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**Friends of Essex Elementary School Meeting Minutes**

September, 2023 -- Zoom meeting

**Attendance:**

Zoom: Betsy McKeen, Mandy Beausoleil-CO Presidents; Maggie Gleason-VP; Sheila McAdams - School Principal; Rachel McInnis-Social Media Coordinator; Jessica Torcicollo-Grant Writer; Hilary Mattison-Enrichment Coordinator; Beth Kelley-1st grade teacher; Rich Carpenter-music teacher Parents: Kristen Mailo, Caroline Gressler, Brandy Markey, Abigail Fay

**Welcome/Introductions:**

Maggie Gleason called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

**Welcome/remarks from Mrs. McAdams**

Students and Staff are happy to be back despite the heat. Smiles all around!

* MERSD district is putting together a monthly highlight of something from the schools. It’s our turn this month and Sheila is hoping we can do Happy as a Clam. Need a few bullets, a quote and a picture by 9/11.
* School council members were all new last year and we do not need any elections this year. Would like all formats to be the same through each building. Candidates who want to run should have info 14 days before open house so we can vote on open house night. Maybe stagger when terms start and finish.
* Sheila knows about bus trouble and working it out.
* Having some trouble with lunch. Students bringing lunch but then eating school lunch. Sheila working with lunch staff.
* Maggie Gleason said all the updates to the school look great!

**Approval of last meeting's minutes**

* Our June meeting minutes were approved.
* Discussion of Zoom Account.
* Betsy McKeen used her work account for this zoom but Sheila stated the school has purchased a zoom account.

**Calendar Planning**

All listed on Friends of EES website but need to finalize some events. Betsy and Mandy will update as need be.

**Kindergarten Playdate Wrap up**

Jess Webb sent an email saying everything went well. Kids played on the playground and Sheila came and spoke to the group. Jess and her daughter Hannah and Beth Prince and her daughter Maya led tours around the school. Sheila had met with Jess and Beth to give ideas on talking points of tour. Caroline Gressler was there with her twin boys and they loved it! Abigail Fay also commented and said they thought it was very helpful.

**Pre-First Day Welcome Wrap up**

This was in place of the first Day Coffee. Since more families get out of their vehicles on the day-before classroom visits than on the first day of school, Sheila thought this would be a better fit.

**Christina Bruce Photo Fundraiser wrap up**

Maggie Gleason was the first family to go! Christina Bruce thought this was a great fundraiser but next time there she would likely not be able offer such a large discount. August was the only time she could do it.

**School Supply Fundraiser wrap up**

Hilary Mattison said they tried a different method with 4”team members” organizing, each with a different task, but there were some challenges. Also, the turnout was lower. Need school list sooner to price out a flier for parents. Does it make sense to continue this? If we went to a business/company might make less money because they take a bigger cut. Some items were bought for Sheila's closet as well as school supplies. Still need to check on returns that were made for extra supplies. M&T bank and Beverly Bootstraps helped with some items in Sheila's closet. Supply closet is there for academic needs.

Beth Kelley was asked why the lists were finalized so late. The teacher lists stay somewhat the same but they come up with new ideas. We ask for the list for the first week in May. Sheila was looking to see if we could bulk buy and thinks she may have held this up.

Sheila said she will check with Memorial for what business they use. Staples might have a program we can look into.

**Happy as a Clam Update**

Going well! More sponsors than we ever had! Incredible community event and kids seem to love it. Biggest fundraiser for the school! Need volunteers! Laurie Carlson from the MERSD helps get student volunteers. We will reach out to Essex Tech for possible volunteers too. Flier going out on Monday to keep parents aware of what happens the week up to the race. There is a committee (Betsy, Jenna Morris, Mackenzie Poulos and Sarah O’Connor) and Betsy will be more of a supporting role next year.

**Family Directory**

Participation is ok. 2nd and 3rd grades have the most.

**Hoedown Planning**

* Friday 10/20, from 6-7pm in conjunction with the Book Fair.
* Need volunteers for playing music and taking pictures. Lisa Shotwell helping but could have a conflict that night. Sheila has some families in mind that she will reach out to..
* Daisy Neil to come and teach during 2nd grade classes. Friends of MEPA was able to get two Hooper grants each for $1500 for Daisy Neil, but we will need $1000 more.
* Sheila gave the green light to start with Daisy Neil, if Friends of EES can’t cover extra fee, she will look into funds she has.
* Guest Arts Instructor named instead of Composer in Residence.

**Book Fair Planning**

Jess Webb, Laura Campbell and Maggie Gleason will run the Scholastic Book Fair. They will have a training to learn how that book fair needs to be run. Book Fair will run October 20-22, with Friday night being with Hoedown. Also, planning a book fair with Beverly Book Shop week of May 13th. Hoping to have 5th grade ice cream social at same time.

**Messy Art Night Planning**

Elle and Dana Woulfe are parents in charge this year. There is no date set yet.

**Enrichment Update**

* Hilary Mattison has multiple options for each grade. She will reach out to teachers with appropriate ideas.
* Kindergarten-Mrs. Yutkins bringing in an art workshop.
* 3rd 4th and 5th - Ocean Explorers Program Gloucester maritime. 3 visits for each grade Different stations with one station at Gloucester location. Theme for each year. $300 for bus.
* Kestrel possible for 1st grade.
* Change is Simple will not be coming to the school this year.

**Grant Writer’s Update**

Received grant from Institution of Savings which will go to Community Read.

We did not receive Cell Signaling funds for Mass Audubon. We will try to apply for Stars, Cell Signaling and Bank Gloucester in the next few months.

**Treasurer’s Update**

Supply fundraisers numbers will be out next month. Some HAAC donations came in during the month of May and need to be put in July to reflect the 2023-2024 budget. In May we tried to get all deposits in and did not split.

Teacher Stipends: Mrs Demitri and Ms Sartell used their full amount and Ms Costa used a small amount.

Heather reminded all that she is in her 3rd year of being treasurer and would love to work with a new co-treasurer to pass along the position.

**Family and Business Appeal Planning**

Family Appeal will be sent out via email and student folders in the month of October.

Maggie Gleason discussed coming 1 hour prior to the next meeting to send out business appeals.

**New Funding requests**

Ms Kasmarcik is requesting funding for a new classroom rug for $549.

Maggie will reach out to her with other options.

Betsy made a motion, with Maggie seconded to postpone the vote on this request and re visit at next meeting.

Maggie Gleason motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 pm and Betsy seconded. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Next meeting: Thursday October 5th, 2023 at 7:30 pm in person and on Zoom.