

Friends of EES



Friends of Essex Elementary School Meeting Minutes April 4, 2022 -- In-Person/Zoom meeting

Attendance: Zoom meeting (Jennifer Roberts, Rachel McInnis, Mandy Beausoliel, Hilary Mattison, Samantha Silag)

In-person: Betsy McKeen-President, Maggie Gleason-Vice President, Suzanne Bediz-Secretary, Heather Harrell - Treasurer, Letizia Donati - Enrichment Coordinator)

Welcome/Introductions:

Maggie Gleason called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

Welcome/remarks from Dr. Roberts:

Things are returning to normal, including the teacher luncheons and the Book Fair. This is exciting! Thank you FoEES and parents for all of the support; it is uplifting!

It is the budget season: The district is looking at cuts at the Elementary level in Foreign Language and one of the 2 elementary school psych positions will be cut so the position will serve both EES and MMES. The state MCAS tests start on Friday, April 8th with grade 3 English starting the assessments. Students have completed practice tests. Tests will continue in May with Math and then Science tests later in the month.

EES sends a BIG thank you to Beth Walsh (parent volunteer) for providing the landscape design plan to beautify the front of EES. Look for more information about a fundraiser to buy a plant! Dr. Roberts is waiting on an okay from the Superintendent. Additionally, FoEES will work with Dr. Roberts and the Student Council to set up a date for planting, which will be a volunteer effort.

School Council is another great way to get involved at EES! The FoEES will need to have an election for the School Council (an advisory committee comprised of teachers and parents to work on the School Improvement Plan and budget considerations). The meetings are held monthly from October to May via Zoom. Current members include Kate Chroust, Jonti Rhodi, and Jessie Palm. We will need to advertise for May meeting selections and have an election in June for the 2022-23 school year.

Book Fair recap:

The Book Shop of Beverly Farms ran a successful in-person Book Fair this year. There were a few hiccups as this was everyone's first year. Overall, it was very easy to work with the staff from The Book Shop.

Details are still being totaled, however, the general estimate is about 20% profit. (- Venmo - \$1,128.41)

Notes for next year: Use stickers to clearly indicate who has purchased which books, additional help is needed by parents; plan to set up on Wednesday night (Y can use other spaces)

Playground Committee Update:

Currently, there is an effort to move forward with the landscaping design plan; have a list of plantings, but it is unclear how the FoEES will disburse the \$35,000 to the playground. The donation has been approved, but FoEES will have to disburse the money to MERSD.

- If there are concerns or additional information, email the playground committee.

Enrichment Opportunities:

- **Jerry Pallotta visit:** Samantha Silag is providing order forms and reminders by Monday, April 25. Jerry will sign previously purchased books; the author visit is a whole school event, organized by grade through the library on May 6, 2022.
- **Whalemobile visit:** This event is scheduled for May 12, 2022. The whale along with Ocean Alliance (snot bot, whale artifacts) is an all-day visit, and each class will sign-up for a visit. There is a preference for the outdoors, however, if there is inclement weather the whale will be indoors in ½ of the gym.
 - Next steps: funding sources: \$1000 was awarded FY20; there was an additional \$1000 (FoEES did not apply for the grant again in April 2020). An additional funding source is needed to cover the total cost: \$2400. (There are additional grants that are being applied for.)
- **Potato Hill visit:** This event is scheduled for 2 days in May (5/26 and 5/27) for grades 3/4/5 by class. The enrichment focuses on poetry. Next steps: FoEES/Potato Hill needs a letter of confirmation from Hooper Fund (\$1500) as this event is funded by a Hooper Fund grant.

Teacher Appreciation Update:

- Appreciation Week (chair: Hillary Mattison) is May 2-May 6 (Monday through Friday). The focus is: What do teachers mean to you? Each day will have a theme.
 - Monday Self-Care (discount to MAC and looking for donations of raffles, exercise class - Zoom, meditation); Another idea is to sell flowers for \$1 each. Students can give the flowers to their teachers. (Suzanne will connect with Joan Bediz supplier of flowers at wholesale prices)
 - Tuesday Hot Drinks and Baked Goods (K-cups donations and baked goods)
 - Wednesday Dinner on the Community (donations of food for teachers to eat/bring home; teachers can bring in take-home containers (donation of containers?); Review of the calendar - This is a half-day. Hilary will reach out to Melanie Healey.
 - Thursday (donation of ice cream from Down River // additional donations of fruit and whipped cream)

- Friday (note from families)
- This continues to develop as a great week to appreciate the staff at EES!

Community Read Update 2022:

The current suggestion for a Spring 2022 Community Read would be to embrace the chaos with a possible date of June 1. The FoEES has a hodgepodge of books. If possible, email Mrs. Cucuru and Ms. Dwyer to see if this works. FoEES will wait for a response from teachers. Kate Koch will coordinate the fall event with support from Theresa.

Grant Proposal Updates: Jess Torcicollo (update via email)

- New England Biolabs – Submitted grant for \$1395 for Whalemobile/Ocean Alliance. Will hear back the first week of May. I emailed her today to see if they can notify us as soon as possible since the timelines are so tight.
- Cell Signaling – due 5/1, will apply for STEM night 2023. I will use Jenna Ware’s past STEM night program to come up with a general idea/budget for the ask, then it can be adjusted as the event is planned by Enrichment.
- Hooper Fund – on track to apply for Community Read Day by 5/15. I believe I have the info needed from Mrs. Russo.
- Cape Ann Community Foundation – will apply for the Daisy Nell program for fall 2023, due by 5/15. Working with Mr. Carpenter.
- Still no response from M-E Rotary, will continue to follow up with them.

Business and Family Appeal:

- Family Appeal - no updates
- Business Appeal - the checks are slowly coming in. Successful mailing went out this year as only 3 letters have come back. There is a total so far of \$2450 in donations. Make note to send out to businesses again in October 2022.

Restaurant Night:

Corey Fealtman is chairing and coordinating these events. Thank you, Corey and let’s try to do more!

- Bravo night brought in \$300.
- CK Pearl night brought in \$500.
- Antique Table - waiting on information

Enrichment Update:

- Grade 3 is confirming River Cruise (June 10) and Cape Ann Museum trip to Shipbuilding Museum Virginia Burton Leigh (June) (might exceed their allocated \$1500 and may need to find additional funding for these activities)
- Grade 2 went to Woodmans already, however, there is no invoice yet. Ms. Kazmarcik’s class had publishing books included as part of additional funding. FoEES would like to reach out to Mr.

Burnett to see if he would like to add the publishing to the grade enrichment. Grade 2 is requesting funding for one bus to Chebacco Woods.

Treasurer's Update:

- **Taxes:** Jeff Soulard, an accountant, is volunteering to complete the 2021 FoEES taxes and will continue to do the taxes. The treasurer is looking into other ways to access QuickBooks.
 - QuickBooks: if we consider moving payments over to Jess's company we could save the monthly fee

Update to Bylaws:

FoEES will post the amendments to the Bylaws on the website for 3 weeks and hold a vote on the amendments at the May 2022 meeting.

Positions to be filled for next year:

- Secretary: Mandy Beausoleil possible or another volunteer
- Enrichment: Hillarie Mattinson (would like to do a co-chair)
- Community Read: Caitlin Cann
- Teacher Appreciation Luncheon: Betsy is asking around
- Social Media Coordinator: still open (Bannon and Brooks?)

Stipend:

Ms. Russo submitted the request and it will be processed. Maggie Gleason will send an email to staff to use their stipend before the end of the fiscal year (preferably by the beginning of June 2022).

K Playdate:

Rachel McInnis will host the K Playdate this summer (August 2022). More information to come.

New Funding Requests:

Ms. Kazmarcik placed a funding request for Story Jumper (grade 2) books to be published. The cost is \$318.59. Suzanne made a motion to approve this request; Maggie seconded. The motion passed. Heather will send a check to Ms. Kazmarcik.

Prior Meeting minutes approval:

The minutes from the March 2022 meeting were approved. The minutes from the February 2022 meeting were approved.

Betsy McKeen made a motion to adjourn and Maggie Gleason seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Next meeting: May 2, 2022 at 7:30 pm (Zoom meeting)