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**Friends of Essex Elementary School Meeting Minutes**

**January 5, 2023 -- In-Person/Zoom meeting**

**Attendance:**

**In-person:** Betsy McKeen-President; Rachel McInnis-Social Media Coordinator; Hillary Mattison - Enrichment; Sheila McAdams - Principal

**Via Zoom:** Bradley Cooke- Secretary; Beth Prince - Kindergarten parent; Beth Kelley - 1st grade Teacher

**Welcome/Introductions:**

Betsy McKeen called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

**Welcome/remarks from Mrs. McAdams**

Mrs. McAdams shared that January is a busy month and next week’s newsletter will be packed with lots of things. Some upcoming events of note: Kindergarten registration will open at the end of January, midyear iReady assessments are at the end of January, the district budget meeting is on 1/24, and in March EES will be presenting their proposed action plan to the school committee. The school committee presentation usually involves both some students and parents as well as staff. In anticipation of this, Sheila is looking to hold a brief discussion during our next FofEES meeting in February in order to provide some additional voices and feedback. There are also some self-reflective surveys with staff and parent voices on the student council which will be contributing to the school committee presentation as well.

The 5th grade musical has been announced: Alice @ Wonderland. Solo auditions are the 12th.

Bradley Cooke asked Sheila if Kindergarten registration will require proof of residency if siblings are already in the district. Sheila said “Yes,” and noted that this will be made clear in the paperwork that is shared with families.

Betsy McKeen asked if the list of deadlines for staff request submissions had been shared. Sheila said that it has but no requests have come in lately. She has added this topic to her agenda for the next staff meeting as there are definitely needs around the school and she is wondering what is slowing the process down. She will report back.

**Enrichment Update**

Hilary Mattison (Enrichment coordinator) reported that 2nd grade went to Woodmans, and K and 1st have signed up for Acton Science Workshop to come. She sent a December reminder to staff and she’ll do a January reminder as well. Hillary noted that if teachers are worried about making an expensive request they should still ask because we are at a point in the year where we can flex the money between grade levels when necessary.

**Grant Writer’s Update**

Jess Torcicolo shared her updates via email. They are as follows:

* The Essex Cultural Council grant has been approved → $2500 for Daisy Nell
* She got on MusicDrivesUs grant list for grant cycle notifications
* Jess hopes to reach out to Spaulding Education Fund but she can't find any info about them online and their website appears to be down. Does anyone know any of the history there?
* No leads for additional Change is Simple funding despite spending a few hours looking.

Sheila shared that CIS did not get the funding this year from the Mass Cultural Council. This means that Jess *may* want to contact them for a grant for something *else.*

Sheila asked if Jess had applied for the Big Yellow School Bus Grant. The November minutes note that there are no available grants for this year, but Jess has signed up for notifications for any future grant opportunities with them.

**Treasurer Update**

Heather Harrell shared her updates via email. They are as follows:

* The Polar Plunge has brought in $185 in donations so far, but we anticipated $1000
* Our first restaurant night of the year brought in $385, we are at 26% to our anticipated $1500 for the year
* No new Family Appeal or Business Appeals have come through since before the last meeting
* There have been no new funding requests since Lindsay's which was paid to her and check cleared
* We anticipated $31,800 for income for the year and are at $29,864 (94%)!!! Largely in part to the success of the Clam Race
* We anticipated $30,815 for expenses for the year and are at $11,875.37 (39%). This is due to no Teacher Stipends or Field Trip requests coming through. We also saved some on the Hoe Down (that was pure profit).
* Outdoor playground furniture\* should be delivered this month!

\*Sheila noted that we will need people to help assemble playground supplies (mostly tables and benches).

**Polar Plunge Planning**

Betsy shared that we will need to pay $240 for police. She spoke with the Chief of Police about her concerns of interfering with the clammers on a Saturday morning, but he does not think it will be an issue.

Suggestion from Sheila - first day of summer and have kids run into the ocean?

**Messy Art Night**

This is officially scheduled for February 3rd (Friday Night) from 5:30 - 7:30 pm. Elle Woulfe, Jade Gideon and Natasha St Clair are planners. So far there are six tables of art projects set. Elle Woulfe is working on getting a few more tables if possible. We will need to help them make a signupgenius for volunteers. It was suggested that we send invites to the local preschools, as well as local artists to possibly participate.

Another suggestion is to have a committee be created to select 10 things created from the night to go in the school’s display case.

**Book Fair Planning**

This is planned for March 22-24 (WTF) and will be through Beverly Bookshop. Dates have been updated on our Friends website. Might be a busy week for 5th grade parents with ice cream social that week plus the musical the following week. Jeremy is taking over the book fairs from now on.

**Restaurant Night**

The next one will be in March at The Farm.

**New Idea for Enrichment: Intergenerational Group in collaboration with Senior Center (Jessie Palm)**

Jessie (4th grade parent) emailed Betsy with a proposal for an Enrichment possibility. EES will need some clarification re sponsorship.

Sheila shared that EES will be providing Kristin at the Senior Center some STEM related activities for February break so grandparents can do things with their grandkids. Sheila will also remind her of performances the Senior Center may wish to attend.

**Staff Appreciation Lunch Planning**

Amanda DesRosiers is helping to run these on Wednesday, March 15 (sponsored by K and 1) and Tuesday, May 2 (sponsored by 2nd and 3rd). Sheila noted that this was a half-day.

**Stem Night**

There was a proposal to have a more broad STEM night that includes elementary kids through high school. However, EES opted to stick to our April date when Jenna is available to lead. Next year 2024 will be district wide.

**Family and Business Appeal Update**

Business Appeal = $1350

Family Appeal = $2200

We should send out a business appeal in the spring just like we did last year. Let’s plan to do so in March or April.

**New Funding Requests**

None.

**Bus Incident**

Bus 5 → One bus driver had to leave at the end of December. Kids from this bus came home upset because the new driver taped off the back of the bus to prevent kids from sitting in the back. Sheila noted it’s a brand new driver and this was likely her response to some behavioral issues. She explained that behavior problems should be handled internally rather than by the bus driver and she would follow up.

Beth Prince, parent, also expressed concerns about Bus 5 and will be emailing Sheila details.

Betsy McKeen made a motion to adjourn, and Bradley Cooke seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 pm. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Next meeting: Thursday Feb 2, 2023 at 7:30 pm in person and on Zoom.**