

Smith Middle School PTO Meeting Minutes
11/8/21 – 5pm
Large Conference Room, Smith Middle School

Attendance: Sherry Gillespie, Cheri Armstrong, Ray Shamoun, Julie Gould, Chris Mueller, Jennifer Hartenburg, Christine DiPilato, Ivana Radulovic, Cesar Lozano, Ajit Bergi, April Bucknell, Thomas Family

Welcome: Meeting was called to order at 5pm by Mr. Mueller.

Introductions: Each meeting member introduced themselves.

General Business/Administrative:
PTO Meeting Minutes from 10/4/21 were approved.

New Business:

Principal's Update: Mr. Mueller provided updates:

1. The Fall Dance was a huge success. Many commented that we should keep this dance outdoors in the future, assuming the weather is nice.
2. Mrs. Vergauwen is out on medical leave, and they are narrowing the options for her temporary replacement. Final interviews will happen in the next few days.

District Update: Christine DiPilato provided the district update:

1. It's been a great start to the school year – return to stage, athletics, clubs/activities. Two schools were named schools of character, and 74 National Merit Semi-Finalists.
2. Updated the Strategic Plan – needed to be able to measure how we're doing.
 - A. Early Childhood to Career – expanded access
 - B. Equity and Well-Being – ensure safety, belonging and connection
 - C. Deep Learning – ensure learning for all across the system
 - D. Building Capacity – expand reach to students, staff and community
3. Challenges – Budget, Enrollment (we've lost 500 students, which affects the budget), Covid-19 (district is hiring a nurse who will do daily testing for any quarantined student so they can continue to attend school), Staffing (we need substitute teachers, bus drivers, custodians, etc.)
4. Looking Forward – Vaccine clinic at THS is full, return to 'normalcy', facilities review committee, FRC recommendation to the Board

Breakfast for the Staff: Sherry shared that PTO provided breakfast for the Staff after conferences. It was good to have it the morning after the first evening of conferences.

Fall Dance: It was a success. Keep it outside, if possible. Maybe add another activity. Julie will organize the Spring Dance.

Holiday Giving Tree: We need to assess how many left over gift cards we have from last year. Then, if necessary, we will organize a way to ask parents for teacher gift donations. We will also ask for donations to stock the teacher's lounge. There are about 70 staff members. In previous years, we've asked teachers what specific gift cards they wanted, but we will likely not do that

this year because we want to use the left over gift cards. We will discuss this more at the next meeting. J. Hartenburg will provide what is needed in the staff lounge.

Next Meeting: We decided all future meetings will begin at 5pm and we'll move the next meeting to Monday, 11/29, so we have time for the Giving Tree.

Teacher Requests: Sherry said we will wait until January to ask teachers for their requests so we know exactly how much money we will make from the Read-a-thon fundraiser.

Read-a-thon Fundraiser: Sherry provided updates:

1. Next time, she would do something more fitness-related and have an actual event at the end.
2. This year we were limited because we couldn't have a Kick-Off Assembly, etc.
3. We might make \$9,000.
4. Ms. Taylor was a rock star! Her class raised the most money, followed by Mr. Pyke, Ms. Zastrow, Mrs. Brennan and Ms. Cline.
5. 6th grade class won.
6. 10 kids raised \$250 or more.
7. Top 3 Students: Stella Silagy, Chase Shamoun, Ava Burton

Volunteer Update: Sherry reported that we still need a Volunteer Coordinator, but she will handle it at this point.

1. Chris will look into whether we can have Bake Sales since Julie reported that the chair of that committee is ready to start organizing them.
2. We still need help with 8th grade promotion. There is typically a ceremony, then a luncheon, then a dance. There have been decorations in the past, including a shield for each student.

PTO Insurance: Chris reported that Rick West says we should have a million dollar insurance policy. District insurance doesn't cover PTO sponsored events. There was discussion about whether PTO actually sponsors any events; most seem to be school-sponsored events. Sherry is going to look into this more at the next President's Council meeting and talk to Rick West. We will discuss further at the next meeting.

Closing: Meeting was adjourned at 6:15pm.