

**PTO Minutes**  
**Thursday, September 3, 2015**  
**6:30pm, ERS Library**

**President:** Meeting brought to order at 6:35pm; May minutes approved.

- Board members and their roles were introduced.
- It was noted that the school weekly calls are not making it to all parents. This week, Dr. Wuch will ask people whose primary (or secondary) number(s) didn't get the call to email Lisa with the number(s) that were missed.

**Vice Presidents:**

- **New Family Signs** were distributed at the start of the year and will be pulled and stored in the Office over the next few weeks. A volunteer is needed to assist with collection.
- A **PTO Webpage** is forthcoming, and a **Paypal account** will be linked for donations and fundraisers.
- The **PTO Facebook** page has 195 members; committee reports and parents are encouraged to post.
- A **Google spreadsheet** for volunteer signups is available on Facebook. We are in need of a volunteer to coordinate teacher dinners during conference week; volunteers have signed up to bring food.
- **Text alerts** for events are forthcoming; we are working with Dr. Wuch on set-up.
- **Target Charge of Education** is a program that links ERS to the Target Redcard and donates a portion of purchases to the school. Our most recent donation was \$128. Currently, only 22 people participate. As many aren't aware of this option, it was suggested that a Facebook post be done to instruct people how to link their Target RedCard to ERS.
- **Target Charge for Education, Schnucks Scripp card, and Boxtops/Labels for Education** will be promoted this year (e.g. Facebook) as monies received go directly to ERS via the PTO account. Lauren (Secretary) will provide text for the Wednesday email as well.
- **Room parent meeting** (Amy Gerlach, Chair) will be held on 9/22 at 2:15.
- **Septemberfest** (Paula Wright, Chair) will have two Foodtrucks (Hacienda, 22August) arrive at 4pm. Brad Jordan will set up speakers for music. A donation of 250 sugar-free popsicles was received. Dr. Wuch confirmed that bathrooms will be open and custodial staff will be present. Because there was no volunteer to coordinate this event, it was almost canceled. Volunteers stepped up with the idea of having Food Trucks. A reminder was given that this is a community building event, so people should please feel free to bring a picnic dinner and come out to have fun.
- The **Buzz Book** (Cindy Norton, Chair) is undergoing final review. Advertising will be offered to parents, which will offset printing costs. Books should be distributed about 9/14.
- **Trunk or Treat** (Sidney Wilmore, Chair) will be held 10/23. Sign-up forms will be available mid-September for people to volunteer to decorate their trunks and donate candy.
- **Jaguar Gear** will be coordinated with Johnny Mack's via online sales. As soon as logistics are finalized, announcements will be made. Other District schools in are using Johnny Mack's as well.

**Treasurer:**

- There will be two product-selling fundraisers this year – **Giving Studio** (products made by local artists, including jewelry, soaps, food items, etc.) and **Pasta** (themed for things such as sports, holidays, and hobbies).
- The balance at the end of August was \$15,168. The big expense this year is the fixed grants for staff, given on "Meet the Teacher Day" (\$350/teacher, specialists) to help buy classroom items.
- The 2015-16 budget was discussed and approved. Jag Gear income/ overhead will be deleted since all orders will go directly through Johnny Mack's. Dr. Retzlaff's retirement gift has not yet been purchased, but the dollars donated are restricted for that purpose and will be spent soon. Each year

the PTO raises money for a school project, but there is currently no set project. Ideas include child-size, “cozy” furniture for the library; a staff survey of school needs will be done to identify projects.

- Last year was the first year the PTO offered the opportunity for families to donate rather than fundraise, and the response was well-received. This will be done again this year.
- 75% of monies raised through Original Works and Book Fair will go to Art Department and Library respectively, with the remaining 25% going to the PTO.

#### **Principal:**

- Dr. Wuch introduced herself and provided some background. She has spent 27 years in education and is in her 9<sup>th</sup> year as an administrator. She was at Ambrose 9 years ago (for 4 years), then served as a principal for 5 years (5 Wilkinson, with year 5 also in Mallincrodt Academy). Dr. Retzlaff was Dr. Wuch’s mentor during her PhD training.
- The first three weeks of school have been great! The staff are amazing, and parent dedication is just as awesome – this is what makes us successful and a good, strong community.
- Goal for the year: Develop three communities – staff, students, and parents.
- Dr. Wuch’s door is always open (98% of the time!) – if it is closed, it means something is due.
- Arrival and dismissal processes will be tweaked in the upcoming days. There are two things to change immediately: Dr. Wuch wants documentation from parents giving permission for children to walk/bike home, with confirmation that it is understood that the kids will go right home. She has already received two calls from parents asking where their children are – everything was fine, but it reinforced the need for this policy. At dismissal, the sidewalk for walking and the grass for talking.
- No big changes are anticipated this year; it will be a big observation year to see what does(n’t) work.
- School attendance is sub-optimal. Too many students arrive late or leave early.
- Enrollment is ~390, with kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes having the highest classroom sizes.
- Kindergarten class sizes are being addressed. Mr. Wilmering has 26 students, with a FT aid; some students leave after the morning. Permission was granted to hire another teacher, and the job is posted. One idea is to pull half-day students (13) into their own classroom to level current classes. When the new teacher is hired, s/he will be with Mr. Wilmering all day at first to start to transition with the children. After half-day students leave, the teacher will go into the other kindergarten classes to work individually with children. Dr. Wuch will find out how many half-day kids plan to go full-day, as that will affect how to level classrooms. A kindergarten parent meeting was requested.
- PTO storage space will be discussed with the Board.
- Ashley Cade offered to Chair “Coffee Hours” for parents to have more face time with Dr. Wuch. It was suggested to stagger morning/afternoon/evening events.

#### **New Business:**

- Next month’s meeting is at the Carpenter Branch Library in the City to reach out to City families who attend ERS. We will have a guest speaker talk about technology in the classrooms.
- A parent provided information about ChildSafe kits, which are used to activate Amber Alerts. She will work with the Board and Dr. Wuch to get information out to parents.
- It was suggested that a few teachers submit quotes about how they used their teacher grants to include in the PTO letter requesting donations.
- It was suggested to have two babysitters at all times for safety purposes.
- Melissa Helwig’s husband will donate mulch for landscaping.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm. The next meeting is September 3 at 6:00 in the Carpenter Branch of the St. Louis Public Library.