

Huntington PTO Meeting

Thursday, January 14, 2016

Executive Board members present:

Emily Pascale

Leeann Wiess

Meghan Vitale

Keith Gatling

Welcome

Leeann welcomed everyone. Happy 2016 to everyone.

PTO Board Members Report

Karate

Kids are excited for upcoming test and tournament in February and March. A few students have moved up. Everything is going well.

Box Tops

Mary Beth asked if we've received a check yet. Leeann said there wasn't anything in the mailbox as of this afternoon, but she'll check with the secretaries and make sure it goes to the right place. Ms. Radley's class had the most Box Tops for December. We need to make sure that winners are getting their ice cream parties. Leeann will discuss with Melissa how this was done in past years.

Moe's Night/Five Below Fundraiser

Leeann reported on the Moe's and 5Below fundraisers. Month-long total at Five Below was \$47.46. Moe's hasn't given us the total yet. Leeann suggested that maybe we ran the Five Below fundraiser it for too long and people forgot about it. The combined total last year was about \$150. We are considering doing another fundraiser at each in the spring, but probably shorter at Five Below. (This was discussed again later in the meeting.)

Updates on Old Business

Fundraising Policy

Leeann discussed the concerns about fundraising at commercial locations that were raised at the November meeting. We need to have a standard procedure. An individual can't represent the organization without the permission of the group. Students should

only sell to friends (including coworkers) and family. The PTO and the building administration, jointly, do not sanction the sale of fundraising items on commercial property. This is a decision of the building administration, not the district administration. The PTO may consider doing something on a larger scale in a public place in the future, but it would be an organized effort open to anyone in the Huntington community and the details would be discussed prior to the event with the building administration.

Field Trip Student Contribution Policy

There was some debate over the parent contribution related to a fund request at the October meeting. The PTO Board has decided, and the administration has concurred, that \$5 should be the standard student contribution requested for field trips (unless, of course, the cost of the trip is less than \$5 per student). PTO will consider requests for funds from the general fund account for trips that cost more than \$5 per student. We will make sure all students can go, but if the cost is \$5 or more per student, families should be asked to contribute \$5. There was no additional discussion on this item.

Parent Involvement Update

Meghan indicated that she has been working on a PTO website, and a draft is ready to be reviewed by the Board members and Mrs. Harlow. Meghan has continued to communicate with the Office of Special Programs regarding the use of our Parent Involvement funds to purchase a cell phone and a web hosting service. A recent message suggested that we might not be able to use the Parent Involvement funds for these items after all. Meghan will give Stephanie in Special Programs a call. If we cannot use the Parent Involvement funds, the Board will discuss paying for the website out of general funds. Since this is less than \$100, this should be fine.

Cornell Cooking Class

Leeann noted that we were not able to find a date that would work for this parent class. The organizers (Cornell Cooperative Extension) indicated that they need a facility with cooking equipment. They have some portable cooking equipment, but it is limited. Since we don't have cooking equipment available at the school, they would need to bring the equipment in, and we couldn't find a date when they had availability.

Cyberbullying Seminar

Gia has been coordinating with the Ryan-McMahon agency on this item. We are considering March 1 or March 3 for this seminar with Ryan-McMahon. March 1 is

preferable due to a PTO Board meeting on March 3. Softin from Contact Community Services noted that there is a parent literacy event scheduled for March 2; it may be difficult to get parents out on two consecutive nights. In the future, we'll try not to schedule items two nights in a row, but we need to get events on the calendar sooner. There was some discussion about whether the seminar would be just for parents (no students). Gia will confirm. Something during the day for students would need to be scheduled separately. We should have the Honor Society students provide childcare during the seminar.

Softin talked briefly about their event on March 2. They will have dinner and massages. The event is sponsored by the 21st Century program, but is open to everyone.

New Business & Upcoming Events

Next meeting and Movie Night

Leeann noted that the next PTO meeting is scheduled for February 11. Family Movie Night is scheduled for January 22. The Honor Society students will make popcorn afterschool, and will be here to help serve the popcorn, since they need volunteer hours.

Gertrude Hawk Fundraiser

Emily reported that fundraising packets will be sent home next week. You can start selling as soon as it comes home. The cost of items breaks down as follows: 50% to Gertrude Hawk, 25% to PTO general fund, 25% to class account. (In comparison, the Genevieve's sales go 50% to the company, 50% to class, none to PTO general fund.) Delivery is scheduled for the week of March 14.

Fund request forms.

Leeann noted that the Board has created new fund request forms for use by teachers/staff. They can be filled out electronically and emailed to us (although hard-copies will still be available in the main office), and the new deposit slips will specify the number of each denomination bill. The Board will be distributing the new forms to teachers soon.

Bingo Night

Bingo Night is on the calendar for February 26. Leeann is taking the lead on this and starting to work out the details. This will be our first time with this event, so there is a lot to figure out. We still need some volunteers! Lisa offered to help.

Moe's Night/Five Below Fundraiser for Spring

Leeann noted that these are fairly simple to set up, although we haven't made a lot of money yet. Meghan suggested that we try to distribute the flyers more widely, especially to other neighborhood groups. Everyone seemed to support doing this again. Leeann will look into dates, preferably during the Easter season. There was a question about whether this would conflict with Gertrude Hawk sales, but since delivery is scheduled for week of March 14, holding the Five Below fundraiser later in March should be fine. Melissa from the 21st Century program suggested that we distribute more reminders, and we could distribute these at PTO and 21st Century events. Keith suggested something on/around Cinco de Mayo. Another parent suggested that we spread out the two events so people can spread out when they spend money. A parent asked if we could select the Five Below at Destiny. Leeann said that we might be able to pick different dates for each location; she is not sure if they can run simultaneously. Leeann will look into dates/locations. It might get confusing to alternate locations, but we'll see if we can do both.

Funding Request Review and Vote

BAM Night

Ms. Cameron requested \$300 for a magician (Jeff the Magic Man) for Books, Art, Magic (BAM) night, which is scheduled for the evening of March 30. Magician will be in the cafeteria, and there will also be two sessions teaching kids to make balloon animals. The magician will also make a balloon sculpture. Ms. Cameron suggested selling raffle tickets for a chance to win the sculpture. Mrs. Harlow asked about the raffle idea and the structure of the event – she would like to know the specific times for the show and more details about the raffle. Proceeds from raffle would be used for art supplies. Everyone present seemed to feel that this was a good idea.

Emily motioned to approve the \$300. Jenn seconded. No opposition, no abstention. Motion carried.

Afterschool program

Mrs. Harlow spoke about the partnership with the 21st Century program, particularly on Family Literacy Nights. Melissa Bland spoke about the afterschool program, reviewing how things have been going for the first half of year. There will be a winter break camp with four days of activities and enrichment, including a babysitting course, swimming, martial arts, STEM, visual arts, and CSI kits. The winter break camp is only open to

students that are currently enrolled in the afterschool program. They are planning for some new enrichment classes in the spring.

Melissa stated that 21st Century program has spent about \$10,000 on Lego kits in response to feedback from parents last year, and they are looking to spend about \$10,000 more on Legos. They are trying to be responsive to parent requests so that more students join the program. Emily talked about barriers for parents utilizing the after school program: for parents that work full-time, the lack of afterschool coverage on Fridays, all of September, and all of June mean that they need to look elsewhere for afterschool care. It is nearly impossible to find someone to provide care just on Fridays, or just for the month of September. Softin and Melissa explained that the federal grant only provides for 100 days of programming, so by only running the program for four days a week, they are able to extend it longer in the year, though not through the entire school year. Meghan also noted that other families require more flexibility, with the option to have their children participate in only the enrichment classes (if they clearly do not need the extra academics). Some parents feel that, if they are able to, they would like to be able to pick up their kids before 5:00 p.m. each day, especially if their children participate in other activities outside of school.

Administrative Reports

Mrs. Harlow stated that she is still working with the teachers to plan a curriculum night – or “take your parent to school” night - in March. There may be an opportunity to partner with the 21st Century program on this. We could utilize 21st Century program for support and to advertise the event. Meghan asked what the attendance has been at the Family Literacy Events. Softin said that 33 families attended the last event, and she is planning to make calls to all parents in the after-school program to boost attendance at the next event. Softin noted that the 21st Century program also works with senior volunteers, and they could help out on Bingo night and other events, such as the upcoming Panther Pride party.

Family Literacy Events

Softin noted that there are two more literacy events in the spring to be scheduled, hopefully with the finale at the zoo on a Saturday. They are hoping to provide transportation (bus passes). Literacy events are open to all parents, not just those with kids in afterschool program.

School review

Mrs. Harlow stated that our school review is in process. Staff members are collecting data around instruction and student achievement, including classroom observations, collection of lesson plans, achievement, attendance, and behavior data. The review will assess whether we've met last year's goals, and set new goals for next year. It will be completed over the next few weeks and results will be available to share in May.

Student assessments

The school just finished the second administration of ANet and Star 360 testing. These assessments are for teacher use (regrouping, reteaching, etc.) and school evaluation to figure out how the school might need to do things differently or target students that need interventions. Meghan asked for a more parent-friendly description of the tests (this had been discussed at a previous School Leadership Team meeting) that would explain the differences between the tests and how the data from each is used by teachers. Mrs. Harlow said that this could be a topic at the "take your parent to school night," and also stated that parents should be receiving information from their child's teacher about the results and what they mean.

School renovations

The renovations team has visited the school twice and completed an entire walk-through of the building each time. They have focused on things the PTO has already discussed: heating and air conditioning, windows, pool lockers, playground, bus loading and unloading, parking lot configuration. The team is compiling information. The next step is a community group meeting; the district's facilities department will take the lead on this.

In the meantime, painting and other minor upgrades are occurring throughout the school. Mrs. Harlow is looking into getting new cafeteria tables with attached seating, as well as upgrading the speaker system in the cafeteria and the PA system in office. The district is paying for the new tables. We will keep some of the existing chairs, but will store the rest at BOVA and request as needed for events. Mrs. Harlow would also like to get a ceiling-mounted projector for the cafeteria.

Other

Mrs. Harlow talked briefly about changes to the district's Parent Partnership Network. There are liaisons assigned to schools, and they are supposed to be spending one day per month in their assigned schools. Our liaison is Mary Lisa Wade.

Some parents noted that Mrs. Harlow's robocall messages get cut off. She will look into this.

The school has set up a Twitter account (@HuntingtonSCSD), although they are not posting yet because they are trying to figure out a procedure. The school will need to develop a master list of students that have not given permission to have photos taken.

Mrs. Harlow noted that middle school parents will need to start making decisions about next year, so pay attention to notices coming home from school. Career week will take place at the end of February, and the High School Expo will be coming up as well.

Report cards should go out around February 2.

Added agenda items

Ms. Cameron spoke about the Panther Pride rummage sale, which will take place on March 11. This is a PBIS initiative for grades K through 5. The PBIS team is looking for donated items, new or gently used. A flyer was distributed providing more details. Volunteers are needed to help set up on March 10 and to help with the event on March 11. Mrs. Harlow said that the school is tracking data to see if PBIS parties are motivating kids to behave, i.e. more participation in parties coupled with fewer referrals.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.