

Birch Lake Elementary PTA Meeting December 19, 2023

Members in Attendance: Davin Mickelson, Krista Mickelson, Tracy Kelly, Beth Schickert, Julian Stanke, Ben Ferin

Guests in Attendance: - Jessica Ellison

Meeting Called to Order: 6:02 PM by Davin

Review of Last Meeting's Minutes: Approved as submitted

School Board Report: *(Jessica Ellison)*

- “World’s Best Workforce” plan submitted
 - <https://www.isd624.org/academics/worlds-best-workforce>
 - Goals:
 1. All children are ready to start kindergarten
 2. All racial/economic/achievement gaps removed
 3. All students ready for post-secondary education
 4. All students ready to graduate
 - Results:
 1. Pre-K kids progressing really well
 2. Working towards goal 2. All teachers completed cultural responsive training
 3. Graduation rates above state average
- Property tax review last week, see details on school board website
 - <https://www.isd624.org/about/school-board/meeting-materials>
- Next meeting: January 8

Principal's Report: *(Julian Stanke)*

- Holiday store:
 - Staff appreciated the changes. Feedback on both sides from parents/families
 - Very high participation rate from students
- Reviewing practices in the building, especially during this time of year (holiday celebrations, holiday store, etc.)
 - Integrating Equity Decision Making protocols

To nurture the whole student, we disrupt systemic inequities by recognizing, honoring, and embracing all cultures with humility and respect.

4-Way Equity Decision Making Protocol

1. How does this help to provide opportunities to students who have been marginalized within the system in the past?
2. How does this help to ensure equitable access for all?
3. How does this help to eliminate barriers based on race/ethnicity, gender, disability, age, or other protected groups?
4. How does this ensure that the same rigorous standards for academic performance exist for all students?



White Bear Lake Area Schools
Leading minds to learning, hearts to compassion,
and lives to community service.

- So far, 4 months of progress and growth
- “How do we supplement/reframe/replace fun and creative ways that fit the equity vision while supporting education and learning?”
- Not going to achieve overnight, small shifts over time
- E.g.: Holiday store: good improvements around equity, not disrupting gym for PE learning, efficient... do we rethink timing and move outside of school hours? (Otter/Willow Halloween example. Big event, moved to weekend, huge attendance).
- ELL teacher increased from 0.6 FTE to 1.0 FTE
- Julian to evaluate community ed opportunities (youth and adult age) at Birch to continue community involvement

Teacher's Report: *(Brian Griebenow, via email)*

- Kinder - Kindergarten just finished our NEW Amplify Science Unit on the needs of plants and animals! Next quarter we will be engineering simple design baskets! We are learning a lot about tricky words and letters sounds and simple CVC words and writing sentences too! We are excited to see the growth of students when we do our winter testing the second week of January! We are also grateful to all our families for their time and commitment to their children and their academic success!
- 1st Grade - First Grade is working in our Fable unit and has started spelling tests.
- 2nd Grade - Second graders will be participating in the YMCA district swim lessons. We will begin on January 2 with a dry land lesson at school. Then the following 6 days we will travel to the Y for free swim lessons. The kids are put into small groups for the lessons. This is a free experience for all second graders in WBL.
- 4th/5th - 4th/5th grade have been writing fables and historical fiction. The students in Mrs. Weiss' math class have been working on finding area and perimeter of various shapes by designing a space (house, room, aquarium, downtown White Bear).

- PE - We just completed our bowling unit and ended it with a day of cosmic bowling. For cosmic bowling we had the lights off and some cool laser and disco lights going in the gym! Skatetime money collection is going well. I would estimate we have collected about \$1,300 so far, which is awesome!

Treasurer's Report: (*Krista Mickelson*)

- Achieved Give to the Max Day goal of \$1000 for Skatetime program
 - Also administering the cash for participation fees received \$390
- Holiday store: Collected \$909 against inventory expense of \$1568
 - In line with expectations
- Expenses:
 - \$400 for 3rd grade MN Zoo field trip
 - \$250 Classroom Reimbursement for Mr. Burdick
- Grant request from Ellie Gutteter (social worker) for therapy putty: \$29.18
 - Grant approved unanimously

Past Events:

- Holiday store (other notes):
 - Holiday cards: donated, need to review before setting out to ensure messages in cards are aligned. Consider multi-lingual cards, or blank
 - Dr. K stopped by during the store and had good feedback
 - Handwriting in cards was a huge success and kids enjoyed
 - Church next door is very invested in Birch success. Sounds like some interest to even host the holiday store in the future.

Ongoing Fundraisers:

- [Box Tops for Education](#)
 - Scan grocery receipts with your phone, we get credit for General Mills products
- [Give with Bing for Birch Lake Elementary PTA](#)
 - Search with Bing to earn points that turn into cash for our PTA
- Groceries for Good Causes – Kowalski's in White Bear Lake
 - Put receipts in the box at the front of the store, donations issued twice a year

Upcoming Events:

- Open Gym:
 - January 12, Mr. G tentative
 - Tracy (and Eric?) planning to be there
 - Need to coordinate keys/games/equipment
- Clean up PTA closet:
 - Coordinate date with Mr. G and Extended Day, maybe Spring Break?

Meeting Adjourned by Davin at 6:59 PM