

Birchwood PTO Meeting
Wednesday, February 3, 2016
9:00am
Birchwood Conference Room

MINUTES OF MEETING:

Members Present: Anne Burger(Recording secretary and parent); Jan Brown (co president and parent); JoMarie Ethier (Co President and parent); Debra Berndt (Principal); Kate Kirkpatrick (Media Specialist); Sonya Ward (Parent); Suzanne Brooksby (VP Programs and Services and Parent); Jill Appert (VP Fundraising and Parent); Laura Mirkovic (Parent); Erin Graves (Parent); Erin Cassady-Dorion (Parent)

Call to Order:

By JoMarie Ethier at 9:05AM

Approval of January Minutes:

Motion to approve with 2 typo corrections. Sonya Ward made the motion, Suzanne Brooksby seconded. Motion passed.

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

- Birchwood sign, JoMarie has been looking into vendors to replace the sign as it is unwieldy to change the sign. For a 4X8 sign, it would cost \$7000. Laura Mirkovic mentioned talking to the district as Iroquois is getting their outside sign replaced and the district may be contributing towards it.
- Brenda Leto's husband found a refrigerator and will be donated to the school.
- Bingo night was a great success and thank you to the PTO from Mrs. Berndt for all the prizes.
- Suzanne Brooksby got bins for organizing things in the basement. Please remind committee members after events to keep things in the designated areas.

Officer Reports

VP Programs and Services (Suzanne Brooksby):

March 11 is the Fun Fair. Tara McKenna said she will chair this again this year, but does not want to do it in the future. Looking for other activities to plan for the night instead of just games. Perhaps a "jail" that kids can put someone in jail by giving up a ticket then to get out of jail, the person has to perform a skit and give up a ticket. Perhaps a photo booth also. March 10 is the staff luncheon and it's "Bucket Filling" and there will be buckets as centerpieces. Looking into catering the event also. Story hour has started and ASEP started as well.

VP Fundraising (Jill Appert):

Popcorn continues to do well. Discussed options for children who have braces. Will look to see if Shoprite can donate a bag or two of Puffcorn. Talked about different spring fundraisers. Perhaps a 5 K run at River Road park. The mixed bags did very well last year, but people think it may not do as well since people may still have the things that they purchased last year.

Treasurer (Brenda Leto):

Absent but sent report. The PTO is doing okay, we did not have year to date information to review. Approval of report: Sonya made the motion and Suzanne seconded. Motion passed.

Secretary (Anne Burger):

The PTO minutes are now on the website as of 2/2/16.

Principal's Report (Deb Berndt):

-Discussed PLC again. Laura & Sasa Mirkovic have joined the committee and will assist with putting together our commitments. It will be like a pie chart with the School's commitment, Student's commitment and Parent's commitments. Along with PALS student leaders. There will be a big poster in the front when completed. Mrs. Berndt is sending home a parent interest letter next week and would like 8-10 parents to come to together on 2 nights (3/9 & 3/23) from 6-7PM to review the value cards and come up with the commitments.

-Grade 2 is piloting the PLC information that was gathered in New Hampshire. There is a team meeting and intervention block (30 minutes daily) and several other staff help with this as they are all in it for the children. This information will be shared with the District's PLC committee.

-Suzanne B stated that there are hearts to go home with the children to be done at home and sent in to go on the bulletin board.

Teachers' Liaison Report (Amy Santandrea, Kathleen Vermilyea): No report, Kate Kirkpatrick said thank you to PTO for all they do for the school.

Board of Education Report (Kevin Laurilliard): No report.

PTO to Board of Ed Liaison's Report (Anne Burger): No report, did not attend January meetings.

New Business

-Spring Fundraiser: Perhaps a photo shoot day. Photographer could set up a day to do photo shoots. The PTO would get the sitting fee. Needs at least 15 people and at most 30 slots. The big fundraiser last year was the mixed bags but may not get as much participation this year due to already having the items. Garage sale was discussed but realized that would be a lot of work. Perhaps a sun screen/bug spray fundraiser. Maybe a 5K or 1 mile run at River road park.

-Be a Smart cookie reading campaign has started. Some children wanted a real cookie.

-Nominating Committee Appointees : Need a committee to recruit candidates for co president and treasurer for next year. Erin Cassady-Dorion said she could take over next years bulletin.

-Master Calendar : ASEP & PALS, Suzanne offered to be calendar master.

-Yearbook : Sonya stated there are some teachers that do not have their picture for yearbook. Generally traveling teachers/staff. Want to know if lifetouch could share the pictures if they were done at another school. She has tried contacting the staff to little avail. She will contact Lifetouch to ask them. The self contained classroom's pictures will be incorporated into their respective grade's pages which causes an issue for making sure we have 2 pictures of each child on the page. Will reach out to the teachers to see if they have pictures. Sonya will not be at Birchwood after next year. She is looking to have someone else come on board next year and have 3 people co chair the yearbook. Perhaps a kindergarten parent. She has someone in mind. Sonya needs

someone to take pictures of Mrs. Luyckx's 2nd grade class next week at Valentine's party because the parent would be doing the page, cannot do it anymore.

-Glass Case in Foyer: JoMarie discussed the glass case in foyer. It doesn't get much use other than to hold some items. She wondered if the art teacher would use that display case when the kids were doing 3D items. Will ask art teacher if they are interested.

Old Business

-E-registration for programs - Erin Cassady-Dorion talked about E-registration and other methods for the future. The E-registration for ASEP worked well and saved her about 8-10 hours of work. She will research other sign up systems to see if something else would help and give us a directory as well. She wondered why Drama club was part of ASEP since it was not in line with the ASEP programs and were run by the teachers. It is likely due to the payment of money for the program. Nature club donated 42 pounds of carrots to the food pantry.

-Communication options : Will look into other options.

Concluding Comments

Adjournment: Sonya motioned to adjourn. Erin Cassady-Dorion seconded. Meeting adjourned at 11:15AM. Submitted by Anne Burger

Next Meeting Wednesday March 2, 2016 at 6:30PM

Committee Reports:

For Arts in Ed, there will be a performance of Opera Saratoga on Feb 25 at 8:30 Flame the Band is coming to Birchwood in May, the teachers are scheduling classroom workshops with Scotia-Glenville Childrens' Museum.

FOM: Birchwood had their first concert of the 2015-2016 season– the children were very excited, and hopefully the 4th graders enjoyed their first concert experience.

The chorus will be singing the National Anthem this coming Friday (February 5th) at the RPI hockey game at the Houston Field House. Thank you to Holly Johnston for arranging this incredible opportunity for the children!

Pre-K program. Things are moving smoothly. (Soyoung Mok)

Junior Achievement and Visiting Author: Nothing new to report (Laura Mirkovic)

Garden/Nature Park: We're planning for spring vegetable garden, would like PTO approval to expand by adding an asparagus bed. Would also like to add nectar plants to butterfly garden in coordination with 3rd grade curriculum.

Have requested an update from Tim Cook re: outdoor classroom, but nothing back yet. (Mike Cooper)