

EES PTO Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2020 -- Zoom meeting at 7:30 pm

Attendance: Zoom meeting (Betsy McKeen, Carla Christensen, Kate Mazzini, Letizia Donati, Theresa Whitman, Jessie Palm, Christina Bruce, and Suzanne Bediz)

Carla Christensen called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Welcome and Introductions:

Approval of prior meeting's minutes:

The minutes from the April 2020 meeting (via Zoom) were approved by a motion from Betsy McKeen and seconded by Suzanne Bediz. The motion passed. July 2020 meeting minutes are being finalized and will be ready for approval at the next meeting.

Remarks from Dr. Roberts:

Dr. Roberts was unable to attend the meeting this evening.

Kindergarten Welcome Bag Wrap-Up:

The PTO provided a bag at the K screening (used Laugh-eteria book) for incoming K families. Thank you to Carla and Letizia for staffing the table. It was nice to feel socially connected.

Family Directory update:

Betsy McKeen created a Google Form to gather information from families for the Family Directory (approximately 65% participation). The link to the finished directory was emailed to families that provided data for the directory. A request will be sent to Maggie Morriss to send the Directory form again to all families by including the link to add information to the form to receive access.

Family and Business Appeals:

As part of the discussion for the appeals, the PTO discussed the need to determine what we are using the enrichment money for during this year to be targeted in our fundraising.

Family Appeal - The purpose is to engage with the community; this is our foundational purpose as an organization. The appeal should be worded to find and support creative ways to enrich EES students' lives. We will provide a paper copy of the Family Appeal letter during October at a pick-up/drop-off.

Business Appeal - The PTO is postponing discussion on the Business Appeal this month.

New enrichment ideas from K teachers:

Possible ideas for PTO enrichment would be:

- Provide "field trips" to the museums through purchasing tickets for each family (these would be individual events, and each family would be responsible for transportation and supervision). There is a desire to develop off-screen activities.

The PTO (Letizia) will reach out to teachers for enrichment ideas (just asking if they have ideas but don't want to be a burden).

Box Tops and Crosby's Register Tapes for Education Cessation:

The PTO will no longer be participating in the Box Tops for Education program due to the declining use of Box Tops' new virtual platform. Crosby's plan has been placed on hold for 2020-2021 by Crosby's.

2020-2021 Calendar review:

There have been changes to district calendar -- Mondays are half-days.

There will be some changes to PTO meeting scheduling. We reviewed the Town Calendar for conflicts and have scheduled the next two meetings.

October meeting: Thursday, October 29 @ 7:30 pm via Zoom (link will be posted on the website)

November meeting: Thursday, November 19 @ 7:30 pm

Reopening Plans and Effect on PTO events:

As the district reopens, the PTO is seeking alternative PTO Event activities to send home (grab bag), using Padlet, and find other ways to keep the EES community connected (via online posting). Carla will reach out to the Event chairs for alternatives.

- Hoedown
- Messy Art

Gear Sale (mask / EES):

Wally (Jungle) can provide an online store, and we can select the items. A discussion was held around the community's general feeling and how this opportunity will be received. The consensus viewed this as a way to connect the community and build school spirit through swag. Christina will review the items with Betsy.

Rebranding discussion:

The discussion was held about rebranding as there is a feeling that all do not feel comfortable or welcome in the PTO. Is it critical to maintain the name PTO? Are we affiliated with the national PTO? More research will be done to determine if there are any legal issues around renaming using "Friends of EES" or something similar. The PTO will consider creating a survey and will revisit the questions provided in the Spring EES Parent Survey.

Advertising for incoming VP to shadow:

There was a general reminder to encourage people to reach out, and an advertisement will be created to post to Facebook.

Amazon orders:

Teacher requests - There were two orders that fell through and will be researched before the orders are placed.

There is a new funding request from Sandy Jordan. She would like a new easel/chart stand for her classroom (approx. \$225). There is a line item for miscellaneous. Betsy McKeen made a motion to fund her request fully, and Letizia seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Parent donations:

There were two (2) family donations from the incoming K kindergarten class, and Carla sent thank you notes. The checks from Hooper Fund arrived for the grants from last spring (Composer in Residence and the Community Read). Since the Composer in Residence grant has finished, the Hooper Fund indicated that they would be funding some music options for 5th grade. The PTO will send them the intention of programming after discussion with the appropriate EES staff.

Betsy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 pm, which was seconded by Letizia. The motion passed.