

Newcastle Elementary PTSA

Parent Teacher Student Association



Newcastle Elementary PTSA Board Meeting
Monday, October 11th, 6-7:30pm
Mary's House and Zoom/Remote

Attendees: Mary Vickers, Brooke Weller, Lara Velasco, Abigail Abu, Kelli Medak, Mei Atangan, Allison Sweeney, Bisa Meek, Ali Bligh, Albert Kim, Bettina Vuong, Marcia O'Donoghue,

Call to Order: Mary Vickers 6:09pm

Dr. Wood Update

- unavailable

President Update

-Canva Pro

- graphic design tool could be used for various projects and perhaps social media presence/posts. It is a free service for nonprofits that consists of up to 10 accounts; message Mary in order to utilize one if interested.

-Parent / Teacher Survey results - 39 responses total.

- Some parent responses made mention that more funds should be spent on academic support (math clubs, etc). Overall, responses suggested involvement limited to Covid, lack of awareness of what the PTA does or inability to attend PTSA meetings consistently. The survey also revealed that evenings work best for families and remote meetings have increased interest.
- Staff responses connected to stress and safety and mentioned various ways the PTSA can help to address the various challenges. Mary will follow up with Alex regarding playground equipment for recess zones. Discussion of grant requests for further equipment and potentially clear masks for teachers was mentioned.
- In a related conversation regarding how the PTSA can mitigate some of the staff concerns, a discussion consisted of how more supervisors are needed for playground and recess; however, it's unclear what the status is on volunteers. Discussion of parent pool / extra parent on the playground for additional support to address the safety issue emerged. Mary will inquire / email as to if/when we can begin to ask for volunteers to support paraeducators during recess time.

- Questions regarding budget constraints and impact on teachers and students raised concerns among teachers and members of the board. Besides safety, other concerns and areas of improvement needed at the school relate to students with special education needs that may or may not lead to liability issues.

-Buddy Bench

- in need of repair!

-Spirit Day

- discussion of various ways to show spirit for the school and when and what that might look like.

-Membership

- Mary will lead a drive / raffle for Amazon gift cards in order to generate interest/ membership in PTSA. It was mentioned that activities may be more motivating than gift cards. Teachers reiterating the message of membership would be helpful as well.
- Grant Request from Burnham- \$325.85 classroom supplies and decor request. Bisa Meek made a motion to grant the request and Abigail Abu seconded the motion. After discussion there were no notable objections or abstentions and the grant request was approved.
- Ali Bligh motioned to approve a grant request for Kelly Crawford in the amount of \$654.50 for Scholastic News for a 3rd grade resource. Bisa Meek seconded the motion and the grant request was approved. No abstentions noted.
- Discussion arose as to the protocol regarding teacher requests for grants, need for receipts, and involvement of the principal in the decision process. Grant requests / Check requests should be separate line items for teachers as it may be helpful in future budgets. Also, perhaps Dr. Wood could create a FAQ to send to teachers regarding requests.

-Alternate forms of communication

- Mary suggested a text message group in order to streamline board approval/authorization.

Volunteer Update

-Cub News

- discussion of past ways of thanking volunteers and possibility of how to highlight notable efforts of various current volunteers.

Ways and Means Update

-Spirit Wear

- \$162.28 total

-Read-A-Thon

- discussed as a potential fundraiser. Issues surrounding how to promote the fundraiser were discussed.

Programs Update

-Fall Activity

- Fletcher Farm Friday, October 22 5p-8p Family Night
- Classroom parties - Kindergarten would appreciate PTSA activity the Friday before Halloween. Dress up celebration may be approved if the teachers are agreeable to it
- Lion Art - Some schools have hired coordinators to teach Art and have come into the school as paid parent art coordinators. Perhaps this is an option for our school.
- Fall and winter art activities TBD.

Upcoming Important Dates:

Wednesday, October 13, 7p Parent Wiser

Thursday, October 14 Picture Day

Monday, October 18 No School--Teacher Work Day

Friday, October 22 5p-8p Family Night @ Fletcher Farm

Friday, October 29 Reflections Due

Monday, November 8 Board Meeting 1p

Thursday, November 11 No School--Veteran's Day