

January 2012 PTO Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM. 12 people were in attendance. Happy New Year!

1. November 2011 Minutes: The November meeting minutes were passed unanimously. There was not a PTO meeting held in December.

2. Principal's Report: Mrs. Leach provided the report in Mr. Testa's absence. There is a chorus and band concert being held on 1/11, Soup & Family Portrait event from 5-7 on 1/19 and a K-2 literacy night is being planned for 2/2 at 6:00 pm (*there was a question if this is for parents only or if families are welcome to attend). CMTs will be held 3/5 - 3/23 for students in grades 3-5 and more information will be provided on which tests students will be taking. PBIS news: re-teaching of the students is happening with regard to dismissals, cafeteria expectations and how students should be conducting themselves in the hallways. There is a presentation on the Superintendent's 2012/2013 budget being held on 1/17 at the Board of Education with budget workshops on 1/24 and 1/31.

3. Committee Updates:

Munson's Fundraiser and Great Harvest Bread will be 2/16 - 3/2. Orders will be available for pick up on the half days of 3/22 & 3/23 that coordinate with parent/teacher conferences.

Books of Honor is being held 3/29 - 4/4. Families can purchase books for the LSS library in a child's honor. A fundraiser is being held at the "99 Restaurant" on Monday evening, 1/30, from 4-9 pm and flyers will be sent home with the details and clarification on if takeout is included.

Programs and Assemblies-Dory is the committee and has planned the following assemblies:

Leslie Johnson did a creative writing workshop for 3rd and 4th grade on 1/6. Tom Lee will do the same for the 5th graders on 1/17. A Power of Light program will be held for 5th graders on a Friday morning in February, but a date and the contract have not yet been finalized. Flock Theater is coming on 1/27 for pm Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades with a workshop to follow for 1st graders. A Weather or Not program will be held for 1st graders on a Friday afternoon in late March. Fiesta del Norte is scheduled for 2nd grade on 5/1 and Mixed Up Matter will be on 2/6 for the 3rd graders. Edison's Workshop for 4th graders tentatively scheduled for 4/4 and 4th grade would still like something by the Noah Webster outreach program in June if there are funds available. Lots of work goes into scheduling, booking, negotiating prices and contracting programs and assemblies for our children! Mr. Testa would like to have an anti-bullying program for the whole school which will be dependent on getting some contracts finalized and if there is money available. No grant money is available from the state yet and Dory put in a request for funds from the Vernon Arts Council.

5. Other Business:

Room parent update- *there was a question of why theme parties have changed from Halloween to harvest party and holiday to winter. Are we trying to accommodate everyone or be fair, but in turn losing the opportunity for students to learn about different cultures and different ways that people celebrate holidays? Other schools are celebrating each of the holidays, so is it a Board of Ed policy that some schools are not following? This will be asked at the Superintendent's meeting and a copy of the policy was requested. LSS is following the rules and the rules are strict and directive on how to teach each holiday, including what not to do.

We've noticed that there has not been a Board of Education representative at any of our meetings this year, so the presidents will ask about who the LSS rep is at the next Superintendent's meeting being held on 2/2. Agenda items are welcomed and parents should send them to Dory Famiglietti or Jennifer Sargent via email (emails can be found the LSS PTO Web site).

A question was asked about the students not being able to play tag at recess. This seems to be true for some grades because some children were getting physical and students were getting hurt enough that they needed to seek medical attention from the nurse. "Touch" football was also an issue and has been stopped. Parents would like a notice sent home to clarify the situation (or policy) rather than hearing from their children that they're not allowed to run around at recess. *What are the alternative activities for recess? Being notified gives parents a chance to talk to their children about their behavior. Parents expressed concern for time being taken away from recess as punishment and would like to see some alternatives offered.

Response from Mr. Testa: There have been a number of injuries during outdoor recess recently. My goal is to ensure the safety of all students. Students are allowed to run around and let out energy at recess. We do have structured kickball games. Kickball is a popular activity. I will meet with our PBIS team to create a list of safe outdoor activities.

A parent expressed concern that Lion Loot can be used to "purchase" time away from doing homework and some agreed that there are better rewards that can be offered, such as sitting in a special place for lunch, getting to help at an activity.

Response from Mr. Testa: There is a menu of items that students can purchase with lion loot at varying prices. (reading time in comfy chair, preferred lunch seating, Bag O Bargain Gift Card) On Wednesdays from 8:15-8:45 students can participate in Lego Club, Arts and Crafts, Game Time, Extra Recess time. Students save their lion loot and decide what they would like to purchase. Or students can save their lion loot to have lunch with a teacher or to be principal for the day. We tried to include options for all students. A homework pass is used for one assignment. It does not exclude students from doing all homework. I agree that homework is important. I have not heard from staff that students are using HW passes to avoid doing homework. Students are for the most part saving HW passes to use when necessary. I don't believe we are sending the wrong message about homework.

PTO elections will be held in April for the President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Kim expressed interest in serving another year as Secretary. The terms are 2 years, but parents can serve longer. If anyone has interest, it is a great benefit to be able to shadow the current officers and learn the position alongside someone with experience.

Rock Cats game – a tentative date of 5/13 is being planned. There is a big flag ceremony that the kids can participate in, so watch for more information.

Book Fair- Over \$3,000 was sold at the book fair and we made a \$900 profit. The next one will be in coordination with the science fair or the Spring social. The Spring Book Fair buys books for our children's summer reading program where each child gets a book that they picked out on the last day of school.

The next PTO meeting will be 2/7 rather than 2/14, which is Valentine's Day.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.