

MINUTES

Towanda Elementary

12/05/2022

In Attendance

Lyndsay Sellitto	Heather Fermon	Brandi Rockwell	Tiffany Nord	Marlys Bennington
Kristine Koerner	Naomi Arndt	Eric Hadden	Michelle Panizzi	

Update from Mrs. Bennington

- Deck the Halls was a fun, engaging event! Thank you for hosting this special evening for our families and staff!
- The Book Fair is going on this week, December 5-9, 2022. Family Night is Tuesday, December 6th from 5:00-7:00 pm. Stop by and shop. Mrs. Stiers and Mrs. Thompson will be available to help.
- December 5th 6:00pm - PTO Meeting
- December 5th-9th Book Fair
- December 6th 5:00-7:00pm Book Fair Family Night - Gym
- December 8th 10:45am - Early Release
- December 14th Last Day of 5th Grade Band/Orchestra for 1st Semester
- December 15th 1:30-2:30pm - Classroom Parties
- December 16th Winter Activity Day - Pajama Day - Last Day Before Break
- December 19th-January 3rd Break
- January 3rd Institute Day - Staff Only
- January 4th School Resumes
- We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Stanczak, one of our 4th grade teachers, for her time with us this semester. She stepped into this role and embraced it, and she has done an excellent job of teaching and growing our 4th graders!! We have been thankful for her love and dedication, and we will miss her a lot! Mrs. Stanczak, you are always welcome at Towanda, and you will always be a Bulldog!
- We welcome Ms. Taylor Parsons, who will join us as one of our 4th grade teachers for second semester!
- Mr. Hadden shared that the 5th graders went to Challenger Learning Center on 12/1. The kids had a great time/had fun/made memories and worked on simulations/team building. Thanks to PTO for helping to fund this trip.

Character Gram Store

- Holiday Character Gram Store will be 12/13 over lunch. Students will shop for a max of 2 items and will be shopping for family members. All items cost 10 character grams. Bags, tissue paper and bows will be provided.

- Heather has designed a simple form for students to fill out beforehand with number of character grams they have going into the store. Hope is this will be easier/consistent approach to use going forward. Will adjust as needed going forward.
- Huge thanks to all the parents who helped by purchasing items from the wish list. Heather is going to draft an email thanking parents and will send out thank you notes to those who purchased big ticket/lots of items.
- We will consider timing/intervals of when to hold the remaining character gram stores this year and next. Mrs. Bennington is flexible on what we decide. 1/17 is next scheduled and will be a traditional store where students can shop for themselves.

Winter Activity Day- 12/16

- PTO will provide a snack. Mr. Hadden said that fruit snacks had been determined to be the most allergy friendly option.
- Still need 2 parent volunteers to help with Partner Reading. This is just supervising students as they read together and does not involve any parent reading aloud. Michelle will post to Facebook requesting volunteers and will provide Mrs. Lange's sign-up genius.
- Students will move through the activities in mixed groups from all grade levels.

Budget

- Naomi will send email reminder to teachers regarding teacher grants.
 - o Used a rolling process for requests this year. Consensus is this is better for teachers as they can request when need arises as opposed to just at the beginning of the year. Mr. Hadden shared a story about how a document camera was discovered to not be working and within a few days PTO was able to provide a new one. Said it was nice for teachers to not have to think 12 months in advance when considering teacher grants.
- Biggest expense for month was Challenger experience for 5th graders. Cost was \$495
 - o Balance 11/14/2022 9,844.63
 - o Inflows 0.00
 - o Outflows (858.13)
 - o Balance 12/5/2022 8,986.50

Deck the Halls Recap

- Next year consider a sign-up genius for paper chain to get more parents involved with hanging the chain.
- Ornament crafts were well received. Puppies and wood ornaments most popular.
- Next year consider taking pictures/providing ornament that picture can go on.
- Discussion on how to make more inclusive of other fall/winter holidays such as Hanukah, Diwali, Kwanzaa. Consider different ornament shapes next year (dreidel? Star of David?) Incorporate colors besides red/green in tablecloths/napkins? Any parents with ideas for future years are invited to reach out to PTO with suggestions.
- Sound bar used for music worked well. Consider allergy friendly options for snack next year.

General

- Class parties on 12/15. Heather has had a few questions from room parents.
- Iron Coyote Dine to Donate will be 1/20.
- Sign up genius for Midwest Food Bank event to come out later. Will be April 25th from 6-8:00 pm.
- Tiffany volunteered to handle April Staff Appreciation, so all months are filled. Thank you everyone!
 - o Pizza was provided in November for staff.
- Gofer List – Hailey is going to be point person. Email will go out to parents explaining what Gofer List is and provide more details.
- Used Book Sale will be 3/17 for students to shop. 3/18 for public sale. Timing is around Spring into Reading. More details to come but will be like last year with a drop off house in neighborhoods/school.
- Lyndsay/Andi will start looking at dates for Walk-A-Thon.
- 50/50 raffle. We would like to do one just need to figure out when. Not sure if Deck the Halls is the right time since we want to keep this as a no pressure event for families to enjoy. Maybe during the public book sale? Need to discuss further
- Spring Family Fun Night discussion. Possibly on a Friday in the spring. Kids could play on playground. Could do 50/50. Could have a food truck/Kona Ice. If we did a cookout, we would need a temporary food permit. Could just do popcorn/kettle corn. Mrs. Bennington will check with food services for requirements when providing food. Labels/sign with ingredients might not be enough.
- Accessible Playground – Naomi did research online which triggered her receiving an email from representative from playground company. She let him know we are still in preliminary stages. Still need to research/discuss options.
- We were only able to get 1 Sam’s Club card so will have to share as needed.
- Last Scrip order of the year went out on 12/5.
- Spirit Wear – discussed organizing a gently used Spirit Wear sale/table. Could collect items in the spring. PTO could clean/organize and offer items at Back-to-School night or Kindergarten registration. Kristine volunteered to help organize.
- Kindergarten registration will be March 1st, 2023 and will be an in person event held at the school.
- School supply bundles – some schools offer option to purchase a box with school supplies so that families don’t have to shop on their own. This was researched in the past and it was decided not to pursue but no one remembered exactly why. The guess is that the cost was much higher to go this route than for parents to shop on their own. Someone also must organize and this doesn’t provide teachers with as much flexibility to make changes to supply lists.
- Teacher gifts for December were discussed.

Next Meeting

January 9th at 6:00 pm
