

ELLICOTT PTO MINUTES

Thursday, October 12, 2017

Board Members Present: Caren Chaffee- President, Erin Mastroianni- Secretary, Jennifer Duff- Parent Volunteer Coordinator

Meeting called to order at 6:32 by Caren Chaffee

President's Report- *Caren Chaffee*

Class t-shirts have been ordered for students, staff, and teachers and will be arriving in 2-3 weeks. Signup genius will be used for volunteers and coordinators. Committee chairs will also be asked to put together a list of lessons learned after their event to help future event chairs.

Principal's Report- *Mr. Pietrantonio*

Thank you to the PTO for funding 50% of Rachel's Challenge. Thank you to Mrs. Duff for the room parent and parent volunteer orientation. Thank you to the coordinators and volunteers for the Walk for Ellicott and for sticking through the weather. Computers were down last week so it was a difficult week. Hillcrest Fire Department is here this week and in K-4 they are going through the smoke house. Grade 5 is learning how to use fire extinguishers. A K-2 staff developer is here this week and will return in March and a staff developer for grades 3-5 will be returning at the end of October. Red Ribbon week is coming up and kids are asked to dress up. October 27 is Superintendents conference day. November 9 is the Veterans Day Assembly. Due to scheduling conflicts there will not be a breakfast this year. After the assembly veterans can stay and talk to a classroom if it's prearranged.

Treasurer's Report- *Jessica Merry*

-See report

Teachers' Report - *Mrs. Clader*

Kindergarten: We had Mr. Morton visit at the beginning of the month and are attending the Fire Safety house this week. We are busy practicing our Halloween songs for our performance at the end of the month. In ELA we are wrapping up ABC Bootcamp and diving into Reader's Workshop. We are also busy with early math, science and social studies activities with a fall theme.

First Grade: We are well into our Reader's workshop program and benefited greatly by having the Teacher College come in and perform example lessons for us. The students are learning about fire safety and enjoyed the annual fire station visit. At the end of the month we can't

wait to go and sing Halloween songs at the nursing homes on Halloween. Here's to a SPOOKTACULAR month!

Second Grade: The teachers were out of the classroom for a week recently receiving "Orton Gillingham" training, and look forward to implementing what we learned during Word Work lessons. We are currently planning our first field trip to Theatre of Youth to see "A Charlie Brown Christmas" in December. As soon as that is finalized, information will be coming home. Thank you so much to the PTO for funding some of that trip.

Third Grade: October is here and Play 60 has started! Thank you for helping your child to keep track of their daily physical activity this month. In ELA, the third grade students will be working on finishing the "Building a Reading Life" unit and moving on to Mysteries just in time for Halloween! We have completed our reading running records of all students, started our spelling letter/sound pattern word lists and are continuing our geography social studies unit by studying land and water forms. The students really enjoyed the visit from the Hillcrest Smoke house to learn about fire safety this month too!

Fourth Grade News: Fourth graders are well into their unit study of Fictional Characters. We are learning how characters can be the heart of a story, and that by interpreting their words and actions we can grow a bigger idea about them. We enjoyed our first visit from the Teacher's College trainer, where we focused on picking just-right level books, and look forward to our next at the end of October. We all began the year writing narratives, and are learning to write with organization. In Math, we finished rounding and we have begun adding and subtracting numbers through the millions using standard algorithm, place value disc method, and representing our understanding using tape diagrams. Many of us have started our study of plant development, and are getting ready to plant our flowers so that we can observe and record our findings as they grow! We have now become accustomed to using our chrome books regularly and love that Google Classroom, Spelling City, SeeSaw and XtraMath are a part of our daily routine!

Fifth Grade: 5th graders are excited for their grey t-shirts! They're learning about animal and plant survival, the geography of the Western Hemisphere, and decimal place value. They are also reading a ton and becoming better readers by writing about their reading. They're getting excited for the musical tryouts next month.

PE Department:

- "Play 60" has kicked off this month for 3rd-5th graders
- The "Fitness for Kids" program (via Independent Health) has begun and will continue through May. Most of this program is for 3rd-5th graders however we will come up with a program more specific to the younger grade levels as the year goes on.
- 5th grade boys and girls intramurals has begun and will continue through January 22nd.
- New this year, we have started a "Student of the Month" award - a top boy and girl student will be selected each month based on effort, performance and participation in our classes. Monthly winners' pictures will be displayed on a poster outside the gym and they will receive a certificate.

Computer Lab News: We've had a great start to the year!

Kindergarten: We continue to progress in learning how to login using our 900# and PW. We are now working on using www.Starfall.com to explore letters, numbers and colors.**I can always use a couple extra hands with the Kindergarteners, so please sign up for volunteer training if you would like to help out in the computer lab!!

Grade 1: We have started using **Clifford Learning Activities** to practice rhyming, counting, patterns, sorting, and computer mouse skills.

Grade 2: We began using a program called "Learn About Matter" to help us understand science skills we are learning in the classroom. It focuses on the 3 states of matter, measurement and mixtures of matter.

Grade 3: We began using **Typing Club** from the Keyboarding page of my website to introduce and practice using the "home row" keys and proper fingering while keyboarding. They are making wonderful progress. It is a good idea to practice for 5-10 minutes a few days a week at home to learn good keyboarding habits. We'll begin a Pixie project this week about the Continents and Oceans.

Grade 4: We began using **Typing Club** from the Keyboarding page of my website practice using the "home row" keys and proper fingering while keyboarding. They are making wonderful progress. It is a good idea to practice for 5-10 minutes a few days a week at home to learn good keyboarding habits. We also used a program "Photo Safari" to practice our map reading skills and learn about the geography of our country. The program has us taking photos of animals around the US and deliver them to a particular city.

Grade 5: We began using **Typing Club** from the Keyboarding page of my website practice using the "home row" keys and proper fingering while keyboarding. They are making wonderful progress. It is a good idea to practice for 5-10 minutes a few days a week at home to learn good keyboarding habits. We also used a program called "Cross Country USA 2". It uses map skills to our country's geography to deliver Commodities to different cities around the USA.

Art Room News:

Shape Monster, Shape Monster Munch, Munch, Munch! My **kindergarten artists** are learning about shapes, having fun making Shape Monsters and learning the Shape Monster poem! Swiss-German artist Paul Klee is the inspiration for my **first grade artist's** Klee Castles. Klee used shape and color and so are we!

My **second grade artists** are creating sunflowers, partly influenced by Vincent Van Gogh and greatly fueled by their own imaginations!

Our **third grade artists** are reviewing geometric shape, warm, cool and complimentary colors as they create their self-portraits in the style of cubism.

Fourth grade artists are fascinated by radial design. They are creating their own radial designs using geometric shape and a limited color palette.

Robert and Sonia Delaunay have motivated our **fifth grade** to create lovely abstract compositions in watercolor. I am very proud of these artists!

Stop and check out the **Kindness self-portrait wall** next to the art room. Each of my students created a drawing of a time when someone showed them kindness. Special thank you to **Mrs.**

Jolene Zeigler for the three mornings she spent hanging the little drawings up. Her time, attention to detail, and kindness is very much appreciated!

Parent Volunteer Coordinator's Report- *Jennifer Duff*

The last volunteer training session was completed tonight. If someone has missed training, information and forms are found at <https://www.opschools.org/domain/2823>. If you have completed the training and just need to sign the annual acknowledgement form you can print it out here

<https://www.opschools.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=276&dataid=1074&FileName=el%20volunteer%20annual%20acknowledgment.pdf>

Room parents have been selected and attended training.

Wrap-Up Reports

-Walk for Ellicott- *Nicole Chelus and Jennifer Coppola*

Was a success and raised over \$13000. A letter was sent home and classes that won will be receiving popsicles and individuals with the highest dollar amount raised per class will have lunch with Mr. Pietrantone.

-Ice Cream Social *Liane Roy, Anne-Marie Asci*

Went well and the lines were minimal. Over 500 tickets were sold. Ice cream was over ordered, and extras were given to teachers for classes and will also be used for the Halloween dance.

Reports on Upcoming Events

-Halloween Dance *Stacey Cramer, Marisa Beechler*

Flyers for the dance went home with students last Friday – 10/6, and we have responses due to the office by next Monday. The Large and Small Cafeterias will be used for our event. The DJ will be setting up on the stage. There will be prizes. We have the Signup Genius website created – and asking for Volunteers to sign up to assist with setup/cleanup, entrance check-in process and snack table assistance. We have an estimated budget outlined based on what we are anticipating for purchases – we are just under \$850.

-Movie Night *Liane Roy*

We'll be showing Rio 2. The doors will open at 6 and the movie will begin at 6:30. We will be providing free popcorn, mini water bottles, and juice boxes. 2-4 volunteers will be needed to help with the popcorn machine and the drinks. Kids will be encouraged to "camp out" with pillows and blankets on the floor like we did last year. The book fair will be open from 5:30-7 pm that night as well. There will also be a Spare Change Bucket for the Veteran's Day donation.

-Book Fair *Anne-Marie Asci, Ren Choroser*

Vendor is Mr. Silver. A paper was circulated to students in grades 3-5 asking for book idea recommendations. Volunteers will be needed for set up, clean up, and during the event and signup genius will be utilized. A reminder email may go out Sunday night as the fair starts Monday morning and a flyer will be put in the virtual backpack.

-PJ Day *Kimberly Penn*

November 21. Money raised will benefit the SPCA.

Updates

-Membership/Directory- *Carrie Stromecki, Kimberly Penn*

We are nearly ready to go live with an online website and app. It will simplify paying for events via PayPal. Easy to renew every year. We will need to look into the possibility to order and pay for school supplies for next year and adding volunteer information for the library, etc.

-Newsletter *Tiffany Hsu*

Will be coming out soon

-Box Tops- *Tiffany Hsu, Carrie Andruszko*

Due next Friday 10/20. Lots of trouble with expired box tops. Reminder will come out via Facebook and a half sheet paper reminder.

-Square one Art *Holly Johnson*

Art was due this week. They were sent in today and about 240 participated. November 1 the order sheet will be sent home and products should be available the first week of December. If someone missed the deadline, they can still do this on their own but will need to pay for shipping.

-BET Update *Erin Mastroianni*

The first meeting was September 25. We discussed shared decision making and increasing recycling at Ellicott. We are in the process of gathering more information.

-Board of Education *Ren Choroser*

Nothing to report

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting November 14 at 6:30

Minutes respectfully submitted by Erin Mastroianni, Secretary.