



United Steele Workers PTA Meeting

Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 8:10 a.m.

Zoom/Virtual Meeting

Attendees

Trudi Jackson

Kate Hume

Meg Ford

Lori Blackmore

Megan Harris

Terry Spotts

Ryan Capp

Governance

President Trudi Jackson called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. A quorum was present.

Trudi shared the agenda and the 12 October 2021 meeting minutes digitally.

Megan Harris moved to approve the 12 October 2021 meeting minutes. Kate Hume seconded. Motion carried.

Financial Review and Budget

Treasurer Mark Perrault was not present.

Principal's Report

Principal Ryan Capp provided the Principal's Report.

Report on Visit to Arts Integration and STEM Schools

- Mr. Capp said he would also present this information at the School Accountability Council (SAC) Meeting tomorrow evening. Mr. Capp and staff members visited about five schools in Charlotte, NC which are part of the A+ Arts Integration organization (<https://www.ncarts.org/aplus-schools>). They can do a 5-day training with the whole staff if a school does Arts Integration. All the schools Mr. Capp visited started their Arts Integration programs about four years ago but were interrupted by the pandemic.
- Mr. Capp explained why he is exploring these options now, mainly because D11 is asking Steele to see if the school wants to be one of the eight pathway schools. The District is looking for two Arts, two STEM, two Outdoor Environment, and two Language Immersion schools. Another option is to become a School of Innovation. Steele has seen an overall decrease in enrollment – hard to say if that is due to the pandemic. The school has added six students in just the past week and is now full in Kindergarten and 1st Grade. Second Grade has seen the most additions lately. There is an opportunity to take advantage of district resources even if Steele is not one of

those pathway schools. Brandon Comfort, the director of this district project, really changed the pathways project –now schools that are not pathway schools will have access to resources as well.

- *Arts Integration Observation Take-Aways:* These schools were low SES schools for the most part, very diverse, and had really high engagement. Kids had a lot of energy for it. The program was included all the arts – dance, visual arts, drama. All the schools observed had better vertical planning than Steele does now – kids would have the same kind of language to build from 1st to 2nd to 3rd grade. One area where Steele is already doing that well is with Social Emotional language. Once a school starts Arts Integration during the day, after school activities naturally follow that.
- *STEM Observation Take-Aways:* Mr. Capp and staff visited one STEM school in St. Petersburg, Florida, it was very robust. The school was designed as a STEM Magnet school by the district from the start and built with people and support for STEM in mind. There were big advantages to that including a partnership with University of Florida, a large grant, and good vertical and cross-disciplinary planning. The school focuses on seven Units of Study each year. Engagement was high and rigor was higher than the Arts Integration schools in general. Mr. Capp wondered if the rigor was a function of the longevity of the program or a function of the actual STEM/Engineering focus. Mr. Capp’s initial thoughts about the schools - is STEM a better way to get at critical thinking, design thinking, and grit than arts integration or is it because the arts schools were newer? Mr. Capp wants to explore more with staff and interested parents. There will be changes as a result. He wants to do two or three listening sessions for the Steele community before the winter break. Mr. Capp needs to give intent to apply for a Pathway to the district in the next two weeks, then the application is due in January. He plans to do a survey as well.
- Trudi asked what would be the disadvantage of putting in intent to apply for both programs. Mr. Capp said none and that Steele should do that.
- Asked if he was leaning toward Arts or STEM right now, Mr. Capp said he has not had a chance to listen to parents and understand a lot of perspectives yet. His current thinking is that it would be really smart to do both at Steele, a school with people from all different fields and backgrounds who are mainly drawn to Steele for the community and sometimes the reputation. He said that Steele has kids who have interest and talents in both arts and STEM and suggested perhaps the first six weeks of school could be K-2 focusing on Arts while 3-5 focuses on Engineering and then flip, going back and forth and continuing to build opportunities after school and through field trips. Mr. Capp observed that in the Arts Integration program there was often a thin connection between the Math and ELA curriculum and the art that was being done.
- In response to a question about whether the teachers would have more training, Mr. Capp said that District 11 would pay for training if Steele were a pathway school. If Steele were not a pathway school, the community would need to look at the school organization for how to do it anyway.

- Trudi asked about STEM vs. STEAM, noting the “A” is for Arts. Mr. Capp said that Marcy has noticed one of the things that binds all these schools together is inquiry and student-derived questions and channeling those into the curriculum. He said that could be a good way to organize all of this work and that STEAM is worth considering. Mr. Capp said he doesn’t know if there is an overarching organization that can help develop/implement that, which is one of the advantages of STEM and Arts Integration.
- Mr. Capp said the driving factor for a pathway school should be what is best for Steele students rather than just enrollment. He took the trip with several principals from the center of District 11 whose schools are all down about the same enrollment and realized that all of the schools are in a similar situation.
- Mr. Capp asked for input on how to present the information to the Steele community and there was a discussion about an evening Zoom session and a coffee talk during school, probably on November 19.

Community Night

- Community Night will be Thursday, November 18. Mr. Capp said he is having trouble getting a food truck for the event and asked if anyone has connections. Megan Harris said she would reach out to a neighbor about a food truck.

Calendar Review

Community Night – November 18, 5:00-6:30pm

Pancake Breakfast – December 17: Mr. Capp said the best way to support the Pancake Breakfast would be for the PTA to make a monetary donation to support it and requested \$500 and two volunteers to help with making the pancakes. The PTA discussed how to approve without budget information. Meg consulted a previous budget to see what was budgeted for pancake breakfasts in the past and said it was \$500. Trudi mentioned that we should work closely with front office staff, Shauna and Kelly and should check with Mark to make sure the budget supports it. Terry Spotts said she has a Costco membership and can pick up pancake mix. Kate Hume motioned to support the pancake breakfast up to \$500 pending review of the budget, Megan Harris seconded. Motion carried.

Holiday Movie – around the holiday time period: Last year the PTA hosted two virtual movie viewings. Kate suggested that this year we do one. The PTA is looking for other holiday spirit ideas to do around the school. Mr. Capp previously said that door decorating is a fire hazard.

Hour of Giving: Kate explained that the PTA is looking to do a fundraiser with a social event somewhere like Goat Patch (if people feel comfortable coming in person) paired with an hour of giving. Currently looking at February/March timeframe.

Focus Day, Someone Special, other events: The PTA is looking for volunteers who are interested in putting events together. Lori said she could lead the Someone Special Dance.

Further Holiday Movie Discussion: Trudi talked to Mr. Capp about the possibility of having an indoor movie and he thought it was still too soon for that. But hopefully by February, we could possibly have in-person events. Megan suggested an outdoor movie – there was some discussion about concern obtaining the rights to the movie. Lori said she could check with the owner of Kimball’s Peak Theater downtown to see if he could help at all. Kate, Megan, and Lori will look into Kimball’s, outdoor movie and drive-in options.

Previous Business

Green Team Super Heroes: Megan Harris gave an update on the program. On December 6, Lisa (the program director) plans to go into each classroom and give a presentation to solicit applications and then get the program going in January. More forms will be going out shortly.

Directory: A very small group of people have responded to be in the directory. Kate said she needs to do more publicizing of it. The directory is online and can be updated continuously. Ann Griner is still coordinating. Kate will put more info in the next several Steele Notes.

Staff Appreciation: Trudi said volunteers have been designated to support staff members throughout the year. Trudi asked people for ideas of what we could do for staff around the holidays.

PTA Giving Focus Survey: Mr. Capp has not received a lot of responses on the survey, maybe 20. Trudi suggested sending it out again.

New Business

Give a Lift Program: Megan Harris presented. Megan was asked by Lisa Korte (School Social Worker) if she would be willing to put together 12 fresh food baskets. Lisa would like to do baskets for Thanksgiving and December holidays. Hunter Gather (Megan’s business) will take care of Thanksgiving. Lisa will reach out to Alli Klein to do a gift card drive. Megan would like to put out a call for money to donate food as well. People could email Megan or Alli if they’re interested.

Free COVID Tests: People can order free COVID-19 test kits through the state at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/covid-19-testing-at-home>.

Winter Clothing Swap/Used Book Sale: Trudi said the PTA decided if people needed specific clothing items, Lisa Korte could let us know.

Winter Speaker Series: Trudi said that Anna Donovan (School Counselor) suggested online workshops/seminars for parents and kids. Trudi shared the list of options over the chat on Zoom. Trudi said we would ideally do three sessions, partnering with other schools and possible sponsors. Trudi said she and Anna thought the interactive Zoom option would be better than the pre-recorded option.

Garden Project: Megan Harris met with Greenway Gardeners who is interested in donating time to get a garden project going. The cost of a community garden would range from about \$2200-\$5000 depending on number of beds, where they would be placed, mulch around them, raised beds vs. mounds. Connecting to water would be a bit of a challenge. Greenway Gardeners said the garden could be built on one Saturday with a team of 7-10 volunteers. A team would need to be engaged throughout the year to maintain and to educate teachers about how they could contribute. Megan said we could integrate science, art, and math and that getting hands in the soil is such a stress reliever. At Galileo Elementary (who has a dome greenhouse) there were some legal issues with processing the food in the school. If the PTA were to donate the food or not bring it into the school, there may be some workarounds. Megan will put together a presentation with the cost, benefits to the school, etc. Mr. Capp hasn't had a lot of response to the giving surveys. Trudi suggested that if someone is prepared to take the lead on a garden project, we could promote it as the PTA project for this year. Meg suggested doing a garden party theme for the fundraiser if the goal is a community garden.

Event Ideas and Coordinators: Dance in February (Lori), Focus Day (usually in March or April) – suggestion of garden/agriculture theme. Biggest Little Farm movie. Enrichment in the spring. Mr. Capp is enthusiastic to have that again. He talked about getting the front office or a teacher to partner with PTA in leading that. Need a volunteer to coordinate Enrichment.

The PTA will send out the Finance Report to the people who attended the meeting. Treasurer Mark Perrault will make the motion to approve when sending it out and people can vote via email.

Trudi adjourned the meeting at 9:36 am.