

Birchwood PTO Meeting  
Wednesday, November 4, 2015  
6:30pm  
Birchwood Conference Room

Call to Order

Co-President's Report (JoMarie Ethier, Jan Brown)

Officer Reports

VP Programs and Services (Suzanne Brooksby)

VP Fundraisers (Jill Appert)

Treasurer (Brenda Leto)

Secretary (Anne Burger)

Principal's Report (Deb Berndt)

Teachers' Liaison Report (Amy Santandrea, Kathleen Vermilyea)

Superintendent of Schools (Dr. Tangorra)

Board of Education Report (Kevin Laurilliard)

PTO to Board of Ed Liaison's Report (Anne Burger)

New Business

- Open House/Book Fair December 4
- Eagle Scout Tim Cook proposal
- Birchwood Mission Statement
- Nature Park Programs

Old Business

- Monster Mash
- Fall Fundraisers

Concluding Comments

Adjournment

Committee Reports: (See next page)

**Pre-K story hour:** will begin on 1/7/16 and end on 3/31/16. (Thursdays 12:30-1:30) (Submitted by Soyoung Mok)

**Junior Achievement:** all classes set with volunteer except 5D. I have a team member from our office who can fill in if she does not get parent volunteer. Junior Achievement has list of parents and will be sending packets and doing trainings as needed. The parents will get next steps direction letter from me this week. (Submitted by Laura Mirkovic)

**Media Relations:** nothing at this time. (Submitted by Laura Mirkovic)

**Visiting Author:** all good for now. Next steps will follow under Kate's direction. (Submitted by Laura Mirkovic)

**Grocery Programs:** 3201 box tops and 299 bonus box tops sent in this past week. Fall check should be \$350. (Submitted by April Dolce)

#### **Nature Park:**

1. Assisted first grade teachers to take their classes on nature trail and do StoryWalk.
2. Completed two Fall programs (Leafman Art K-2 38 kids and Mapping the Trail 3-5 23 kids).  
Artwork from the K-2 program will be displayed on the bulletin board by nurse's office.  
Cost of programs: \$37.44 for prints of kids artwork, \$65 for 5 compasses (can be reused for future programs)
3. Shed to hopefully be erected before winter; platform base has been installed (\*\*Installed this week!)
4. Spoke with Tim Cook (former Birchwood student) about possible Eagle Scout project to update trail benches and add an outdoor classroom white board. He will present his ideas and request for funding at the PTO meeting.
5. Materials purchased for structure to cover our strawberry beds (\$150). Plan to mulch with kindergartners after ground is frozen.
6. Committee requests feedback from PTO on a few issues related to after school programs.  
Specifically:
  - Online registration. Paper registration requires significant effort to collect and record information by parent volunteers. Also, online registration would improve completeness of information (parents often neglect to provide grade, classroom, or email contact information) and eliminate transcription errors.
  - Program attendance limits; 30 kids is too large to manage and conduct meaningful programs. Consider scheduling multiple dates for each program by default, or reducing attendance limit altogether.
  - How to handle program cancellations (eg due to inclement weather). How do we effectively notify parents and confirm that last minute notifications have been received? Should a "rain date" be scheduled by default? (Submitted by Katie Cowley-Cooper and Mike Cooper)

**Fundraisers:** Frozen Food Fundraiser Update: Fundraiser went well, we are planning on a Nov. 16th delivery. (Submitted by Jill Appert) Gift Card Fundraiser: Forms went out late last/early this week. (Submitted by Millie Gnatek)

**Friends of Music:** Raffle winners – Tom Parisi & Mirkovic Teal Group. Liaison thanks PTO for support with providing prize for membership drive. (Submitted by Tammy Apkarian)

**Staff Appreciation Breakfast:** \$191 was donated by 15 families, families provided an assortment of breakfast items, juice, etc. Wraps were ordered from Union Café and picked up by a parent volunteer. Hannaford contributed a \$25 gift card, Price Chopper a \$15 gift card, Dunkin donated 2 boxes of joe. The gift provided to the teachers this year was utensils to replenish their silverware drawer and pumpkin spice Keurig cups. There was \$77.15 left after all purchases. (Submitted by Tiffanie Wood)

**Picture Day:** Picture day went well, retake is scheduled for Tuesday, 11/24. Teachers signed up 2-3 classes per slot (necessary to fit in between specials and lunches) which caused a back up. We are requesting 2 photographers next year to try to avoid the back up. Next years contract was signed and sent off. (Submitted by Tiffanie Wood)

**Book Fair:** Monster theme this year. Plan to increase sales include retaining children's wish lists and having scheduled family buying time. Also, retaining wish list and providing it to families with option of purchasing books on line during and after the event. Co-chairs are working to have teachers provide more items in their wish-lists as this is very popular with parents. (Submitted by Francesca Hill)

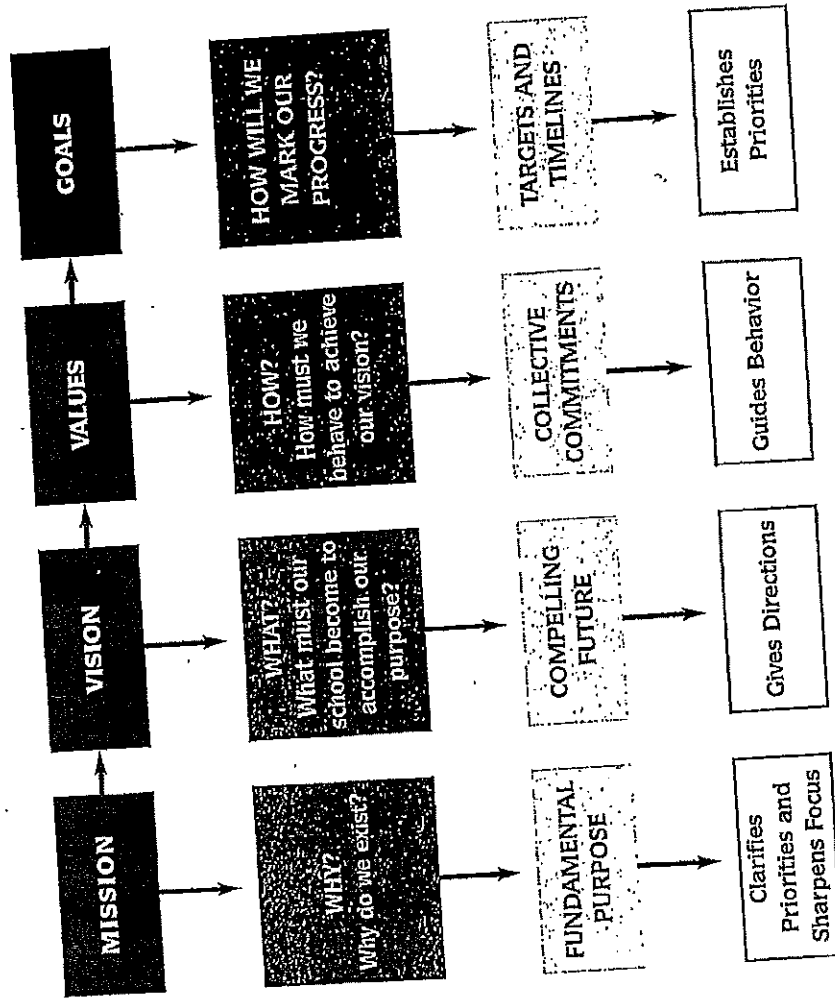
### **Monster Mash: Monster Mash 2015**

- Well, the Monster Mash was once again a success! We made some changes this year that seemed to have been a pleasant surprise!
- We had some wonderful volunteers who really kept the crowds coming through the door moving and getting families to the fun faster. They were also fabulous in the cafeteria where this year we opted to have families bring water, juice, snacks and desserts as well as a special treat from Ayelada frozen yogurt! Thanks to Anne Burger and her family once again for all the beautiful pumpkins and for manning that pumpkin decorating room, there were many wonderfully decorated pumpkins.
- The 50/50 table was a success as well with a take home for the winner of \$67.00
- The admission fee of \$5.00 per child and \$.50 per ticket price still worked well and we made a profit of \$1556 (current totals, waiting to see if there are anymore reimbursements)
- Our magician from Magicman Entertainment did a wonderful job, was easy to work with and with no objections would be a welcomed guest in future.
- Our games were great and another big thank you to our parent and middle schooler volunteers. Great job and Birchwood students had a blast. Thanks to John Leto, Chris Fusco, Rick Mizenco and Jeff Dutcher for their games.
- Our DJ Evan Brooksby was fabulous and our kids and parents had a blast dancing around!
- We had a great parent costume contest, they keep getting better and better every year.
- And lastly, we were able to fit all this in an hour and a half! It worked well for everyone and they seemed to like the time change.
- There are already suggestions coming in for next year but they are add ons not instead of so all in all, success once again! (Submitted by Tara McKenna)

## **Mission Statement**

**The Birchwood School community is committed  
to helping each child achieve academic and  
social excellence.**

LEARNING BY DOING



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11/4/15

PTO Meeting Birchwood

Brian Meservey

Brenda Lutz

Tim Cook

Debra Berndt

Jan Brown

Johnnie Ethur

Amy Santandrea

Wendy Cook

Cosimo Tangorra

Mike Cooper

Kathleen Vernilyea

Suzanne Brooksby