

**Gilbert PTO Meeting**  
November 7, 2016  
Location: Gilbert Middle School

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Role call: Beth Richards (PTO P) Molly Neal-Wong (PTO VP), Destiny Lempiainen (PTO T), Layne Billings (High School), Staci Edwards (Elementary School), Emily Olson (PTO-OAL), Erin Roche, Paul Jacobson (HS Guidance), Cherie Torresi, Dhuha Akili, Tanya Forth, Lindsey Beecher (Superintendent), Sunde Nesbit (PTO S)

B. Richards welcomed everyone and called the PTO meeting to order. B. Richards and D. Lempiainen reported that they are still working on developing a financial update. They need to learn the system and finalize the carnival report.

L. Beecher mentioned that Ryan Wise, a representative from Department of Education, visited schools in the district. Mr. Wise was very impressed with what he saw. Periodic visits associated with TLC-Grant.

L. Billings brought Mr. Jacobson (HS counselor) to provide more information about integration of college courses into HS program (follow-up from September meeting).

*Summary of information presented:*

1. Multiple ways to get course credit:
  - a. HS classes taught by instructors certified to teach at community college level (career technical education, ag, English)
  - b. JR & SR- PSO classes, not taught by HS. Need to be accepted into a college (DMACC, ISU)
  - c. Hunziker center- offer a lot of different technical programs. Students can receive credits from that center.
2. Sometimes courses transfer and others don't. Sometimes can be included as elective center; can depend on whether college has a particular program. Mr. Jacobson stated that he works with each student to determine whether classes transfer, dependent on their postsecondary interests (if known). He also mentioned that sometimes there is value in taking a course regardless of transferring credits.
3. A certain number of electives are also required of HS degree, which is another way college courses are factored in.
4. Question was asked the degree of information shared with parents. Mr. Jacobson mentioned that there are periodic times when he has met with parents, but none formally this year.
5. Feedback from parents who have been involved in that process is that it serves as a way to get experience with varying majors without the formal commitment.

L. Billings announced that school will be participating in APEX program (STEM-based). Opportunity to get involved with job shadowing, seeing others working directly in the field (engineering, health and human services, business communication and technology, renewable energy and bio-sciences). Teaming with City of Ames, DMACC, multiple other agencies in order to

support students and fund the program. Advantage is opportunity to get involved with a STEM career prior to college, also can serve as a way to get 'foot in the door' for a future career at a particular agency. The program will be available for juniors and seniors starting next year.

S. Edwards mentioned significant change in state, from testing Iowa Assessments to Smarter Balance. This change should provide more opportunity to write about what is known, rather than memorizing and responding via multiple choice primarily. Similar to NWEA, adaptive response style. Will be available to 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades; still in talks for other grades. More expensive to provide per student. Won't be available for second graders. Assessments in language arts and math, not other subjects.

Edwards also discussed the elementary playground equipment and how past students have expressed complaints about wooden structure being removed. She stated that parts of slide mountain need to be repaired, also need slides in future to be open rather than closed. Custodian is working on getting estimates for this and she may come back to PTO to request additional funds for repairs. Edwards also indicated that most of playground equipment (from the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Project Based Learning Unit - approved in September) have been purchased. Students from class at HS are preparing to submit their plans for the building to store equipment tomorrow; will be finished by the end of the semester.

Richards reported that the carnival made approximately \$12,000. The committee received a lot of positive feedback from parents, teachers, and administrators.

#### Upcoming Activities

Conferences - meal sign-ups going out tomorrow, coordinated by L. Clouse. Conference times changed because it was hard to get people in and were packed. This will give more time for elementary school teachers. There will be a pop-up shop for leftover PTO shop items.

B. Richards reported directories will be finished and distributed very soon. Looking into options for having an electronic directory in the future.

Teacher appreciation gifts from PTO will be allocated in January. The PTO will write a check and give to principals, then principals will extend the classroom budgets. A letter about donating to the teacher supply closet as a teacher holiday gift will be distributed.

Wanting to have more cooperative efforts with Gilbert Education Foundation. C. Torresi mentioned that she will have presence at Holiday Boutique selling coffee, invited PTO to join and share the profits. Can sell PTO shop items there as well. E. Olson will work on visual display of supply closet. Also discussed planning trivia nights at Prairie Moon; \$300/team. 8 rounds of 10 questions, social time afterward. Not intended to be a fundraiser; PTO would be welcome to join and participate.

C. Torresi also mentioned crowdfunding website: [www.ffk12.org/gilbert](http://www.ffk12.org/gilbert). PTO is listed as a cause. It was designed to replace the traditional neighborhood drives that had been done in the past. At this point, it has nearly reached the same amount as last year. There are 15 days left currently, but may be able to be re-initiated in the spring.

T. Forth and D. Akili discussed Bingo. Tentatively set for March 24 (Friday), maybe after school. Similar pricing as last year; probably will make changes to food. One noted intent was to get more high school children involved; however, it was pointed out that fewer parents would be able to go. Ideas were discussed for target of funding. Mr. Billings suggested Bingo with Buddies (high school mentors with elementary school mentees). Another idea presented was Bingo against Bullying.

#### Volunteer Opportunities

1. There will not be an educational event since no volunteers have come forward to plan and organize the event.
2. Spring fundraiser. Ideas discussed:
  1. Crowdfunding site
  2. Selling t-shirts and other remaining PTO shop items (that were sold at the carnival)
  3. Restaurant fundraisers - Noodles & Co, Orange Leaf, etc.
  4. Round-up options - Fareway, West Hy-Vee, Casey's
3. Elementary School Mileage Club Coordinator needed for spring
4. High School Conference Meal Coordinator (shadow this year to coordinate next year)

The meeting adjourned 9:25 pm.