TOAST PTA Minutes 10/20/14 6:30pm

1. Call to Order— Laurie Kirchman made a call to order and convened the meeting.
2. Approval of Minutes-- Minutes were reviewed; Emily Westin made a motion to approve the minutes, which were adopted unanimously.
3. Report from Principal-- Principal Pleet was not present. Laurie Kirchman said she could bring necessary items to her attention.
4. Report from Officers
   1. Corresponding Secretary Susan Googins had no comments.
   2. President Laurie Kirchman (LK) mentioned the school notifier (snn) and suggested that parents sign up and spread the word.
      1. Parents complained about miscommunication, disorganization, and lack of appropriate notification, both in terms of the recent Giffen evacuation and events generally. One parent questioned whether there was an official Communications officer who could centrally coordinate communications to parents? LK said she would take this suggestion to the principal and brought up the idea of hospitality volunteers as an intermediary solution.
   3. Vice President Carrie Coddington (CC) reviewed the fundraising report and announced receipts of $4156 from the fall fundraiser, which is approximately $1k over last year’s fundraiser. She also mentioned the upcoming read-athon, Pennies for PTA jar, passive donations/corporate-target, price shopper, etc. there was widespread support for an Election Day bake sale.
   4. Treasurer Emily Leckman Westin (ELW) thanked the budget committee for their contributions and reviewed the budget. She also mentioned that there will be an increased focus on various fundraising efforts, which should cover the increased expenditures this year. The most noteworthy increase was in classroom contributions, which will be expanded so that additional staff will be eligible to receive reimbursement for classroom- related purchases. She also mentioned the appreciation committee and new safety- related expenditures, which were raised at the last meeting. These items account for approximately half of the total budget. The remainder was evenly split among events. Also, $1,500 was donated for ballroom dancing. The “Other” category includes various items that aren't the PTA’s money to spend, like PTA dues, Founder’s Day, recycling program, babysitting for meetings, postage, miscellaneous, etc., and $100 for administrative expenses such as a table cover, locked cabinet, etc. for PTA expenses and PTA officer training.
      1. Jack Cornell (JC) asked about contingency funds for unanticipated expenses. ELW mentioned the emergency fund, which is well- funded. Jack mentioned replacing the flag and related equipment, which was raised at the last meeting.
      2. A parent raised a question about grants, which related to the $300 dollar grant for the outdoor learning center.
      3. A parent made a motion to take a vote, and the budget unanimously passed.
   5. Working Group Reports-- LK mentioned BLT, school board meetings, and other meetings.
      1. BLT Meeting –JC mentioned that there were technological difficulties, but it mainly centered on programs that the school is considering purchasing. He said the two programs, Study Island and Reading Eggs, are centered on students' testing scores and that programs can be used at home and school and that other schools saw a considerable increase in scores. These comments were echoed by Ms. Shoop, who also mentioned upcoming musical, which is still pending. BLT meetings are on the second Monday of the month. The next meeting is on Nov. 10th. LK stressed the importance of having a PTA representative present at these meetings.
      2. Outdoor Learning Center- The money is in reserve. Art Flynn wishes to install a rain collection system, and a parent has volunteered to spearhead this project. A motion for a vote was made to authorize this spending, and it was unanimously passed.
      3. JC volunteered to help install the greenhouse, which was previously purchased. A motion unanimously passed to allocate $250 for cement for greenhouse installation.
      4. Operation Appreciation--Holly Roberts mentioned that the appreciation committee has convened and will decorate a door and will have a drawing.
      5. Recess-- LK, said that no working group has met yet; however, the question that remains is who is responsible for recess? A parent pointed out that the principal's stated priorities seem counter to the school policy as carried out. Parents complained about the lack of recess, that children are getting penalized for talking at lunch, and that if a child misbehaves recess gets taken away as punishment. A parent suggested a meeting with all stakeholders, including cafeteria monitors, the principal, parents, and teachers. LK said she would raise these issues with the principal.
      6. PTA Events-- CC mentioned forming a group to plan upcoming PTA events, including movie nights, family fun day, etc. Also, 2620 box tops were submitted, which will net $260. It was also noted that box tops can only be sent twice a year through the school. Shop Rite does electronic box tops. CC said that information on this will be sent home with students and that a PDF is available on the PTA website.
      7. Additional—A new working group was suggested to allocate after school funds.
      8. Unfinished Business- A motion was made to elect a new recording secretary, Nichole Katz was unanimously elected.
   6. New Business—
      1. Harvest fest—The event is for all grades and was planned by sixth graders. The event will be held this Friday at 5:30 in the gym, and help is needed to run the activities, which will occur before the dance, which will begin at 6:15.
      2. PbIS—This event is scheduled for November 7 and will include a movie and popcorn party for scholars in second grade and below. Scholars in third grade and up will have different activities. Volunteers are needed for this event as many teachers will be absent.
      3. Scholastic Book Fair-- Book delivery is on Tuesday. Sales begin Wednesday and end on Friday. The book fair will be open all day for the duration of the fair, which will require volunteers, especially in the morning.
      4. Announcements
         1. Chat and Chew will be on Tuesday at 12pm; the school board forum will be on Wednesday October 22nd at 6pm; school pictures will be on Friday October 24th, and the Halloween parade will be on Friday October 31st at 9:30am. Regarding the latter, volunteers are encouraged to help pre- k and kindergarten students to put on their costumes. Parents pointed out an inconsistency regarding parent help in the event of rain, as a notice stated that in the event of inclement weather, no parade will be held, and parents will not be allowed into the building. A parent suggested some sort of hospitality wear, such as a button or ribbon so that visitors would be able to easily recognize PTA volunteers.