

MINUTES

Ross Elementary PTO General Membership Meeting September 4, 2019

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

President Erin Sekerak introduced herself to the General Membership and then introduced the 2019-2010 PTO Board members who were in attendance: Jamie Seelman (President Elect); Courtney Rohaly (Past President and Fundraising Chair); Catherine Reagan (Treasurer); Sharon Moran (Secretary); Lisa Weaver (Member-at-Large); Jocelyn McCarty (Member-at-Large); Bridget McCourt (Member-at-large).

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AND WELCOME: Principal Beall welcomed the Membership. He said the year has gotten off to a great start. There had been a slight hiccup with some playground equipment but now everything is fixed and in good order. It is a good time to be thinking about and preparing for improving the playground in the future. There are many exciting events to look forward to this year including the Fun Run, the 5th grade tree planting trip, assemblies and Start with Hello week. Students will also be going over the Standard Response Protocol and learning the school's approach to safety within the building. He is glad to be back and was happy to see everyone at the iPad and curriculum nights and is looking forward to a wonderful year.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Catherine Regan reviewed the PTO Budget (a copy of which was provided to those in attendance). She indicated that the budget was put together over the summer. She highlighted the following items.

- a. The PTO paid \$420 to cover the cost of some 6th grade gym uniforms.
- b. The PTO gave each teacher a \$50 gift card to begin the year with a bit of help covering the cost of classroom expenses.
- c. Kona Ice and CDG Sports were part of this year's Back to School Social, the cost of which was covered by the PTO.
- d. The PTO also covered the cost of teacher appropriation requests which amounted to \$1,902.52.
- e. The budget is in a healthy state, like any budget it will ebb and flow but overall the PTO is in a good position to continue to support and provide programs, clubs and events throughout the year. The PTO also wants to keep the budget strong as plans begin for a new playground in the upcoming year.

PTO PLANS FOR THE YEAR: Erin Sekerak highlighted some of the exciting events the PTO has planned for this year including: assemblies for the whole school, Authors Day and Field Day.

The PTO will again be covering the cost of fieldtrip buses and will once again be offering dance and a variety of clubs and providing recess toys and equipment.

PLAYGROUND : Missy Chafin was introduced as the Chair of the new playground committee. The playground is old and includes a piece of equipment that the children are not permitted to utilize and so the time is right to begin planning for a new playground. Missy indicated that she has spoken to people who have planned and built playgrounds in the City of Pittsburgh and received a list of their favorite vendors. She has spoken to Mr. Beall and Mrs. Stretch and gotten their input as to what their ideal playground would include. She and the playground committee will be working to separate the playground building process into phases and she hopes that they will have enough money for the first phase to begin around the first of the year. The school district will cover the cost of installation and mulch but will not pay for any of the equipment, so the PTO must raise the money necessary to cover that.

T-SHIRTS: The PTO will provide every student with a t-shirt this year. Each grade will have a different color and they will be asked to wear their T-shirt for school events such as spirit days, field trips, assemblies and Field Day. Catherine Reagan suggested that it would be a good idea for students to keep their shirts in their locker so they have them readily available on the occasions where they are asked to wear them. Students should receive their shirts on the morning of the Fun Run.

DIRECTORY: There will again be an online Directory this year. The company that provided the online Directory last year was bought out by a new company, so there is a new app. Michela Barbarino has taken the lead on the Directory and is working through the new app. She will be getting all the contact information from the school office and will upload it into the new Directory. PTO email reminders and updates will go out periodically via the Directory. As in years past, families can unsubscribe if they do not wish to get these emails. The online Directory should be available later this month.

PARTIES: Jamie Seelman let the membership know that once again this year there will be three classroom parties: Halloween on Oct. 31, Winter Holiday on Dec. 20 and Valentine's Day on Feb. 14. Head Homeroom Parent volunteers and party volunteers are once again needed to plan and run the parties. The volunteer form is available on the Ross PTO website and a link to the form also went out in the weekly E-link. If there are multiple volunteers for Head Homeroom Parent a lottery will be held at the next PTO meeting to draw names. All parties must adhere to the District guidelines for food and drinks. All volunteers will be sent the guidelines and they are also available on the District website. Anyone wishing to volunteer at a party must have their clearances on file with the office. Volunteers for Head Homeroom Parent or the Halloween Party, must have their clearances into the office by Oct. 1. Clearances are good for five years. The school office can inform parents when their clearances will expire.

FIELD DAY: Field Day will be May 15 with a rain date of May 22. Jamie Seelman indicated that Field Day would involve the same type of activities as last year, with games and centers that the students will rotate through. She also noted that the date for Field Day on the district calendar is incorrect and so everyone should make a note that the correct Field Day date is May 15 (with May 22 as the rain date).

FUNDRAISERS: The Fun Run is scheduled for this Sept. 20. This is the biggest fundraiser for the PTO and families are encouraged to have their students raise money through sponsorships which can be either flat donations or donations of a certain amount per lap. The Fun Run will occur during school hours and each class will run for 30-45 minutes. Please remember to have your students wear sunscreen and bring a water bottle on the day of the Fun Run. Money raised by the 5th and 6th grade students will go towards their specific class fundraising goals.

Approximately \$75 per student is needed to fund all the programs and items the PTO provides. If families do not want to participate in the various fundraising events and efforts throughout the year they are encouraged to write a check for \$75 and donate it as part of the Fun Run. This is the most effective way to donate, as all the money goes directly to the Ross PTO (there are no costs involved). This year fundraising is especially crucial as the PTO is trying to fund a new playground.

There will once again be monthly restaurant fundraisers with the first one taking place in October at Chipotle. The PTO will also again sell Butter Braids, with orders due in October and delivery prior to Thanksgiving break. There will also be a Spring Candy Sale.

ASSEMBLIES: Mr. Beall sent out a survey to the teachers to assess what they would like to see in future assemblies. Of those who responded, 75% said they would like to see something done on Kindness or anti-Bullying. Jocelyn McCarty said that she is still exploring different ideas for assemblies that would promote a message of kindness. Some teachers had suggested Jim Basketball Jones. The membership noted that the school has done several previous assemblies featuring Jim Basketball Jones. Possible assemblies featuring the local Ross Police, educational information about Native American culture and one that would be purely for entertainment were discussed.

BOOK FAIR: There will be two Scholastic Book Fairs this year. Money raised in these Book Fairs goes towards the PTO. The first Book Fair will be in November during Parent/ Teacher Conferences. This Book Fair will likely be in the hall near the school entrance. The second Book Fair will be in February during the Celebration of Learning and this one will be located in the auditorium. Each class will have an opportunity to come and shop at the February Book Fair during school hours. Families also can shop during the Celebration of Learning. Volunteers will

be needed to staff both Book Fairs. There are some good deals at the Book Fairs and the PTO gets a percentage of the sale proceeds so everyone is encouraged to volunteer and come out and shop.

HOLIDAY SHOPPE: The yearly Holiday Shoppe is in need of a new volunteer to lead this event. The Holiday Shoppe usually runs during Parent/ Teacher Conferences, allowing students to shop while parents attend conferences. If no one volunteers to lead this event, it may not occur this year.

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.