Day.
 - o Red shirts on sale: LS - \$15, SS - \$12
 - o We will walk the car-rider line for this sale and sell Valentine's Day Grams simultaneously.
- Tracy wants to organize the shirts before the next sale to clean things up and to gather somewhat of an inventory.
 - o We approve Tracy buying more hats. Preferably a cotton ballcap option.
 - o Probably need to purchase more red shirts for the upcoming Valentine's Day sale. Good fabric only.
- Teachers should get a hefty discount, year-round. We all agree that 50% off is a good discount (money will still be made on the short-sleeved shirts). Hoodies are not included in this discount.
 - o Tracy will send an email to teachers letting them know about their new discount and asking them to include their information for the pre-order of hoodies.

- Holiday Events planning meeting on 1/19, 9am @ Cognitive Brew House:
 - o This was a successful meeting; updates and info to come (from Betsy).
- Duty free lunch on 1/26:
 - o We are short a couple of time slots, but plenty of regular PTO volunteers will be there/around and can fill in where needed.
 - o Don't offer to take kids to classrooms. Teachers need to come back and pick their students up.
 - o We need to prompt kids to start cleaning up sooner.
 - Maybe it would be beneficial to use kitchen timers for this?
 - o We should delegate a little bit better by telling parents where to stand.
 - o It's also an ice cream day.
- Valentine's Continental Breakfast on 2/2, 7:30am-8:30am:
 - o Sign up sheet coming for breakfast items as well as volunteers for set-up/break-down.
 - o Will need parking lot signage.
 - o Kevin to invite the Dads.
 - o Tracy will either have sponsorship letters available for people to take (if interested) or some kind of a form for people to fill out if they'd like to receive sponsorship information.
 - Possible QR code on flyer that takes them straight to the details.
 - o We need a plan for getting the coffee maker started earlier. The coffee wasn't hot enough last time. Suggestions: Ms. Shirley start it for us? Someone let Betsy in earlier? Katie could bring Keurig?
- Reading Caves set-up in the library on 2/23, 3:15pm:
 - o We'll need 12 volunteers
 - o Mrs. McVey would rather have the PTO help with this than students so they can be surprised!

- Updates from meeting:
 - o Steam Night will be 4/11, 5:30pm-7pm.
 - Do we want to do a table? Who will staff it?
 - o Summer staff retreat was discussed.
 - o Staff is starting to do "Vertical Walk-Throughs."

- Teachers observe the grade level directly below theirs for insight on how teachers are preparing students for their grade.
 - They also observe the grade directly above to see how they should be preparing students.
 - Teachers are even doing this at other schools for insight on how teachers throughout the county are doing things.
- Teachers have been observing their grade level peers for grade level consistencies. Mr. Auten wants consistency.

Leader In Me

Kacie Tilley

- Kacie has been in communication with Mrs. Fletcher about another involved PTO member taking over this responsibility for Kacie next year. This person will need to start going to meetings and shadowing Kacie.
 - Katie F. and Jennifer S. show interest in doing this but need confirmation that having kids at meetings will be ok.
 - Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 3:45pm, lasting about 30 minutes.
- Awards are coming back.
 - We would like to offer School Store prizes to award recipients.
 - How do we do this financially since the School Store funds belong to the 5th grade, not PTO?
 - We could budget a lump sum for this at the beginning of the year... Student wins an award and gets a voucher (Chad Buck), comes to the store and picks their prize?
 - Tracy does not like the idea of tracking award sales for reimbursement from PTO to 5th Grade... this will get complicated.

Superintendent Parent Advisory Committee Meeting

Katherine Dare

- No SPAC meeting since our last PTO meeting, nothing to report.

New Business

- Valentine's Grams: See notes in President's Welcome.

Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 15th @ 1:00 pm

Workshop Meeting: Spring Fundraiser Meeting: Monday 1/29, 9am at Cognitive Brew House