

Pleasant Ridge PTA Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2016

In attendance: Jennifer Steben, Megan Brown, Amy Good, Amy Spooner, Meg Phillips, Lindsay Winkler, Jackie Sweet, Jillian Stacy, Cris Supina, Kevin Musson, Peter Campbell, Lorrie Welzbacker, Gabrielle Clark, Alicia Gardner-Aber, Jacqui Jacobs, Amanda Warren, Kim Provost, Natalie Samp, Rachel Mooney, Janet Dillon, Paulina Logozzo

- Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 9:05 am
- Welcome, purpose of PTA & introductions (Jennifer Steben, President):
 - Introductions
- Year in review, current objectives (Jennifer Steben, President)
 - This year the emphasis will be on the playground
 - Goals are safety and fun
 - Additional equipment
 - Baseball field coming this Spring
 - Last year the majority of funding was spent inside
 - Walkie talkies
 - \$8,000 on books (\$4000 literacy library update, \$4000 media update)
 - 90 Chromebooks in the building
 - Scholastic bucks
 - GoPros
 - Apple TV setup
 - Focus on safety and technology
 - Field trips for every child.
 - Fall fundraiser
 - Focus on making sure it is all inclusive (incentives for participation)
 - An evening PTA meeting for those who can't make it to daytime meetings is in the works!
- Welcome from principal and goals for the year (Kevin Musson)
 - Class sizes – benchmark is 26
 - Average class sizes
 - 22 for Kindergarten
 - 23.5 for first
 - 26 for second
 - 23 for third
 - May need an additional 1st grade next year
 - ECSC may be moving to liberty school (merge w/Pooh Corner), which will free up space

- NWEA testing begins next week – will take place in classrooms and computer lab space
- Outside excavation to begin next Friday (9/25) for soccer/football field
 - Recesses will be moved to the back of the building to accommodate
 - Creating small baseball field in conjunction w/students
 - May incorporate a 4C's activity to design Whiffle ball field
 - Community Ed contributed funds
 - Steve's custom signs will contribute with official signage on outfield fence
 - Decision to be made about the rope climbing tower from a safety standpoint
 - Focus is on the littlest students when it comes to playground – currently we are lacking appropriate equipment
 - Beginning of October- small repairs will take place
- 90 chromebooks ready on carts + special ed has additional 20 + additional 20 from previous years
- Walkie-talkies – teachers and *paraeducators* (goal is safety for all students)
- Reconfigured front drop off areas – improved our time by 7 minutes
- Specific pick up points for each grade level
- All parents stay in vestibule our outside
- Bus loop – paraeducators are giving their time to coordinate bus loops – we have one new paraeducator starting this week
- Asking parents to please stay on sidewalks, stay out of drop-off loop and do not walk between buses
- TV for the front of building for corporate sponsorships, announcements, pictures (to replace bulletin board)
- Inside – Steve's custom signs will be doing some building wraps for the tops of windows, posts, etc. Will include "district compass".
- PR high five will stay as positive behavior incentive system
- Homework Policy – focus is on *moderation* of homework. Reading with kids each night 20 minutes, etc.
 - PR in second place in district in terms of test scores (NWEA, MSTEP).
 - Saline as a district is consistently first in county with test scores
 - Scot Graden spoke regarding Harvest's no homework policy
 - It is a district issue – PR will not adopt this policy without more data
 - The goal right now is open communication with teachers & homework transparency
 - Reading scores are very good in this building in particular
 - Teaching good study habits
 - Amy Good is lead for communication – PTA will reiterate the correct message for those who have questions (there is a petition circulating currently re: no homework policy)

- Concerns should go to Kevin (not the teachers)
- Staff perspectives (Lorrie Welzbacker & Pete Campbell)
 - Pete noted that other teachers are not able to attend meetings, but wondered could we have a google doc for teachers to fill out to get questions answered and help with communication
 - Minutes will circulate to teachers
 - Lorrie spoke regarding the homework issue
 - Teachers communicate why they are doing what they are doing and why they send what they do for homework
 - Team effort between family and school – working together with open communication
 - Second grade field trip – All classes would like to go to the Apple Store this year.
- Budget overview and vote (Melissa Wild Speicher, Treasurer)
 - Voting members must be paid
 - Chairs and board members are paid members
 - Money for strategic grants – Kevin
 - Fall fundraiser shooting for 20,000 (low estimate)
 - We have 5k going in from corporate sponsors
 - Raised 24k last year
 - Budget numbers mirror last year's numbers
 - PR raised the most money in the district
 - Yankee candle was a new fundraiser last year and was very successful
 - Open to new ideas for fundraising
 - More focus on passive fundraisers
 - Was all teacher money spent last year? No – there will be google docs for staff to see who used what
 - Pete would like more ideas of what other teachers district wide are writing grants for. This info should be public
 - Motion to approve budget: Amy Good
 - Second: Meg Phillips
 - Unanimously adopted
- Getting involved – volunteering and membership (Lindsay Winkler, VP Volunteers & Megan Brown, Secretary)
 - Lindsay has a list of positions that need chairs
 - If you chaired last year and would like to continue - e-mail Lindsay
 - 137 on Bench list (had 140 last year); Lindsay will continue to update the list
 - Please let Lindsay know if you have any volunteer needs for upcoming events along with specific dates and times
 - Meg will circulate the list she has from Carmen about event dates etc.
 - We are at 58 members this year

- Grade reps are getting the staff involved
- Spouses can be members too
- T shirts – sold out of small – we have a few medium and large (\$10 each)

- Fall Fundraiser & passives (Amy Spooner, VP Fundraising)
 - Already raised 5k thru corporate sponsors
 - Ninja warrior challenge launching tomorrow—kickoff at lunches
 - Emphasis on participation - rewards for getting entire class registered online
 - 10/18 awards ceremony and celebration combined to minimize classroom disruption
 - \$1000 goal per classroom
 - Only 2 classrooms last year didn't make goal
 - Question: Can PR alumni participate in zip line? Need to look at cost and logistics of keeping the zip line for an extra hour.
 - \$75 goal per student threshold up from \$50 last year
 - Metrics from last year indicate that this would be a comfortable reach for most
 - Overall threshold of 25k and classroom goals of \$1000 per class are the same
 - Each child will get a chance regardless of how much they raised
 - More info to come after kickoff with financial information (website will have more info as well)
 - Starting next week with Amy Good, Grade Reps and Amy Spooner will be pushing info out through social media, emails, classroom newsletters
 - Kevin, Joe, Jennifer and Amy Spooner will meet and get with Amy Good and Lindsay re: communication and volunteer needs
 - United communications – fun, helpful for school and inclusive
 - Bring back Script program – gift cards
 - Passive fundraisers
 - Kalahari night in March
 - October Kalahari date is PR on the porch night so PR is not doing fall Kalahari
 - More details forthcoming

- Curriculum activities & goals (Meg Phillips, VP Enrichment)
 - Anything not fundraising that supports school – curriculum nights, grandparent's day, spring dance
 - Still in need of a couple of chairs
 - Spring dance revamp – looking for ideas
 - STEM night? Hands on experiments
 - Amy to put it out online to gather ideas/feedback from membership

- How to stay in tune with the PTA and PR overall – activities, Fall Fundraiser and beyond! (Amy Good, VP Communications, Amy Wallen – Kinder Rep, Cris Supina – 1st Grade Rep, Jill Stacy – 2nd Grade Rep, Jackie Sweet – 3rd Grade Rep)
 - Amy Good – new to the role so e-mail with any doubts/questions

- Amy G manages social media, website, Kevin's weekly e-mail to parents, flyers (final approval for flyers needs to come from Amy G)
 - Graphic design mom (Deb Smith) as resource for flyers
 - Pictochart for flyers – amy G has login information
 - Meeting agenda items should come to Jennifer or Megan
 - Amy for communications for Kevin's newsletter
 - Kindergarten set up a Facebook page as they may have some different needs
 - Does not seem as though each grade needs a separate Facebook page – may get confusing with Amy G's social media communication
 - Be careful about how we are sharing pictures/videos
 - Not publishing class lists, room numbers, addresses, phone numbers
 - Students who opt out of picture taking process – goes through office – look at that before posting any pictures/videos
 - List of room parents – we do not have these yet
 - Need to follow up with room parent meeting when we have this info
 - In addition to Holiday Wish Wall, Jackie Sweet proposed creating a “staff favorites” list (possibly coordinate this with room parents)
 - Perhaps we could put Staff Favorites on website
 - All staff not just teachers
- Open business & close (Jennifer Steben, President)
 - Natalie pointed out that this has been an expensive week for parents: pictures, pizza at Welcome Home, t-shirts, PTA dues, book fair
 - What can we do for families who cannot afford these extras?
 - PTA donates t-shirts – donate to social worker for kids in need so they can be given “behind the scenes”
 - How can we do more free events like the free hot chocolate at the parade and the free movie night?
 - Donate book fair books (Kevin and Jennifer will work together on this)
 - T shirt cannon for PR on the porch (free event)
 - Adjourned at 10:42 am

Our next meeting will be Thursday, October 13th.