

Hillside Elementary School

PTO BOARD MEETING

Minutes

January 11, 2017

9:15 am

HES Teacher's Lounge

Meeting called by	Tracy Johnson
Type of meeting	PTO Board Meeting
Facilitator	Tracy Johnson
Meeting Minutes by	Kathleen Gribb
Attendees	Mrs. Diane Cohle, Kathleen Gribb, Maura Harley, Tracy Johnson, Laura Mills, Nicole Scherer,

Agenda Topics

Call to Order/Welcome

Tracy Johnson

Discussion	Tracy Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:20 am and called for a vote to approve the December 2016 meeting minutes. The board approved.
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Principal's Report

Mrs. Diane Cohle

Discussion	Mrs. Cohle presented the Principal's Report.
<p>Mrs. Cohle wished everyone a Happy New Year.</p> <p>Upcoming Events: January 12th – Mother Goose will visit the Kindergarten students January 16th – No School – Martin Luther King Day January 23-24 – Kindergarten and New Student Registration will be held from 9:00-11:30 AM and 1:00-3:00 PM January 27th – Father Daughter Dance February 2nd – Betsy Ross will visit with the 4th Grade Students</p> <p>Mrs. Cohle stated that the students did not go out for recess on Monday and Tuesday due to the cold temperatures. This is snow and ice season and Mrs. Cohle reminded the group that the district has text messaging available if you don't want to receive those early morning phone calls when school is cancelled or delayed.</p> <p>Apex Fun Run – Tracy Johnson asked Mrs. Cohle if the teachers were surveyed to get their thoughts on the Fun Run that was held in the fall. Mrs. Cohle did not think this had happened yet. Tracy asked if Mrs. Cohle and the rest of the Hillside staff would be agreeable to possibly holding another Fun Run. Mrs. Cohle thought this would be fine as long as we addressed the few concerns previously mentioned. Tracy will schedule a meeting with Beaumont to compare notes since they used a different vendor for their Fun Run. There is a PTO President's meeting on January 23rd; Tracy will invite all to attend the meeting with Beaumont in case any of the other school were interested in having a Fun Run of their own.</p>	

Discussion	Tracy Johnson presented the President's Report.
<p>Fun Run – Tracy Johnson asked whether the survey should go to just teachers/staff or if we should survey parents as well. Nicole was more interested in the teacher/staff feedback. She offered to draft a survey and will talk to Christina Carberry and Kate Nelson to get their feedback and ideas. Tracy stated that if we were going to hold another Fun Run next year we would need to lock in a date with Apex. Nicole said that Apex now has a South Jersey office that we could work with, however, the fall was going to be rather busy with Cultural Arts activities and it might be hard to find a good time to hold such an event. It was agreed that the Fall was the best time to hold a Fun Run since the majority of the big fundraisers are typically held in the Spring (Parent Social, Spring Fair). Field conditions would probably be better in the fall as well. Another thought to only hold the Fun Run every other year.</p> <p>Fundraisers – Tracy was concerned that if we didn't hold another Fun Run next year the PTO wouldn't cover their expenses. Further analysis will need to be done to see what is different between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 budgets besides the Fun Run. Mrs. Cohle asked what other PTO's do to raise money. Tracy said that a lot of the PTO's just ask for a lump-sum donation in the beginning of the school year and don't hold many fundraisers. In addition, a lot of the schools have "private" clubs which are run by parents as opposed to vendors, so all proceeds go towards the PTO. Laura Mills has received some feedback that parents don't like being asked for too many donations. Laura also suggested that holding events at Chipotle and Kiwi Yogurt might work out better because families are actually getting something while also raising money for the PTO. Kathy Gribb mentioned that The Vanguard Group didn't previously match PTO donations, however, starting January 1st there has been a change to their policy and they will now match all PTO donations. She suggested mentioning this in the next Hawky push in case other companies have made similar changes.</p> <p>Father Daughter Dance – The Girl Scouts typically hold a Father Daughter dance in February. Unfortunately, they were not notified that Kristin Becket was going to coordinate a school-wide Father Daughter dance. The Girl Scouts have however, decided not to have a competing event and instead will encourage their troops to attend the Hillside event and schedule extra events with the money saved.</p> <p>Lobby Renovation – The decorator is taking a more modular approach to the redesign. This will allow the staff to easily move pieces around as needed. One request was to have a clock behind the receptionist desk to make sign-in and out easier for visitors. Tracy has been talking to Carolyn Noll about possibly using some of the student photos to spruce up the stairway similar to the "photo wall" at Valley Forge Elementary School. Nicole Scherer reminded Tracy that she is having the David Wiesner drawings framed so maybe those can be used instead of purchasing additional artwork. The decorator is supposed to submit a bid to Tracy by January 23rd. Once she has that we will be able to compare furniture prices with the district purchaser.</p> <p>Parent Social – Tracy reported that all the elementary schools seem to be utilizing various bidding apps for their silent auctions this year. A demo with the vendor is being scheduled which Tracy plans to attend. The committee could use a few more hands to solicit donations from local businesses. Anyone with a "personal connection" would be ideal since they will be more likely to secure a donation. Time commitment will be approximately 3-5 hours. Letters are ready, they just need to be delivered and then followed up. As a reminder, please check with Regan Kreszswick or Lauren Allred before asking businesses for donations to make sure we're not doubling efforts.</p>	

Discussion	Nicole Scherer presented the Cultural Arts Report
<p>Chinese Cultural Day – The second graders will be broken into four groups. These four groups will rotate between all the activities for ½ hour sessions with each presenter. Presentations include: Master Chang the Chinese Paper Cutter, a Shadow Puppeteer, a Chinese Calligraphy lesson, and Chinese dragon mask making with Mrs. Carreon. Parents are able to attend Master Chang's presentation. Master Chang will have items on display that can also be purchased.</p> <p>DELTA Meeting – At the last DELTA meeting there was a performance by the award-winning group, Musicopia. Nicole thought it might be a good fit for Pride Day, however, Mrs. Cohle stated that a performer has already be booked. Nicole also mentioned that Alex and the Kaleidoscope, which is a children's TV show, might be fun to book for Theme Week as it promotes character building. Music was the theme two years ago, so it will not be in the rotation for a few more years.</p> <p>Theme Week – Nicole would like to try to incorporate technology into Theme Week this year and going forward. Some ideas include: video production, coding and Garage Band. Nicole has starting looking into The Coding Academy in Bryn Mawr, but they seem pricey. There is another company in West Chester that she plans on calling. Hopefully they will be more reasonably priced or at least be able to point Nicole in the right direction. Mrs. Cohle suggested she contact Lisa Lukin. This year they may be able to incorporate graphic design into the Art theme.</p>	

The Theme Week information that was handed down to Nicole is getting dated and Nicole would like to create a Planning Committee. The committee would be charged with planning a few years out and researching new ideas, as well as possible vendors and presenters. She would like to get more creative with the themes and possibly restructure the whole program. Typically, Theme Week consists of a one-week visit from a vendor that culminates with a 4th Grade performance however it doesn't have to remain this way. Mr. Haines has offered to create a special 4th Grade performance.

Painting with a Twist has been secured for Friday, May 12th from 6-8 PM. Covers for the tables will be supplied. We are told that the paint should clean up easily if any gets on the floor, but Tracy Johnson thought it might be wise to get paper for the floors just in case.

Treasurer

Maura Harley

Discussion	Maura Harley presented the Treasurer's Report
<p>Banking Fee Change - Maura Harley was recently notified by the bank that there will be additional charges for bulk cash deposits and coin counting/rolling. They will be installing additional rolling machines that can be used for a fee. Maura will meet with the Branch Manager to discuss. Tracy Johnson offered to go too. Maura stated that we can always get rolls from Staples and roll our own coins.</p> <p>Returned Check - Maura informed the group that there was one returned check from the Book Fair. The PTO will cover the 15.00 fee; we do not typically ask for this to be reimbursed. Maura will send a letter to the family to inform them and ask them to submit another payment.</p>	

Vice President of Fundraising

Kate Kilgarriff

Discussion	Kate Kilgarriff presented the Fundraising Report.
<p>Spring Fair – The committee is starting to gear up for the fair. The date has been secured with the inflatable company; we're just waiting for the new catalogue to arrive so we can select the items we would like at the fair. Stephanie Tanner will take on responsibility for games. Laura Mills and Kate will work together on the paperwork for the event.</p>	

Vice President of Social Functions

Jessica Littleton

Discussion	Tracy Johnson presented the Social Functions Report.
<p>Tracy has offered to fill in as VP of Social for the remainder of the school year.</p> <p>Mrs. Cohle asked if the PTO Staff Appreciation Breakfast was still being planned for February 8th. Laura Mills will follow up on: (1) Teacher Appreciation Week – Kelly Ploszay chair, (2) PTO Staff Appreciation Breakfast – Colleen Mullin chair, and (3) Staff Luncheon at year-end – Kate Kilgarriff, Danyll Lockett and Christine King co-chairs</p>	

Vice President of Membership & Services

Laura Mills

Discussion	Laura Mills presented the Membership & Services Report.
<p>Yearbook – Laura asked if the cover design has been forward to Tracy and/or Mrs. Cohle. Neither one had received anything yet. The cover is due next week but will need to be approved first. Final due date for the yearbook is April 17th. Laura mentioned that there were problems last year with the timing of the student photos. Typically, the photographer submits a CD with all the student photos directly to the yearbook company.</p>	

Old Business

Discussion	<p>Open Positions –Nicole Scherer has graciously agreed to host the PTO Volunteer Social on Monday, January 30th from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. Nicole will send an email for everyone to sign up to bring something. Tracy Johnson mentioned that she recently met a parent who was a CPA. She is planning on inviting her to the social and is hoping she might take on the Treasurer position. The Volunteer Social will be added to the Highlights email and a special Blast will go out as well.</p> <p>Clubs – Laura Mills asked Tracy if she could discuss the procedures for outside vendors at the next Presidents Meeting. Currently there is a club that has 16 students signed up, but no one has offered to Chair this club. Laura will email the parents of the students signed up to see if anyone will step up. Laura also asked whether she needed to ask for the specific instructor clearances or if having the company clearances is sufficient. She was curious to know how other Elementary Schools handle these situations.</p>
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New Business

Discussion	<p>Classroom Facebook Pages – Laura Mills informed the group that she has spoken with a family moving from New Eagle to Hillside. The new student is rather anxious about attending a new school. At New Eagle, there are classroom Facebook pages that are shared with the families. Laura asked if it was possible to do something similar at Hillside. Tracy Johnson thought that this had been discussed at past meetings and decided against because families that are not on Facebook might feel excluded. It would also be difficult to monitor the comments and any complaints. Laura stated that other elementary schools hold grade level socials to encourage families to get to know each other. Tracy thought this was a good idea and we should keep it in mind for next year. Maybe a Facebook Group could be started once these Grade Level groups are established,</p> <p>New Family Welcome Committee – Laura Mills mentioned that Kate Nelson has not been notified of any new families and wanted to make sure the committee wasn't missing any. Mrs. Cohle thought that there were less than 10 new families since the beginning of the school year. Laura will follow up with Beata and will make sure the committee reaches out to any families that have joined since September.</p> <p>Crossing Guard – The crossing guard at the corner of Howellville and Cassatt Roads does an amazing job. It was suggested that the PTO give him a \$25 gift card to show our appreciation.</p>
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Adjournment

Tracy Johnson

Discussion	The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.
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