

ELLCOTT PTO MINUTES

Tuesday September 18, 2017

Board Members Present: Caren Chaffee- President, Erin Schneckenger Co-Vice President, Erin Mastroianni- Secretary, Jessica Merry- Treasurer, Jennifer Duff- Parent Volunteer Coordinator

Meeting called to order at 6:34 by Caren Chaffee

Welcome and Introductions of all present

President's Report- Caren Chaffee

- There are two open positions- Apparel and Newsletter/e-letter. Please see a PTO board member if you are interested.
- More news will be posted online, including announcements and volunteer sign ups. There is a PTO Facebook page what will be continuously updated, Elptoellicottelementary.
- The PTO will once again be sponsoring class tee-shirts for students, staff and teachers. Teachers should look for a form that will be sent out to collect sizes.
- Please use the PTO board or event co-chairs to give feedback or present any issues. Any building issues please bring the attention of the BET.

Principal's Report- Mr. Pietrantone

- Thank you to all who volunteer and to the teacher representatives.
- Grade 1 and 3 based on enrollment had sections added in August and a couple of teachers were hired at that point.
- Universal FASTBridge was completed and will be reviewed for extra help/placements.
- An annual assembly will occur with behavior, rules and expectations will be differentiated by grade level. Code of conduct will be sent home.
- We are now following Readers Workshop for grades K-5. We invested heavily this summer in classroom libraries for grades K-2.
- We have a new Partnership with Teachers College. 1 staff developer for grades 3-5 and one staff developer for grades K-2 will come in 10 days/year total. They will meet with a grade level for 45 minutes, go to class and model a lesson or teach teachers and give feedback.
- New change is Chromebooks for Grade 4.
- DARE is up and running in Grade 5.
- The new virtual backpack will eliminate a lot of fliers being sent home. An email will be sent linking to the virtual backpack.
- October 5 will begin Rachel's Challenge with a high energy kickoff assembly. This has been a successful program in the past and will now be in all 4 OP elementary schools. After the

assembly, students and teachers will be encouraged to create a chain reaction of acts of kindness. Each class will receive a bucket with links to place acts of kindness on them. Each grade will get a specific color.

-Lockdown drills- there will be 4 as regulated per year.

-Ms. Neureuter hopes to return in 1-2 months.

-September 25 is an early release day.

Treasurers Report- Jessica Merry

-See report

-Reimbursement and tax exempt forms are available online.

Teachers Report - Mrs. Silver, Mrs. Hackford, Mrs. Clader

-*Kindergarten* is busy learning colors, shapes, basic routines, and working on ABC Bootcamp this month. We are also dipping into sight words and starting Reader's Workshop soon. We had a visit from Mr. Morton last week and he brought the most adorable goat named Sissy. Thank you again to the PTO for their support in funding Mr. Morton each year!

-*First Grade* is off to a great start! The students are settling into their routines and already working hard. We are planning many fun things for our first graders and we are always so thrilled with our supportive PTO! Here's to another great year of working together!

-*Second grade* is off to a great start! We have been busy getting to know our students and have begun our Running Records assessment to help find our student's Independent reading levels to begin Reader's Workshop, new to most K-2 classrooms this year. Next week, all second grade teachers will be gone from the classrooms for Orton Gillingham phonics training. We are really sad to be out for so many days, and sad to miss Ellicott's Walk-a-thon with our students and families, but we hope learning about new ways to teach our students will be worthwhile. Once we return, we will be excited to start our new Science Unit, "Matter Matters" about solids, liquids, and gas.

-Welcome back to school and to *Third Grade*! We have been enjoying getting to know all of our students! Our classrooms are getting started right away with multiplication and Reader's Workshop. We are also using this time to review cursive handwriting and basic geography skills. Spelling word pattern studies will start soon! The children are off to a great start!

-*Fourth Grade* is happy to be back and is excited for a new school year. We are launching Reader's Workshop in ELA, reviewing place value in math and have begun our study of brassica plants in science. We are looking forward to seeing all of our parents at the Walk-a-thon on September 29th!

-*Fifth Grade* is excited to be back. Last week the DARE program kicked off! Now the teachers are planning for the year's field trips, and information regarding them will be coming home soon. Finally, the teachers want to stress the importance of reading EVERY night!

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

Kindergarten: We are learning how to hold a mouse and have started logging in with our 9-digit number and 3-letter password. This will take us some time and we will take it slow. We also

started using a program called A to Zap that is a fun way to learn about the alphabet and use a mouse.

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 & Grade 2: We logged in and are learning our new password. We used Keyboarding Zoo from Abcya.com to remind us to use 2 hands while typing (right hand on the right, left hand on the left).

-Grade 3: We logged into our Chrome account and created a few bookmarks/shortcuts. We renamed them also. We will be reviewing how to type keeping the proper fingers on the home keys. In a few weeks we will begin using EduTyping. More info will be coming home.

-Grade 4, & Grade 5: We have logged into our Chrome accounts and began organizing our Google Drive. We created new folders and organized any documents from last year. We reviewed how to open a new Google Doc. We titled it and moved it into the proper folder.

Parent Volunteer Coordinator's Report- Jennifer Duff

-The first volunteering meeting of the year happened earlier. There will be another meeting October 12 along with room parent training. We are still collecting volunteer forms.

Committee Report

-Walk for Ellicott- Nicole Chelus and Jennifer Coppola

Will be held September 29. Forms and envelopes were sent out to students with a schedule. Volunteers are needed to help throughout the day. The Walk is under budget so far.

-Ice Cream Social

September 27. \$2/person. Volunteers are welcome. Mrs. Silver will put a sign up form in the teachers' room.

-Membership/Directory- Carrie Stromecki and Kimberly Penn

We will get a free 60 day trial to be online. We are upgrading to a cloud based directory like the middle and high schools. Paper forms will be grandfathered in. People may join the PTO at any time. There is an online component for events and renewal is easy. There was a Question if someone is not a PTO member how can they pay for events, and this will be looked into.

-Newsletter/Social Media

Elptoellicottelementary on Facebook

-Box Tops- Tiffany Hsu and Carrie Andruszko

Box Tops will be collected three times per year. A new Bounce Magic promotion will be running through October. Look for the bulletin board.

-Picture Day- Mary Pat Kent

Will be held Monday, October 2. Mary Pay Kent has worked hard at making the day run smooth and has made more improvements this year.

-Square one Art

Will be sent home next Friday. This allows parents to order products with child's artwork.

These products should be ready by the holidays

-Halloween Dance- Staci Cramer and Marissa Beechler

Details are being worked out. October 20 from 6:30-8:30. There will be a DJ and some small snacks and cider. Perhaps a photo booth and a judge for costumes

-Movie Night in November

-Book Fair

The book fair will be done again by Mr. Silver. Some of the pros were: ease of setup and staffing, no tax, and easy pricing for students. If teachers have certain books they would like to see, come up with a wish list and he will see what he can do. They will need volunteers which will be done through sign up genius.

-PJ Day

Will be November 21 and the money raised will benefit the SPCA

-BET Update

Will have the first meeting September 25.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting October 12 at 6:30

Minutes respectfully submitted by Erin Mastroianni, Secretary.