

Ellicott PTO February 7, 2017
PTO Meeting Minutes
Submitted by Erin Schneckenberger - Secretary

Board Members present:

Tracy Brege, President
Krissie Bonin, Vice-President
Karen Laudico, parent volunteer coordinator
Jessica Merry, Treasurer
Erin Schneckenberger, Secretary

Proceedings:

Meeting called to order by President Tracy Brege

Treasurers Report: see treasurers Report. Tax exemption forms available, disbursement forms available, budget discussed soon.

Board of Ed Report: Purchase of scientific Calculators was discussed, applies more to middle and high school. Keep an eye on minutes on website for more information.

Discussion regarding the computers (Chromebooks) for nonpublic school students. Our BOE Representative offers the following information as a follow up of further looking into the information that was shared....

In the third paragraph of the part of the policy that speaks to "Loan to Students Attending Non-Public Schools in the District" there is a "catch" which I had not discerned--- *"However, ...district not required to loan computer purchased with local or federal funds or with State funds other than Instructional Computer Hardware Aid funds"*. The Chromebooks were purchased with "SmartSchool" funds from the state and those funds are specifically to be used within OPCSD for students within the District. While non-public school students' schools still get a per pupil amount for computer through this "instruc. computer hardware aid" the amount is not enough to cover the cost of a chromebook (this is similar to the per pupil amount given to schools where district residents attend for library books and is somewhere in the \$35 range per pupil). The policy would provide the hardware to students if the funding was from a source other than those listed- there just isn't anything that qualifies so, really, the point is moot. SEE OPCSD WEBSITE FOR FURTHER DETAILS

Larry Bochen: community member asked to speak at meeting off agenda, he is concerned about the congestion in am and pm, would like to address

BOE for potential new entrance to ease congestion, from route 277. Mr. Bochen was directed to the Principal and/or District Office.

Room parent update: basket raffle for spring fest, 3/31. District has online training form. Discussion about training and different buildings throughout district.

President's Report: vote for expenditures. Track update - several meetings within district yielded PTO funding is not going to be appropriate for project. The project has a series of steps to be completed to gain approval. Mr. Pietrantone will put in plan to potentially add the track to the school. Would be more appropriate for PTO to add amenities to track.

PTO has funds to be dispersed. Discussion on importance of spending money on the students who put the money in our account.

6 Potential Projects were brought to us for funding:

Outdoor Marquis - estimated cost between \$20/\$25,000.

Reviewed mission statement. District responsible for installing and maintaining. Question about prior vote. Discussion about how the sign-board will benefit children, parents and staff, maintenance of the sign-board, information displayed on board

Marquis - 8 yes, 6 no, 2 abstain– Up to \$25,000 passed

Art seats - Mrs. Benes requesting new seats for art room.

Up to \$2000 passed - unanimous

Library Books - Mr. Fallon requesting funds for new books

\$1000 passed-unanimous

HD Camera ELTV - new camera needed for ELTV

up to \$ 400 passed unanimous – central council rep concerned about making sure purchase goes to the district technology department

Playground Balls – Balls are classrooms - \$400 passed unanimous

DARE program donation - \$1000 passed

Discussion about our PTO donations in the past to this program and how students benefit from the decision making process they learn via the program. Officer Mazur will speak at a PTO meeting next school year to keep parents informed of the program.

Suggestion for future use of money:

Discussion regarding Teacher allowance from PTO- Past practice of this was discussed and information was shared that our PTO was advised this was not the best use of our funds. Donations to the district must be

accepted by the BOE. Blank check type allowance funds are unwise.

Teachers Report –

January/February Ellicott Teacher News

Kindergarten - Mr. Morton brought in a reindeer in December and a Hedgehog in January. The Hedgehogs tied in nicely with our Jan Brett author study. We finished studying five senses before break. We are introducing teen numbers. We will also be reading some fun classic stories.

February - Mr. Morton brought in a ground hog this month to celebrate Groundhog Day! We learned a lot about these cute little animals. We are celebrating our 100th day of school with fun center activities in each classroom. We certainly are 100 days smarter! We are reading some classic stories and really enjoying discussing them while learning some great vocabulary in the process. Two classes have introduced Reader's Workshop and are enjoying this new process. Mrs. K our math coach is working in each classroom with some wonderful hands on activities, which are really helping to build our number sense. We look forward to celebrating Valentine's Day and President's Day before our February break.

First Grade -

- Looking forward to Rob and Carol Allen coming to school to perform a magic show. Brought to us FREE from the dairy farmers of WNY.
- Moving into place value in mathematics.
- Integrating Orton Gillingham phonics instruction with our state skills and modules for ELA.
- SS - learning about our family traditions. Comparing families. Talking about fun, education and chores from today and long ago.

Second graders are very excited to begin learning to write in cursive soon, and are also learning two and three digit addition and subtraction! We will be hosting "Explore & More" for an in-house enrichment program for each 2nd grade classroom on "Tinkering".

Third Grade- Third grade is working on metric measures in math and completing word problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Rounding and estimating is a part of this module. In ELA, classes are working on various units including mysteries, non-fiction and the Magic Tree house stories. Students are learning how to find facts in fiction stories and how to use text features to aid their comprehension. Buoyancy is our next science unit to learn with many hands on activities. In social studies, we will be studying the US and learning about our economy. We also got to learn about Chinese language, traditions and customs with the visiting teacher from China, Ms. Melinda!

Fourth Grade- This month is an exciting month in **fourth grade!!** Our students are delving into non-fiction books, and we are working on a close read about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In Math, students will be learning how to multiply double-digit by double-digit numbers, and then we will be moving into our Fraction unit. In Social Studies, students have been learning about Native Americans; we will soon be learning about the American Revolution and colonial times. Fourth grade would like to give a special thanks to our PTO for having Earth Spirit come in last month. It tied in beautifully with our curriculum, and the kids had a great time! Also, the fourth graders really enjoyed their visit from the Buffalo Beauts, of the WNHL. One of the players, Megan Bozek, played on the USA Olympic team! It was quite the treat.

Fifth grade is planning a trip to Theatre of Youth to see The Shakespeare Stealer in February. We're also right in the thick of Operetta practice, and we're all getting very excited. 5th graders are working on the Close Read, and we'll all be starting a new Reader's Workshop unit. Fifth grade is also planning a trip to the Buffalo Museum of Science in April.

From the Physical Education Department:

Congratulations to Mrs. Vivian's class who won a "Fitness For Kids/ NFL Play 60" Activity Party at the New Era Field House in December. They had a blast participating in fitness stations and even received a healthy lunch-to-go! We have been receiving some really cool pictures of 5th graders being physically active outdoors ...AND even cooking up some really healthy snacks during December and January! Keep these pictures coming so that we can add them to our Fitness For Kids bulletin board outside the big gym. Thank you to so many of you parents for embracing our Fitness For Kids program!

December and January in Computer Lab: Many of the sites I mention can be found at my website: www.mrsstott.com.

Kindergarten:

Dec. ~ We began a new program called www.ReadingEggs.com. We took a short quiz before playing so we would be playing the reading/phonics games at our own level. Parent letters were sent home so students could access this (and many other sites) at home at any time. We also used www.ABCya.com and www.santatracker.google.com to do some holiday activities.

Jan. ~ We began another new program called Math Seeds. It is similar to ReadingEggs but has a focus on Math. We have also used iPads. We have used the following apps: Bugs and Bubbles, Bugs and Numbers, and Letter School. The kids really loved it!

First Grade:

Dec. ~ Parent letters were sent home with information on how students could access many of our paid websites at home at any time. We learned about Holidays in England, Mexico, France, Greece, Germany, and Israel. We created a "Holidays Around the World" booklet using Pixie4. We also used www.santatracker.google.com to do some holiday activities.

Jan. ~ We began another new program called Math Seeds. It is similar to ReadingEggs but has a focus on Common Core Math skills. We also created Valentines for Veterans using Pixie4. This was good practice for our two hand typing. They did a great job!

Second Grade:

Dec. ~ We reviewed the program www.ReadingEggs.com. We took a short quiz before playing so we would be playing the reading/phonics games at our own level. Parent letters were sent home so students could access this (and many other sites) at home at any time. We also began a new long-term Pixie4 project about Communities. We'll work on it throughout the year. We started by creating a picture of an urban area and will add sentences to describe it. We also used

www.santatracker.google.com to do some holiday activities that included a little bit of coding.

Jan. ~ We used Google Docs to write New Year's Resolutions. We learned how to safely search for and add an image using the Google Docs app. We also created Valentines for Veterans using Pixie4. This was good practice for our two hand typing. They did a nice job!

Third Grade:

Dec. ~ We began a new program called ReadingEggspress. It is the older version of ReadingEggs. We took a short quiz before playing so we would be playing the reading/comprehension/spelling games at our own level. Parent letters were sent home so students could access this (and many other sites) at home at any time. We also used KidsHealth.org and iPads to learn about our bones. We also used www.santatracker.google.com to do some holiday activities that included some computer coding.

Jan. ~ We learned how to open a shared Google Doc and make a copy of it. Then we used Google Docs to write New Year's Resolutions. We learned how to safely search for and add an image using the Google Docs app. We also used a site called Tagxedo to create a "Word Cloud". These became our "Valentines for Veterans". What a nice job they did!

Fourth Grade:

Dec. ~ We completed a Plant project using Google Slides. We completed slides by identifying the different parts of a seed, a plant, and a bee. We also wrote what they need or how they help. We also used www.santatracker.google.com to do some holiday activities. Many of them involved computer coding. We wrote code to make an elf dance or move through a maze and created a snowflake with code.

Jan. ~ We used Google Docs to write New Year's Resolutions. We learned how to safely search for and add an image using the Google Docs app. We also used a site called Tagxedo to create a "Word Cloud". These became our "Valentines for Veterans". What a nice job they did!

Fifth Grade:

Dec. ~ We worked a lot with a robot called Scribbler. We wrote code to make it light up, make sound, and move. Some of us even got it to draw shapes like a square or a triangle. We also used www.santatracker.google.com to do some holiday activities. Many of them involved computer coding. We wrote code to make an elf dance or move through a maze and created a snowflake with code. Lastly, we created a surprise picture using directions in a shared Google Doc.

Jan. ~ We used Google Slides to complete a shared slide show called "What's your Dream?" We shared our dreams for the world and our future. I am

impressed with how good they are at using the Google platform! We also used a site called Tagxedo to create a "Word Cloud". These became our "Valentines for Veterans". They really made them look nice.

Chocolate Sale - just started Friday. Thursday April 6th, pick up date, volunteers needed from 130-330pm

Central Council-

Central Council Meeting
Dec. 9, 2016

Meeting called to order at 9:34 am by Barb Fowler.

Minutes approved by Kim Schnelzinger and seconded by Krissie Bonin

We will make effort to find a place to post Central Council minutes online with district as requested.

President update: Barb mentioned that we have current tax exempt forms for PTO purchases.

Treasurer Report- Financial Status Report discussed. Waiting on dues from one school and short couple bank monthly statements from schools.

School Reports were discussed and shared at meeting

Book Study- Mr. McGarrity spoke about the book Literacy Is Not Enough by Lee Crockett. The book discusses education in schools and the direction for technology and skills they are looking for in job market today that we are preparing our children for. Goal is to get book out into the community. Books were passed out to each PTO so they can be read and we will discuss as group at next CC meeting in Feb.

Lisa Kruger discussed new grading in elementary buildings. Discussion regarding benefits and how children and parents are impacted. Students are working towards mastery and more performance based feedback. Parents are responding well. Teachers are very positive and supportive.

Mr. Wolf spoke about the Blue Ribbon Status for the High School. Based on what school does in community, test scores and grades. High School had Blue Ribbon week and ended with an assembly for students and ice cream. Blue Ribbon Status is recognized for three years. High School received a banner and plaque to display. Mr. Wolf said it is an affirmation of what HS does and represents. Tim Hortons donated coffee for ceremony and Orchard Fresh donated 200 cupcakes.

Volunteer Training update with Deb Epolito. Completed video shown. Form at end for parents to complete and sign acknowledgment and send in to their school. Master list of parents who complete training will be distributed to each building's Parent Volunteer Coordinator. Each building will still have the Volunteer Orientation at beginning of year this will not replace that. Deb Epolito reminded PTOs to check the movie licenses not all movies are covered by the district license so be sure to check. Dream Works covered but not all Disney movies.

Meeting adjourned 11:04am

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathy Wiktor, Secretary

Newsletter- reminder to send Liz Duckham info for newsletter, photos, etc. Deadline by the last Friday of the month. Send articles to ELPTO@OPSCHOOLS.ORG

Square one art - received \$1154.00 profit

Spring Family Night - 3/31. Committee planning Luau themed event. Food Trucks will be onsite.

Dr. Seuss Day - 3/2. School will be decorated, kids and staff encouraged to dress in costume. Themed pencils will be distributed.

Author Visit -2 authors selected. 4/25-4/28-Matt Chandler- Author in residence will be with us. Writer's workshops for upper grades. Matt will also have a table at our PTO science night.
Author/Illustrator Heather Harris will be with us April 24th.

Science Night - 4/27 planetarium price increased, volunteers discussed, participants discussed, potentially involving Ellicott school projects. Need a chairperson to take this on for next year.

Box tops- current promotion offers Bounce Magic prizes.

Apparel - thank you to the chairs- excellent vendor, Finishing Stitches will recommend them to CC for other PTO's.

BET - concern regarding waste of food and discussion with students regarding lunch time.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting March 2, 6:30 pm.