

PTO Meeting Minutes –March 11, 2014
9:10AM, Hillside Elementary School

Attendance

Michelle Barton, Lori Benedict, Diane Cohle, Maura Harley, Lisa Nishikawa, Carla Ojha, Dana Zdancewicz, Kim Zahlaway.

Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes from the January 2014 and February 2014 PTO Meetings were approved.

Principal's Report – Diane Cohle

- 1st Grade weather show – March 21st
- PSSA testing for Grades 3 and 4 is scheduled for March 25-April 1st with make-up days on April 2, 3 and 4.
- Mrs. Cohle thanked the PTO for putting on the Book Fair and Pancake Breakfast for the staff.
- Mrs. Cohle thanked the PTO for rescheduling the Valentine's Day Parties to the Monday following Valentine's Day due to the snow. She stated that the kids so enjoy these parties and so she was thankful they didn't miss out.
- Earth Day is April 21st, immediately following Spring Break.
- If we have any more Snow Days, the next Make-Up Days will be Spring Break days.
- Dana Zdancewicz asked Mrs. Cohle if the PTO should be purchasing the lanyards that the office wants to order and Mrs. Cohle said yes, please. The PTO will order and pay \$200 for the lanyards for Hillside Parents when they visit the school.
- Lisa Nishikawa asked Mrs. Cohle to explain the policy regarding flyers that go home via backpacks.
- Mrs. Cohle explained that the school district cannot endorse outside organizations or businesses. So if a flyer is fundraising for another organization or company, it cannot go home thru the backpacks.
- There is also an issue fundraising for anything other than the Hillside PTO via the website. We are the only PTO in T/E that has their website hosted from the district's website.
- The PTO voted to begin the process of creating a website independent of the TESD website.

President's Report – Dana Zdancewicz /Lori Benedict

- Lori attended the recent PTO President's meeting – there was discussion regarding food allergies and classroom parties. Also discussed was how to get parents more involved in school and the PTO. Thinking is that some parents might not respond to requested to volunteer for PTO positions because there may be an assumption of taking too much time or too difficult.
- Lori suggested the PTO try to communicate an estimated amount of time each position requires and include this when we solicit for volunteers – perhaps put on a Volunteer Info Night.

Treasurer's Report – Sian Keating / Maura Harley

- Maura reported the Book Fair numbers at #3100 which is \$1800 less than the fundraising goal. The book fair may have been too early in the year, too soon after the holidays.
- Maura had a fundraising suggestion for Hillside to create an Amazon program where people who click thru from Hillside PTO's website to Amazon, raise a portion of proceeds for the PTO. People shopping have to click thru the PTO site every time they shop Amazon in order for the PTO to get the money.

- Carla Ojha mentioned that The Saturday Club runs this fundraiser thru Amazon and they make about \$400 per year with only 125 members. Her experience is the only effort on the chair would be to track the check(s) from Amazon – which is not unlike our Target and Box Tops Fundraisers.
- It was noted and Mrs. Cohle agreed – this would require the PTO to have an independent website.
- Maura Harley brought up the HES car magnets. There seems to be an issue with some of these magnets sticking to cars – not everyone experiences it, but enough people have complained that we should get rid of any remaining magnets and order from another vendor. Ann Davidson will be asked to follow up. Perhaps we can order magnets in time to sell at the Spring Fair.
- Maura mentioned that she suggests that the PTO drop this fundraiser. She said that it's been a tricky fundraiser to put on and often parents complain about quality, pricing, content, etc. There was a motion to drop the Fundraiser, Michelle Barton seconded the motion and the Board voted – the motion passed, the Holiday Shop will be removed from the list of fundraisers.

VP Social Functions – Marcy DelOrefice (Not Present)

- None

VP Membership and School Services – Lisa Nishikawa

- None

VP Fundraising – Ann Davidson (Not Present)

- None

Committee Reports – Core Parent Coordinator (Kim Zahlaway)

- Kim reported to the Board that she and Jenn Howell have feedback on the class parties and food allergies and the C.P. Coordinator position, in general.
- Kim & Jenn need replacements for the 2014-2015 school year and have begun talking to potential volunteers. They want to find someone soon so that person(s) can shadow them for the end of this year.
- Recommendation: Grade Coordinators selected before the end of the year, so that once class lists are set, the G.C. can start asking for Class Spokespersons at the end of the summer.
- Recommendation: The nomenclature for the Core Parent Program is confusing to parents. Jenn & Kim suggest we clarify these roles by changing the titles to those that might be more obvious (i.e.: Class Volunteer instead of Core Parent).
- There was a motion to investigate new titles and report back to the board. The motion was seconded and the Board voted – motion approved.
- Lastly, Kim and Jenn received a lot of feedback on class parties and the changes made this year in terms of food served. Kids and parents were not happy with some of the choices and Kim & Jenn recommend cutting food completely out of the classroom parties or at least snacks that are allowed not be the focus. In place of food, the PTO can spend its budget on crafts and games for the kids to play.

VP Cultural Arts – Carla Ojha

- Carla notified the Board that she followed up from the Off-site Budget meeting by emailing her breakdown of her 2013-2014 Cultural Arts expenditures to Sian and Maura. There had been some confusion with payments to Musicopia from last school year. Musicopia is an agent for some of the vendors who we hire for Cultural Arts events. Monies paid to them

may have been assigned incorrectly due to this confusion. Deposits have to be made to book some of the vendors towards the end of the school year, for the following year's assemblies.

- Maura responded that she and Sian will need to review Carla's breakdown, as the latest budget reports still do not match.
- Carla stated she expects Hillside to receive the \$500 grant from the school district as we have in the past.
- Upcoming events: April 1st is Franklin Institute, May 12-16 is Theme Week and June 11th will be the Life Cycle of Bees.
- Darcy McGroarty will be planning next year's Theme Week.
- Carla is working hard to keep next year's Cultural Arts budget to \$5700-\$6k, instead of \$7k. One way is Darcy and Carla are working to find other source for the theater vendors for next year's theme week.

New Business

- By-laws – Michelle & Dana to work on confirming changes to the By-laws from the previous PTO Board have been incorporated into the current version and modify as necessary.
- PTO Committee List with names of returning members and those positions that need to be advertised for new Chairpersons. Michelle has the list and created a spreadsheet for the PTO to use for the 2014-2015 PTO. Michelle passed around a print out and will email it out to the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20am. The next PTO meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 9, 2014 at 9:10am at Hillside.