**PTO Meeting Minutes- August 12th, 2019**

Attending: Julie Kent, Leah Vickers, Stephanie Riley, Bevin Sekora, Erica McRae, Corey Hogans, Andy Crutchfield, Kristie Crutchfield, Renee Gilman, Jason Torian, Theresa Torian, Stefanie Derby, William Hill, Tamisha Palmer, Michelle Schalliol, Ashley Turley, Kelly Hallmets, Josh Cox, Sarah Cox, Cassie Lewis, Kim Perry, Alicia Lawler, and Barbara O’Brien.

1. **Introductions**
2. **PTO Overview**: We reviewed what PTO does to support our school, including providing teachers with supplies and support. We reviewed specific fundraisers and events as well, and expressed that the PTO is open to sharing all PTO information with everyone.
3. **Updates** (from our previous meeting):
4. **Chair Changes:** Our new membership chair is Michelle Schalliol. The new hospitality chair is Renee Gilman.
5. **Spring Carnival**: It was originally scheduled to be May 2, from 10:00am - 2:00pm. We discussed moving this event to a Friday evening but the chair expressed concerns due to conflicts with the afterschool program and school day disturbances with set-up.  We are now considering moving the event to Saturday evening, possibly 3:00pm-7:00pm. We would need to consider available natural light and prioritize outside clean-up/breakdown before inside clean-up/breakdown. We also need to look into the policy for the inflatables for rental hours and pick-up times. There’s also a family at Little River who owns an “inflatable” business. We’d like to look into the possibility of renting inflatables from them. Beth and Tracy were not available to comment. We will reach out to them later.
6. **Loyalty/Box Tops**:
   1. Remind folks to link/relink VIC cards. We’ll look into whether we can hand out information at Harris Teeter locations encouraging community members to support Little River through their VIC purchases.
   2. BoxTops now offers an app you can use to scan receipt. In some cases one may be able to turn in BoxTops and also scan receipts for double points.
   3. Other PTOs report earning Box Tops points by scanning Aldi receipts as well, even when specific Box Tops items aren’t purchased.
   4. We plan on considering “Coke Points”. We use to collect Coke Points and decided to discontinue as the process was tedious and the rewards limited to a catalog. Typically sports balls were the only thing earned through the catalog. We will look into the Coke Points program again to see if the rewards policy has changed. If we decide to pursue it we will need volunteers to help enter in codes.

4. **Teacher Funds Update**: The projected amount we will provide for teacher funds this year is

$8,525. In addition, we provide a $400 allotment for specials (art, music, technology, media, PE). Money is also set aside for events such as Science Day, the talent show, and PTO performances. All of this adds $3,725. For the fifth grade and middle school celebration fund, a  $400 expense line has been changed/added for 5th and 8th grade. After speaking to an 8th grade and 5th grade representative, both agree to work together to figure out how the $400 will be distributed for graduation/celebration needs.

5. **Safe Schools and Wellness**: In the past the PTO and school have taken turns buying batteries for the defibrillator. The PTO no longer carries that expense. We’ve adjusted the budget to $200.

6. **Fun Run**: We discussed whether it would be a good choice for our school, highlighting positives such as other schools’ successes with it and the fact that an outside company handles almost all of the work required; and negatives such as the large chunk of proceeds that go back to the company and the possibility of disturbing instructional time with frequent pep rallies. We can look into various companies to figure out our options and possibilities of customizing the program.

7. **Beaver Mascot**: We’d like to hold Penny Wars in order to raise money for the purchase of a school mascot costume. Penny Wars work by students in various grades adding money to jars. Pennies count towards positive points. All silver change forces pennies to be subtracted according to the value of the silver coins. For example, placing a quarter in a jar erases the value of 25 pennies. Silver change does not count for the total earned. Only pennies are counted. Therefore, the hope is that rivals put silver change in opponents jars hoping to devalue their collection of pennies while collecting as many pennies as possible, (as quickly as possible), for their own jars. The winning grade level will submit names for the mascot. Administration has final approval of the Mascot’s name. The cost for the mascot costume is $500. We may recruit middle school students to roll coins.

8. **Membership:** Membership was listed as a single line item but encompasses several things. This complicates record keeping as it doesn't specify what we're bringing in for membership, separately from what we’re spending on branding and food purchases for Open House.  We need separate line items for each of those categories. We estimate that we will need $500 for branding and food purchases at Open House. For Open House, in the past, one hotdog, 1 bag of chips, and 1 drink is included in a $5.00 membership. Without a membership the cost is $3.00 We will think through this further before Open House.

*(IDEA: Create a Sign-up Genius asking for donations for food items for Open House. Charge $5 and you automatically get a membership even if you just want to share your name and not your contact info. Maybe add a cookie to the meal. If you purchase an entire meal you only have to pay $1 for each additional item. Otherwise, hotdogs are $2 each and other items are $1 each)*

IV. **Reimbursement Checks**: We have received our first reimbursement check from the money that was stolen from the PTO last year. We should be getting a check back every month. We no longer have a debit card and require double signatures on each check.

V. **Kindergartener Parent Packs**:  Attendees worked together to create “goody bags” for kindergarten parents to receive on the first day of school. They included packages of tissues, Lifesaver candies, an encouraging poem, and a short supportive message from the PTO.

VI. **Family Night Out**:

* Julie Kent is trying to finalize dates. Hopefully they will be in place by Open House. So far 6 out of 11 are set up.
* Tutti Fruitti will have a “Welcome Back” night for Little River next Monday night , August 19, from 5:00pm - 9:00pm. We’re trying to secure Hope Valley Diner Family night, at the same time. They’ve never had a family night event in the past. Other restaurants in the area are not an option at this time. Pop's Pizza was attempted in the past. They didn’t donate money back to the school due to sells not increasing from their norm, although LR families did attend the event.
* Little River has been on a waiting list for 3 years to have a family night at Chipotle. Chipotle give 33% of sales back to the school. City BBQ gives 25% back. We have a parent representative who may be willing to reach out to these restaurants on our behalf.
* Family Nights will be the 3rd week of each month if possible. These are the dates we’re aware of so far:

Monday, September 16 ~ Pomodoros

Thursday,  December 19 ~ Picnic

Monday,  January 20 ~ Pomodoros

Monday, April 20 ~ Pomodoros

Thursday, May 21 ~ Picnic

VII. **School Dances:**

1. **Glow Dance:** In the past the PTO has organized and sponsored the Glow Dance. The Art Club usually sells concessions. $50 in the budget covers glow supplies to be passed out at the dance. Andy Crutchfield (our AP) usually DJs the dances. We are scheduling this year’s Glow Dance for Friday, February 21 from 5:30-7:00pm for K-5 and 7:30-9:00pm for 6-8 (middle school). We will need to coordinate with after school in order to prepare the gym for the dance.
2. **Past Dances**:  5th grade held a sock hop in past. There was also a Snow Ball. This past year we had a separate K-5 dance, 6-8 middle school dance, and an 8th grade formal. The formal was organized by parents who were active in the PTO but was not sponsored by the PTO. It was held off campus. Concessions sold at the middle school dance supported athletic programs.
3. Several voiced that they would like to have a school dance in September but this may be difficult due to other school events and limited volunteers.

VIII. **Other School Events:**

1. Our Lighthouse team has several events planned that will need PTO support including Hispanic Heritage Night, which will be held on September 19, and Parent Night Out which will be held on Friday, December 13.
2. Science Night will be held on October 3.

IX. **Additional Event and Fundraising options**: We are budgeting $18624 for what we will be spending this year and $18420 for what we will be making this year, which indicates we need more fundraising. The following are possible ways to increase funds enough to at least break even.

1. **Yard Sale**: This has been done in the past and it’s relatively simple. We sell parking spaces, rent out tables, and make sure we have a PTO representative at the event. We would need a volunteer to lead the charge on this one.
2. **Ford "Drive For Your School Program"**: One adult from each household test drives a car and the school earns $20 for each participant, up to $6000. A tent is set up outside so there’s no pressure to enter the dealership or complicate the process.
3. **Ask for Donations with no Gimmicks**: Some research has shown that this is usually not a successful way to fundraise and may offend some.
4. **Auction at Spring Carnival:** Auction off grade level baskets and staff experiences at the spring carnival along with other donated items. Clubs can create baskets as well, and all proceeds go to their club. We would likely not have vendors at the spring carnival if we go with this option. We plan on putting this in place and increasing projected earnings for this event.
5. **Read-a-thon:** We will revisit how successful fundraisers have been at the end of November or beginning of December and determine whether it would be beneficial to have a Read-a-thon. If we decide to attempt it we may align the beginning with Parent Night Out and the end with the Glow Dance. We would also reorganize the requirements to put less pressure on the teachers in regards to record keeping.

X. **Open House**:

1. We need volunteers to help with PTO membership, distributing meal tickets, and passing out food.  Renee Gilman will prepare the hotdogs and lead the charge to getting the food together. We will set up the food in the breezeway directly outside the gym. Families can sit inside or outside at picnic tables or tables set up in the middle of the gym. PTO tables can be set up in the gym for tickets sells, membership sells, and distribution of information. We will discuss the charge for food and how that correlates with foods. People who sign up for membership will also receive a Little River magnet. Will will set up a Sign-Up Genius for Open House volunteers as soon as possible. We will scaffold times so that volunteers will also have an opportunity to meet teachers and tour classrooms.
2. Due to poor internet service we will not attempt to have parents sign up for shoppers rewards or join the PTO online.
3. Class lists will be posted in the cafeteria/gym. The cafeteria/gym will also house representatives from school programs and clubs. ENCORE classes will also be represented.
4. The Student Lighthouse Team will be set up in the front lobby. Student ambassadors will guide people to where they need to go throughout the school in shifts so that they will also have the opportunity to visit with teachers.
5. A PTO board representative will visit each of the Kindergarten classrooms at 4:45.

XI. **Communication Needs**: There was a question about whether we can create a grade level email group to assure all parents receive the same information. We communicated that our current plan is to send the first PTO Update to all parents and offer them the option to opt out of PTO communication by responding to the email and asking to be removed from the email list. We are hoping more parents will stay informed this way. We also plan on increasing information on the PTO website and Facebook page. Each monthly email communication will also have a link to the PTO website where more information can be found like an updated calendar, teachers wish lists, and volunteer opportunities. Erica McRae, the room parent chair, will share information with the room parents and the room parents will help distribute information and monthly updates shared from the PTO. She can also set up grade level communications to share with grade level reps. While we may not have a spreadsheet that lists all teachers wish list items, our goal is to have a link to all teachers wish lists on the PTO website, along with Amazon wishlists, and Donor’s Choose projects.

Our next meeting will be on Monday, September 9th.