

Hillside Elementary School

PTO BOARD MEETING

Minutes

November 10, 2015

9:15 am

HES Teacher's Lounge

Meeting called by	Jessica Littleton
Type of meeting	PTO Board Meeting
Facilitator	Jessica Littleton
Meeting Minutes by	Kathleen Gribb
Attendees	Charlene Briggs-Blomer, Mrs. Diane Cohle, Kathleen Gribb, Maura Harley, Tracy Johnson, Jessica Littleton, Laura Mills, Maria Rick, Nicole Scherer

Agenda Topics

Call to Order/Welcome

Jessica Littleton

Discussion	Jessica Littleton called the meeting to order at 9:15 am and called for a vote to approve the October 2015 meeting minutes. The board approved.
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Principal's Report

Mrs. Diane Cohle

Discussion	Mrs. Cohle presented the Principal's Report.
<p>October was a very busy month with the Book Fair and the new Halloween Parade schedule. Both events went smoothly. Mrs. Cohle received a lot of positive feedback on the new Halloween parade schedule and parking was not an issue this year.</p> <p>Upcoming Events: Thursday, November 12th – Picture Retake Day November 16-20 – American Education Week – This year, parents have been invited to attend their child's Math class. There is a three year rotation so parents have an opportunity to see all subjects over the course of their time at Hillside. Each grade will be held on a different day of the week. November 18, 2015 - "Math in Focus" workshop for Grade K-2 parents to learn more about the math program from district specialists. Separate session for Grades 3-4 will be held on December 15, 2015. Thursday, November 19th – Cultural Arts Assembly – The Three Aksha November 23-24 – Conferences – ½ Day for students; lunch will be served November 25-27 – No school – Thanksgiving Holiday November 30 – Conferences – No school for students</p> <p>Valley Forge Elementary School is piloting an online registration system for conference sign-ups. If all goes well the other schools may adopt in the future.</p> <p>Rachel's Helping Hands – The Rachel's Helping Hands Cancer Foundation, created in memory of Mrs. Paster, will be holding it's inaugural 5K/Fun Walk fundraiser on December 6th. Since this is not a school event we cannot send flyers home via backpacks. Please spread the word, post on the PTO website and include in both the Highlights and Blast emails.</p>	

President's Report**Jessica Littleton**

Discussion	Jessica Littleton presented the President's Report.
<p>T&E Care –</p> <p>Yearbook – We have an editor for yearbook! Carolyn Noll has volunteered to coordinate yearbook this year. Carolyn is a professional photographer and has help with Shutterbugs in the past.</p> <p>Sunshine Fund – Larissa Leon was invited to attend our meeting to discuss the Sunshine Fund and how it operates but she was unable to attend. She did send an email that Jessica could forward to the Homeroom Coordinators but did not send current procedures. It was discussed that maybe a “board” should be set up to help run the Sunshine Fund, increase awareness and create general guidelines for the fund. Maura Harley stated that Larissa submitted a reimbursement form for \$25 to cover the cost of 5 Below gift cards. It was not known if this was to cover gift cards for the year or cards that were already distributed. Another idea was suggested to have a Google Document to track any disbursements by the Sunshine Fund so we had some record of how funds are being allocated. Mrs. Briggs-Blomer was concerned that some teachers may not even be aware of the Sunshine Fund and as a result may not notify the PTO as situations arise.</p> <p>Classroom Coordinators – Jessica emailed Jane Balsan about discussing the role of the classroom coordinators but hasn't received a response. Maria Rick said that she didn't receive a notice from her 1st grade coordinator regarding the contributions for Special Teacher gifts. Homeroom coordinators had a choice to either email families or send home paper notices. Jessica will check with Jane to make sure all communications went out. Kindergarten teachers sent out special letters explaining how to contact the HES PTO.</p>	

Vice President of Cultural Arts**Nicole Scherer**

Discussion	Nicole Scherer presented the Cultural Arts Report
<p>Dr Recess – The visit by Dr. Recess went well. More kids participated than usual and they especially liked his props. Mrs. Briggs-Blomer said that she has seen children adopting his practices on the playground – instead of one large group playing swarm ball the kids broke into two separate groups.</p> <p>Franklin Institute – The Franklin Institute will be presenting The Weather Show to the First Grade. The show will focus on clouds and tornados.</p> <p>The Three Aksha – An Indian dance troupe, The Three Aksha, will be visiting on Thursday, November 19th. They will teach the children cultural traditions, hand gestures and dances.</p> <p>Talent Show – The Third and Fourth Grade Talent show will be held on Friday, November 20th at 6:30 pm. Turnout was good and there are a lot of acts this year. Nicole and Carla Ojha have discussed whether Talent Show should be fall under Cultural Arts or if might “fit” better somewhere else.</p> <p>December looks quiet for Cultural Arts but coming up in the new year Betsy Ross and Master Chang will be visiting.</p>	

Treasurer**Maura Harley**

Discussion	Maura Harley presented the Treasurer's Report
<p>Maura Harley reviewed the Budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fun Run numbers are preliminary and do not include all expenses - Book Fair did well, however, numbers only show the deposit. There is a payment to Scholastic outstanding. - There are extra Directories available to sell if anyone is interested. - Hawky Campaign – donations are still coming in. - Kids Stuff Books – We are still waiting for the final invoice and there is also an additional deposit outstanding. - Class Funds – All checks have been distributed to teachers and classrooms. Thank You notes have been coming in from the teachers expressing their gratitude. These were passed around for everyone to read. - Party Money – Some reimbursement forms for various grades are still outstanding. - Constant Contact has been paid. We will also set up a PTO account with Volunteer Spot which will cost \$100/year. - Fundraising is down a little bit so the “bump” we got from Whole Foods was welcomed! - Nicole Scherer mentioned that she had a DELTA show booked for the spring. Maura was concerned that since fundraising numbers are down there may not be enough funds to cover the expense. They will talk offline to finalize. 	

Vice President of Fundraising**Laura Mills**

Discussion	Laura Mills presented the Fundraising Report.
<p>Whole Foods – Laura met with Mrs. Pechin to discuss how to allocate the funds. Mrs. Pechin's wish list includes: \$100-150 to cover the cost of seeds and soil, money to cover the cost of t-shirts for the 1st grader gardeners and to earmark funds for the Marathon program which will cost about \$15/child next year. Maura will add an expense item to the budget to cover t-shirts. Mrs. Briggs-Blomer stated that the 1st grade garden program used to be called "Hillside Sprouts" and they used to have little shovels and buckets. It was suggested that teachers work hard to secure grants to fund special projects and that we should make sure to include Facebook posts and to include in the yearbook each year to highlight their efforts. Mrs. Cohle mentioned that the TE School District magazine honored Mrs. Pechin in the September issue and all the 1st graders involved received special certificates. The status of this program is unclear because the person who ran it has moved.</p> <p>Wrapping Paper – Since this fundraiser didn't materialize this fall, Laura asked whether it made sense to hold at another time during the year. There were mixed opinions and concern that it might not be as successful if not held near the holidays. Laura suggested that we take it out of the budget for next year and if possible to coordinate next year it will be an extra bonus.</p> <p>Target – This is the last year for the Target fundraiser. Target pledged to donate a specific dollar amount and since this goal has been met, they will be discontinuing the program starting next year. We will need to find a replacement.</p> <p>Amazon Link – It is important to get families to remember to use the link on the PTO website when shopping on Amazon.com as this gives us a much higher percentage than simply tagging Hillside in "Your Account".</p> <p>A discussion ensued about whether it might be better to simply request a donation from each family as opposed to having various smaller fundraisers throughout the year. It was generally thought that various fundraisers offer "something for everyone" and families might be more likely to participate if interested. It was suggested that we survey the families to see what they prefer. Another suggestion was to keep the children involved in fundraising as we did last year collecting coins for the playground. This gave the students a sense of community and a feeling that they "own" the playground.</p> <p>Purse Bingo – This proved to be bigger than anticipated and will be tabled until next year to give the committee ample time to plan.</p>	

Vice President of Membership & Services**Tracy Johnson**

Discussion	Tracy Johnson presented the Membership & Services Report.
<p>As Jessica mentioned, we now have an editor for yearbook! Thank you to Carolyn Noll for volunteering to coordinate yearbook this year. Tracy reiterated the importance of notifying the Communications Committee BEFORE flyers go home via backpacks to give the team ample time to update the website. Ideally, Allison needs 3-4 days to make changes.</p>	

Old Business

Discussion	<p>FLITE – Arionne Achackzad contacted Nicole Scherer to discuss having the HES PTO ask families to consider contributing gift certificates to FLITE in the name of special teachers. After discussing, it was decided that now might not be the appropriate time, however, we will consider doing a coin collection in each classroom similar to the playground collection to get the children involved and help increase awareness of FLITE.</p> <p>T&E Care – Tracy Johnson mentioned that we will be doing a Gift Card and Healthy Snack drive for T&E Care in the February/March timeframe. Laura Mills offered to help coordinate.</p> <p>4th Grade Relay T-shirts – Jessica will contact Mr. Pechin to discuss the details (i.e. color, size, amount needed, etc.) This will be coordinated with the t-shirts Mrs. Pechin would like for the 1st grade gardeners.</p>
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Adjournment**Jessica Littleton**

Discussion	The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 am.
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