PTO Meeting, Little River K-8 School

January 10, 2022 via Zoom

Attendees: Maren Schreiber, Stacey Swanson, Easley Schack, Seronda Robinson, Andy Crutchfield, Cassie Lewis, Cory Hogans, Lesley Watson, Kayley Talbert, Martha Camacho, Anjelique Jeter, Isaac Castro, Christina Randall, Lynette Williams, Jeremy W.

Meeting Began 6:02 pm.

PTO Updates:

1. Hospitality—Maren Schreiber

-Distributed holiday gift bags

-Provided hand warmers for carline; hope to purchase more in the future

1. Winter Break Bingo

-Bingo sheets and water bottle labels sent home with students before break.

-Still collecting Bingo sheets for a prize drawing.

1. Board Nominations 2022-2023

-It’s time to submit nominations for next year’s PTO board.

-Positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary are all taking nominations.

-Committee chairs needed for GoPlaySave fundraiser and Book Fair.

1. Crayons 2 Calculators

-Volunteers needed for February 15 and April 12 10:30-11:30 at Crayons 2 Calculators warehouse on Bacon Street.

-Great opportunity to support teachers with needed supplies.

1. Book Fair

-In-person Book Fair discussed for April. Dr. Hogans thinks we will know if this is possible as we get closer to April. Dr. Robinson added that we can’t currently say what the situation will be in April, but Dr. Hogans is correct that the current surge is from the holiday season, though spring break may also have effects on cases in March and April.

-April 11 prior to Easter weekend may work for Book Fair; volunteers will be needed if in person.

-Minimum of 2 volunteers needed for each shift, 1 to manage the cash register and 1 for assistance.

-An outdoor mobile book fair may also be a possibility, but would require set-up. Experienced Book Fair volunteers think the outside fair may work and would allow parents to attend.

-Dr, Hogans cited the December Vendor Fair as positive precedence for outdoor events.

-Question: Could we have any time for Book Fair sales over a weekend so that working parents could attend? The weekend before Easter weekend (April 9-10) could work if materials were delivered Friday, April 8, and the fair could be held the following week. Dr. Hogans added that April 14 (Thursday) is Leadership Day, which will be virtual again this year, and could tie in with Book Fair.

1. Spring Vendor Show/Garage Sale

-Event under discussion for May.

-Would allow vendors or individuals to buy a table for $25 and sell products or garage sale items; vendors donate an item for auction.

-Tie-in with fundraiser for Nothing Bundt Cakes? We could hold a presale for cakes and have them available for pick-up at the event, plus additional cakes available for purchase.

1. Spirit Wear

-Gauging interest in Little River spirit wear sale. We could also tie-in this sale with the Spring Vendor show by having items available for pick-up or purchase.

-Interest in selling shirts (preferably with more fit/sizing options) and Spirit Socks (socks with Little River beaver).

-In the past, spirit wear has been purchased through the school office.

-We can explore website options for creating items, such as Zazzle.

1. Dine-Out Nights

-Zaxby’s Dine-Out Nights scheduled for January 24, February 21, and March 21.

-We are interested in looking into other restaurant options for Dine-Out Nights. Please let us know if you have an idea or a contact.

1. Dates to Know

-Spirit Days:

-1/14: Pattern Day

-2/4: Wacky Tacky Day

-2/14: Red and White Day

-No School for students 1/17, 1/18, and 1/19.

-Report Cards: 1/26

-Next PTO Zoom Meeting 2/7

-Early Release 2/9

1. Other Questions and Concerns

-Minutes will be posted to PTO Weebly page.

-Question: Can PTO meetings be recorded for parents who are unable to attend? Recording is possible, but we need to notify participants in advance.

-Some students did not bring home water bottle labels or Winter Bingo sheet; Mr. C will follow up with teachers.

1. Q & A with Dr. Hogans

I. Discussion of the schedule change that took place on Friday, 1/7

-There was a high number of Covid-related staff absences. Administration needed to rearrange the schedule to cover teacher absences by transferring teachers from Encore and Discovery classes to general education classrooms. There is a district-wide shortage of substitute teachers, as well as bus drivers, and many are not available due to being in vulnerable age groups for Covid illness. On Friday 1/7, the case surge resulted in a large number of absent staff. They have not previously needed to change the daily schedule to accommodate absences, and so they wanted to ensure the Little River community understood why the change took place. They don’t anticipate this situation arising again, but they now have the experience of making this change if the need arises. Many of the absent staff members were able to return after the weekend and Encore and Discovery classes resumed as of Monday 1/10.

-The priority when a staff member is absent is to have a qualified substitute teacher to take their place, but if none are available they use internal support staff to cover, and then they may split classrooms between other sections for coverage.

-Demand for substitute teacher is extremely high. Administration welcomes applicants for substitute teachers for those who can answer the call.

-Legislature took away the authority of school districts to close school buildings, but there are certain metrics that would allow for closure.

II. Adjusted Covid Protocols

-On December 27, revised protocols were implemented immediately with staff and student return on January 4.

-Reduced quarantine period for cases

-District sent a robo-call with new protocols. Dr. Hogans opened the floor for questions; currently no questions about new protocols.

-Meeting called with School Improvement Leadership Team for Wednesday, January 12 to discuss new protocols, which parent leaders can share with other parents.

III. Other Questions

-Question asked about backpack weight; what can we do, in particular for younger students, about excessively heavy backpacks? Can students who don’t use Chromebooks at home leave them at school, since this is the major factor weighing down their backpacks (1st grade used as example)

-Dr. Hogans has previously discussed backpack weight with Middle grades, but now looking at the issue with Elementary students. Discussion of what is weighing down backpacks; further discussion will be needed for this concern.

Meeting Conclusion

-Please reach out with any further questions or concerns.

Meeting adjourned by Maren Schreiber at 6:55pm.

Minutes prepared by Kayley Talbert