

Gilbert PTO Meeting
September 6, 2016
Location: Gilbert Middle School

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

Role call: Beth Richards (PTO P) Molly Neal-Wong (PTO VP), Layne Billings (High School), Abby Terpstra, Erica Marquette, Dana Dunn, Katie Hanson, Cherie Torresi, Staci Edwards (Elementary School), Maria Hartt, Emily Olson, Christine Baker (teacher), Dee Dee Haselhoff (teacher), Ashley Soma (teacher), Lindsey Beecher (superintendent), Sunde Nesbit (PTO S)

B. Richards welcomed everyone and called the initial PTO meeting of 2016-2017 school year to order.

Spencer Thornock (Eagle Scout) provided a presentation for a Ga Ga Ball pit at the middle school, along with game rules and prosocial qualities to the game (kind of like volleyball, except on the ground). Capacity for 25 people. Discussed advantages of having it set up to be handicap accessible. Some were concerned about longevity issues; however, Spencer is proposing tempered wood, so that should withstand the elements. Sand may need replacement. The total estimated expenses were \$1,240, which was requested of the PTO.

Mrs. Edwards updated group on last year's Eagle Scout project, which still moving forward.

Some of the 2nd grade teachers presented their students' Project Based Learning Unit. This student-driven project focused on determining playground equipment needs at the elementary. Each class focused on two months of the year and interviewed the rest of the school to create a list of preferred activities for those months. The classes then developed a budget, created a list of items they would like to order, and conducted research to identify the best places to purchase these items. On behalf of the students, the 2nd grade teachers requested funding from the PTO - \$200 per group plus an additional \$200 for storage containers, \$1,200 total. The 2nd graders are also working with high school (Mr. Litchfield's class) to build a shed at elementary school for the recess equipment.

No updated report from treasury. Carnival is our biggest fundraiser, so more to come next month.

Mr. Beecher mentioned a previous email that he sent out, a lot of positive changes in district within past five years. Made himself available for contact and input from parents.

Mr. L. Billings discussed updated offering of AP classes at the high school. Seven classes total offered this past year. E. Olson requested more information about how college courses transfer into long-term planning for college; Mr. Billings encouraged discussion with the school counselor. School counselor may be a good resource for future discussion.

Mrs. Edwards discussed lunch program and use of alternatives improving attendance in the program. Have seen participation rates increasing some. Edwards updated group on Camp

Invention, which had 85 K-5 participants and 25 middle school participants. The school felt the event was very successful and are hoping to expand in the future.

The school's mentoring program was discussed. Trying to figure out how to establish more "authentic" relationships outside of school; one suggestion is to provide events that they could do together, such as the carnival.

The proposal of a Casey's punch card (for pizza or donuts) was discussed. Have to buy a minimum of 50 cards, \$7.50 (pizza), \$5.00 (donuts); we would double for fundraiser (\$15, \$10). As an alternative, C. Torresi mentioned that she is planning to could set up crowdfunding site as a replacement of the neighborhood drive for the Rock Hop. She will be able to identify particular "causes" on the site and suggested including PTO as one of those causes. Other alternatives for fundraising were discussed, i.e. an "un-fundraiser" where money goes directly to school rather than buying "stuff."

K. Hanson questioned how high-risk, high-needs students can get involved, in particular at the carnival. Richards reported that the counselors are contacted and free wristbands are given to students identified by the counselors. Hanson questioned whether mentor-mentee program could get involved

Richards reported on two successful back-to-school socials. Free ice cream was distributed at the elementary school and cookies at the intermediate school. Two families donated the cookies, ice cream, and even a freezer for the elementary school to keep.

Upcoming activities:

1. Carnival - October 8, 5:00-8:00 pm
2. High School Conference Meals - September 29 and October 3

Volunteer Opportunities:

1. Educational event organizers (the last 2 years was "Be a Dollar Scholar"). Mrs. Edwards suggested STEM-based event.
2. Spring Fundraiser (plant sale is not going to be done, didn't make much money for the amount of work done). A. Terpstra suggested people to put together school supplies. Edwards suggested collecting the money in spring for the school supplies in the fall.
3. High School Conference Meals. Person running it is stepping down, could be a volunteer opportunity.

Richards discussed options for fulfilling teacher requests.

1. One idea is to have an Amazon wish list to send with parents; suggested that it be grade specific. Mrs. Haselhoff volunteered to help teachers who are in need of assistance with it.
2. Also discussed having a supply drive at athletic events. Options- hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, tissues, dry erase markers

Discussed SCRIP program and the need for marketing this program to increase participation.

Vote on funds:

1. 2nd grade request for \$1,200. Olson motioned, Nesbit seconded. Motion carried
2. Eagle Scout project for Middle School Ga Ga Ball pit - request for \$1,240
 - a. Discussion of guidelines for funding Eagle Scout projects in the future. Also can request funds from Knights of Columbus.
 - b. Estimate will probably be higher, due to need for drainable base. Some members expressed concern about there not being a base for the sand (weeds, drainage)
 - c. Nesbit motioned to approve \$1,000, Neal-Wong seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.