

General PTO Meeting Minutes
Pocopson Elementary School
September 4th, 2018

Attendees:

Attendance Sheet Attached.

Meeting Opened at 9:47am

Eileen Day welcomed the group and thanked them for coming.

Eileen led introductions for the current PTO Executive Board Members and gave a short description of their responsibilities. She acknowledged the delays due to the train schedules and then thanked Lucy Barber for the baked goods this morning and wished her a happy birthday. She then turned the meeting over to Mr. Beaver.

Mr. Beaver's Address and Slide Show

Mr. Beaver began his address by confirming that he'll reach out the district office to find out who we talk to about the train schedules and also wished Lucy a Happy Birthday. He also told us that today is his daughter's first birthday away at college and he was excited to have a cake delivered to her at school.

Mr. Beaver explained that beginning school before Labor Day allows teachers and students to become acclimated and be in a comfortable place now, and really roll into the year. Plus, if we don't get too many snow days, we'll appreciate it in June too! He then explained that not all meetings will have such long intros from himself, but will sometimes instead have other teachers there to present, or other informational presentations.

Next, he introduced the school through an online slideshow.

Link for the slide show: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1kwoYvypG0EBQjYVV3-mF4z6n6yIM7Q-J2PbL5_6y_nk/edit?ts=5b911adc#slide=id.g414d07b03d_0_48

Discussion topics from the Pocopson Elementary slideshow

- Student enrollment is currently at 573, slightly down from last year, and it is projected to be lower for next year. Question: is it alright that we drop in the student enrollments? Answered: Mr. Beaver doesn't really know when he would start to worry, but he's hoping to stay above 530. This allows for multiple counselors, programs, etc.
- The banners lining the drive into the school were mentioned, and he thanked the PTO for those.
- The PTO had our garden areas re-done this summer. The person used was a Unionville High School graduate. Mr. Beaver's hoping the beautification of these areas will spur

interest in our outdoor classroom areas. Also, the garden has been adopted by our 4th graders and taken on as a STEM project for the year. He thinks it would be neat to fully utilize our garden out back, like the gardens at Patton Middle School. This is exciting because it is taking STEM into real life. It was also mentioned that there is a composter – a previous Boy Scout program – and that the garden is all organic.

- The red Pocopson T-shirts were acknowledged as a PTO contribution, highlighted by the photo of rather unsure looking kindergarteners wearing them on their first day of school.
- Mr. Beaver mentioned the new staff additions for the year. Rachel Harris, a long term substitute for second grade until January for Mrs. Beam and Sara Terranova. Sara Terranova is not a new hire, but has a new role as an IST teacher to replace Mrs. Vinci who retired after last year. Heidi Boyer, Reading Support, will take over for Sara. Dana Venugopalan and Rachel Frey are new PCAs, Stephan Thornton and Melanie Walker are agency nurses. Kristen Fuller is a PCA, Peyton Lopapa, LSP and Lisa Barrickman, Library and Noah Krey, Tech Support. Custodian Larry Kepler retired and a new custodian is being hired to replace him.
- 2018 Climate Study – The survey was taken by all third through fifth grade students. As for parent responses, the 9% response rate was incredibly disappointing. Mr. Beaver explained that once the results are in, the CSI rep contacts Mr. Beaver to discuss and they're always excited about our responses. He'd like to up the parent participation rate when taken again in 2020. The way responses are measured was explained. The median score is used, to help remove the outliers. He explained the color coding for the responses and that the results can be drilled down further by the staff. The overall responses from the students were incredibly positive and are also incredibly similar to the responses from 2016.
 - Safety Rules and Norms score very well and that is a comforting thing.
 - Support for Learning is another area that are highlighted as having a positive response.
 - Social Media showed as positive – students feel safe from teasing, verbal abuse or teasing when online or using devices. This positive response was an improvement from the 2016 survey.
 - Physical Surroundings was very positive – great reflection on the custodial staff
 - “Climate Survey Says” Very Positive! Across nearly all 13 dimensions.
 - 2 neutral dimensions in Sense of Social Emotional Security and Social Media
 - Leadership Dimension was a 3.5 – “Do school leaders establish and communicate a clear vision”
- Wellness Policy Changes
 - Birthday Celebrations – We are really trying to stop having a child be subjected to 25 different times for cupcakes. We're looking for positive ways to celebrate birthdays without it being food related.
 - We have Birthday Grams available to purchase for the students to help make their day a little more special without food
 - https://pes.ucfsd.org/uploaded/PES/PTO/PES_Birthday_Grams_2018.pdf
 - The classroom and school wide celebrations will be decided by Cliff and grade team leaders – possibly Halloween will be one of those.
 - Curriculum Related Opportunities – teachers will be presenting those options to Mr. Beaver. We aren't looking to eliminate food-based activities necessarily, but there will be a dialog about the activities.
- PSSA Information Chart – This is another measuring stick for our school. Our results are stellar and really great district wide. School Grades listed Chadds Ford as 10th and Pocopson as 11th. Mr. Beaver reassured parents that we don't throw everything else

(curriculum wise) out to prepare for the PSSAs. He highlighted the science grade, coming in at 98%.

Mr. Beaver turned the meeting over to Kate McHale.

Treasurer's Report and Budget Vote

Kate thanked Mr. Beaver and explained that the PTO budget needs to be voted on for the new year.

The PTO balance sheet and the Profit & Loss statement were explained.

Changes made for this year's PTO budget–

1. Money has been broken out specifically for Grandparents Day
2. Pancake Breakfast post PSSAs
3. increased teacher grants from \$200-\$250 due to such a successful Art and Garden
4. Maker Space in the Library – STEM incorporation in the Library area – students have responded well and asked for more
5. Office Staff expenses now included
6. Couple items moved from Balance sheet to the P&L
 - a. Fifth Grade Picnic
 - b. Interior and Exterior projects
 - c. Educational Enrichment – to cover things that come up during the year such as teacher grants for specific projects

Kate McHale Made the Motion, Eileen Day Seconded, Unanimous Vote was made to approve.

Kate offered her email for any questions throughout the year.

Kate discussed Passive Fundraising: it is an easy way to raise funds for the school with little effort. Some of the ways we do this is through the Giant A-Plus Rewards program and Amazon Smile.

Kate reminded us we need to sign up every year for the Giant A-Plus rewards.

<https://giantfood.com/school-rewards/>

Amazon Smile: "AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice."

<https://smile.amazon.com/>

Just remember to use the Smile website to order, not the regular Amazon page.

Another great local partner is 202 Nails. When visiting 202 Nails, remember to sign up on their clipboard for Pocopson. They also generously donated to last year's Art & Garden. They located at 1810 Wilmington Pike, Glen Mills, PA.

Kate handed the meeting back to Eileen.

Patriot Pride and Family Fun Night

Eileen explained the PTO Welcome Packets the students will be receiving and what will be included.

- Welcome letter from the PTO, Patriot Pride Campaign flyer, School FAQ's, District Calendar, box top collection bag, and a bus notepad
- We made \$1,500 from box-tops collections last year so, please utilize the baggies included.

The Patriot Pride Campaign

- This is our third year where it's completely in house. We previously used a third party company, Boosterthon, but due to the 40% fee taken from our monies raised, we now run everything in house. Now, 100% of monies raised go back to Pocopson.
- Rather than many small fundraising campaigns, one school-wide fundraiser with nothing needing to be sold.
- A week full of fun for the students to show their school spirit and raise funds to go toward school projects.
- Patriot Pride Calendar of Events:
 - Monday, September 24th - Crazy Hair
 - Tuesday, September 25th - Pajama Day
 - Wednesday, September 26th - Wacky Wednesday and Chick Fil A night
 - Thursday, September 27th - Color Wars
 - Kindergarten in blue, First in orange, Second in Red, Third in green, Fourth in yellow and Fifth in pink
 - Wearing anything with their color counts!
 - Friday, September 28th - FUN RUN!! and Family Fun Night
 - Fun Run SignUp genius will be coming up.
 - Kindergarten through third grade receive bracelets for every lap completed
 - Fourth and Fifth grade have the Color Run
 - The color is made using organic cornstarch and students can opt to run through non color lanes and receive bracelets if they'd prefer.
- Even if students didn't purchase additional spirit wear, all students should have a red Pocopson shirt to be able to be involved.
- Chick Fil A Night - Mention Pocopson Elementary when you visit from 6am - 10pm and they will donate a portion of purchases to Pocopson
- Family Fun Night
 - Picnic Dinner with food available for purchase from the PTO
 - Movie will begin at 7:00, please bring blankets to relax on

Eileen presented the flyer, explaining the Fun and Funding goals. We are able to do the fun activities, banners, garden areas, teacher grants, due to the donations. We are stewards of the PTO as a whole, we represent the parents.

Parent feedback was very positive. They appreciate that we have one fundraising push and not wrapping paper, etc.

Family Fun Night

Pizza and Chick Fil A Sandwiches will be on sale while there.

The movie is still being decided, but will begin promptly at 7:00. We ask that during the movie, we have a quiet and relaxed atmosphere. The idea is that we are then calming down and watching the movie in the gym, not running around.

Reminders will be coming out from PTO, HR Parents and teachers.

New Initiatives and Events:

New Messaging for the Banners are being decided. Other schools have even contacted us to ask how and where we came up with them. The banners and message are great ways to pass on positive thoughts and encouragement to the students.

Kindness Messaging – Explanation of where we will be placing the messaging, near the school entrance area and bathrooms.

Raised Beds and Outdoor Garden Areas and Pond area –

We are working with Longwood Gardens to set up a sensory garden. We are really trying to make it into a special area for the kids and teachers to use and enjoy.

Eileen turned the meeting over to Nora Baughan.

Homeroom Parent Update

Hopefully everyone has seen the request for HR parents. A Homeroom Parent will be a liaison between the teachers, parents and PTO to disseminate information and help encourage volunteerism. Nora confirmed the deadline to volunteer is September 7th and that the Homeroom Parents will be drawn from a confidential lottery on September 10th. There will also be a meeting next Friday, September 14th for the new Homeroom Parents.

If you are considering doing it and are unsure, Eileen added that we have Nora as a veteran and a Pocopson Pinterest page with lots of ideas.

Clearance Reminders:

We do need to have all clearance forms on file – PA State Police, PA Child Abuse History and FBI Criminal History Report. If they were done before, they can expire. If you are unsure about your clearances, the office can let you know if they have them and if they are up to date. Clearance information is available online here: <https://pes.ucfsd.org/for-parents/clearances-volunteers>

Nora turned the meeting over to Janice Michels.

Spirit Wear Sales

Janice Michels has found a new Spirit Wear company and has been working diligently make this a smooth transition. Last year we did about \$4,000 in sales and only realized a profit of \$274. It was time for a switch.

We now work with a company that allows for more profit. We will be carrying some inventory and can take orders online. Perfect Impressions in Kennett is who will be used. The store will be put online and the link will be sent out tomorrow. Janice gave a small demo using Patton Middle School's page as an example. Janice is still finalizing how sales will work, both online and from stock.

We had \$1,700 in sales at Back to School Night, and that was in large part due to the ability to take card payments. The profit margin is much better, but we aren't quite sure what the final percentage will be yet.

Name brand products such as Under Armour will now be available. She demoed shirts, bows, etc., so parents could see examples of what will be sold. Most of the items were kept to a one color design to keep costs down, allowing for higher profits. Last year's dri fit shirts were sold for \$28 and they're now down to \$21. We will carry some inventory, more student sizes than parents.

Janice is also training a couple new recruits to take over when she leaves next year.

It was added that we have Spirit Wear Fridays on the first Friday of every month and any of the Pocopson items can be worn.

Upcoming Dates

(Insert the dates from the Agenda)

The student directory was highlighted – Eileen highly recommends participating.

Eileen demonstrated how to login through Powerschool and access it through the School Bulletin tab.

Kelly Fleming is in charge of our upcoming Picture Day – there will be Fall and Spring photos. Class pictures will be taken during the Fall Picture Day. This is a great way to meet and put a face with the teachers and kids.

Our upcoming evening PTO Meeting will have the Specials Showcase to explain what goes on in some of those special area classes.

Eileen closed by thanking everyone in attendance and reminded them that our emails are all online if they need to contact us.

Meeting concluded at 10:53