Baker Elementary School PTA Meeting Minutes

Date: January 23, 2025 (Rescheduled)

Location: Virtual

1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 9:31 AM by Amanda Palermo, PTA President.
- Participants were admitted as they joined the call.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

- All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda

- The agenda was distributed via email prior to the meeting.
    - Motion to approve: Heather Elmer
    - Seconded by: Halley Casey
    - Outcome: Approved unanimously.

4. Approval of November 2024 Meeting Minutes

- The November 2024 meeting minutes were shared via email before the meeting.
    - Motion to approve: Dr. McClintock-Comeaux
    - Seconded by: Halley Casey
    - Outcome: Approved unanimously.

5. Guest Speaker: Shelly Patel, Boyce Middle School PTO President

- Shelly Patel joined the meeting to discuss Boyce Middle School PTO Board Opportunities for the 2025–2026 school year.
    - Open Positions: Vice President (3-year term), Secretary (2-year term), Treasurer (2-year term).
    - Boyce PTO is less time-consuming than elementary PTA as activities and funds are primarily teacher-led.

    - A QR code was provided with detailed position descriptions, and members were encouraged to reach out if interested.

6. Officer Reports

- Treasurer's Report – Heather Elmer:
- Financial Updates:
    - Spirit Wear sales exceeded expectations with $1,500 raised so far (goal: $1,200).
    - Current Balance: $30,000; projected end-of-year balance: $17,000 after expenses.
    - Major upcoming income items remaining include field trips, Baker Bingo, and Spirit Nights, and specialty keepsakes (not included in balance as it is uncertain if it will happen this year).
    - Sales tax exemption renewal was approved for five years.
    - The Read-a-Thon goal is $3,500, with $100 already raised.
    - The PTA is currently $900 short in covering the planned field trips for this school year.
        - A major expense is coming up: The $2,200 check for the zoo field trip is due by May 5th.
        - Options to Cover the Shortfall:
        - Utilizing extra Readathon funds (beyond the $1,400 goal) to help bridge the gap.
        - If the shortfall is not covered, parent contributions may be requested to ensure trips proceed as planned.
        - Vote held to allocate any Readathon overage toward field trip expenses – motion passed unanimously.
            - Readathon Messaging Strategy: Parents will receive clear communication about how Readathon funds directly benefit field trips.Messaging will emphasize that funds raised are not for prizes, but for educational experiences like field trips.
            - It was unanimously approved that any Read-a-Thon overage will go towards field trip costs.
    - The PTA is exploring a crowdsourcing-style donation tracker to display progress toward the field trip funding goal.
- Secretary's Report – Emily Hand:
    - No correspondence to report at this time.

- President's Report – Amanda Palermo:
    - Recruitment for 2025–2026 PTA Board and Committee Chairs will begin soon.
    - Open positions include Vice President, Secretary, and several committee chairs.
    - Outreach is underway to determine which Committee Chairs will continue for the next school year.
    - Open positions will be posted in the bulletin and emailed to parents later in the spring.
- Vice President's Report – Halley Casey:
    - Winter parties in December were a success with positive feedback from students and staff.
    - Valentine's Day Kindergarten parties will be held earlier than last year for the PM classes, with schedules to be sent to Homeroom Coordinators (HRCs) soon.
    - Reimbursement forms will be included in upcoming communications, including the link.
- Second Vice President's Report – Dr. McClintock-Comeaux:
    - Spelling Bee:
        - Great participation with 21 students.
        - Winning word: "Equality."
        - Finalists had to spell off-list words after using all prepared words
        - The event provided a valuable competition opportunity for students who may not typically engage in competitive activities.
        - Future of the Spelling Bee:
            - Concern: The Spelling Bee is a significant expense for the PTC, and it has become increasingly difficult to find volunteers to run it at other schools.
            - Potential Change: There is a possibility that the PTC may discontinue funding and organizing the event district-wide.
                - Baker's Options:
                    - The PTA may need to decide whether to continue hosting the Spelling Bee

independently in conjunction with the Scripps program.
        - The school will support whatever decision the PTA makes regarding the Spelling Bee's future,
        - Sarah Cranganu, who has been leading the event, plans to discuss the future of the Spelling Bee with the PTC.
        - The Baker PTA will monitor the situation and determine if it will need to assume responsibility for organizing and funding the event in the future.
    - Staffing Update:
        - Mrs. Tipton (1st Grade) will go on maternity leave in April; Mrs. O'Leary will return before her leave to ensure continuity.
    - Curriculum Update:
        - Keyboarding has been added for grades 3 and 4 to prepare for the PSSA's transition to online testing next year.
        - Students will write digital essays during the PSSAs for the first time.
        - Students are excited about the new keyboarding program.
        - Handwriting program is still in place.
    - Dr. McClintock thanked the PTA and families for their support.
- Teacher Representative Report – Mrs. Cook (3rd Grade Teacher)
    - Mrs. Cook thanked the PTA, staff, and parents for their continued support.
    - Students are thoroughly enjoying the new keyboarding program, with positive feedback on classroom posters and typing techniques.

7. Committee Reports & Upcoming Events

- After-School Activities – Kelly Meyers & Kelsey Minerd:
    - Spring session begins mid-March, with classes on Mondays and Wednesdays through early April.
    - New activities will be introduced pending permit approvals.
    - Kelly and Kelsey are stepping down after this year and are seeking new chairs to shadow this spring.
    - Volunteer sign-up will be released soon.

- Arts in USC – Halley Casey:
    - Submission deadline: January 24, 2025.
    - Show date will be announced soon, likely in February.
- Assemblies – Megan Hinch (Reported by Amanda Palermo):
    - January 31, 2025: Nia Dance Ensemble
    - April 8, 2025: The Next Galileo - Pittsburgh CLO's "Gallery of Heroes," highlighting historical figures.
        - There will be two shows to accommodate all students, including kindergarten, with 9:30am & 1:30pm show times
- Baker Bingo – Lucy Curran & Anne Scher:
    - Date: February 8, 2025, from 5:00–7:00 PM at Boyce Middle School.
    - Tickets must be purchased in advance; no tickets sold at the door.
    - Volunteers needed for games and concessions.
    - Cash-only for concessions and the 50/50 raffle (pending approval).
- Baker Family Cultural Fair – Lucy Curran:
    - Date: January 25, 2025, from 1:00–3:00 PM.
    - Ten families will showcase their heritage through booths.
    - Paper dolls representing students' cultural heritage are due January 24, 2025.
- Baker Gives Back – Katie Marsh & Kara Krebs:
    - Socks & Stuffies Drive starts January 27, 2025, for the Foster Love Project.
    - Valentine's Day card collection for Friendship Village runs from February 3–13, 2025.
    - Keep an eye out for information in the PTA bulletin.
- Read-a-Thon – Jess Schroeck, Jocelyn Munro, Natalie Jaskowski:
    - Dates: February 20 – March 9, 2025.
    - Funds will support field trips, with any overage approved for this purpose.
    - Fun incentives to boost participation include Dr. McClintock potentially getting a pie in the face if the $3,500 goal is met.
    - Considering donation tracking to encourage family participation based on reading goals.
- Spelling Bee – Sarah Cranganu:
    - The event was a success with impressive student participation.

    - Discussion ongoing about managing Baker's own Spelling Bee in the future due to volunteer shortages. (See more information above in Second Vice President's Report – Dr. McClintock-Comeaux)
- Baker's Got Talent Show – Pam Scureman:
    - Rehearsal: April 2, 2025
    - Show Date: April 4, 2025
    - Location: High School Theater (permits are already secured).
    - Planning is currently ramping up, and it's not too late for students to start thinking about their performances.
- Celebration Books – Diana Slanders:
    - 40 books donated so far this school year.
    - Book title lists are available in the weekly PTA emails.
- Enchanted Shop – Lindsay Minerd & Maya Brook:
    - Amanda thanked the volunteers, as well as extending a big thank you to Lindsay and Maya for all their hard work. The event was a great success.
- Grade-Level Socials Update: Each grade is planning end-of-year social events for students and families. Below are the current details:
    - Kindergarten:
        - Planning in progress.
        - Target month: April (exact date TBD)
    - 1st Grade:
        - Date: April 25th
        - Location: Baker Gym
        - Theme: Step Into Spring
        - Permit process underway.
    - 2nd Grade:
        - Date: March 27th
        - Location: Baker Park
        - Theme: Longest Recess
    - 3rd Grade:
        - Date: March 21st
        - Location: Baker Gym
        - Theme: Favorite Things
    - 4th Grade:
        - Planning is underway (more details to come).
    - Additional Notes:

        - Previous K event organizer (Emily Hand) has shared planning information to help guide this year's events for Kindergarten and First Grade.
        - These events are always a big highlight for students, and more details will be shared as plans are finalized.
- Spirit Nights – Amanda Palermo:
    - Chick-fil-A Night: January 22, 2025 was yesterday (awaiting final numbers).
    - Goal to have one Spirit Night a month through the end of the year.
    - Open to suggestions for Spirit Night spots.
    - Upcoming event with the Washington Wild Things.
- Spring Book Fair – Christina Tullai & Diana Slanders:
    - Dates: February 26–27, 2025 (4:00–7:00 PM).
        - Students will preview the sale during school hours on Wednesday, February 26.
    - The Book Fair will NOT overlap with the Read-a-Thon.
    - Sign-up Genius will be going out shortly for volunteers.
- Staff Appreciation – Bethany Salmen:
    - Event Date: February 6, 2025
    - Theme: Tailgate Luncheon
    - Volunteer sign-up available via Signup Genius.
- Third Grade Tile Wall – Natalie Jaskowski & Meghan Mechlem:
    - Supplies Received: All materials for the tile wall project arrived and have been sorted and organized.
    - Important Guidelines:
        - Each student must write their name and teacher's name on the back of the artwork.
        - Copyright rules need to be followed, and guidelines will be clearly communicated.
    - Distribution Process:
        - Teachers will distribute the clear plastic packets containing:
            - An instruction sheet (including copyright information).
            - A sample image of how the final tile will look.
            - A construction paper template for students to create their artwork.
            - Students should return completed artwork in the plastic sheet to keep it protected.

            - Materials will be delivered to classrooms the first week of February.
        - Final submission deadline will be February 29th. Starting earlier to hopefully streamline the process.
        - March: Artwork will be sent for production.
        - PTA will ensure clear communication with parents about deadlines and instructions.

8. New Business

- Social Media Chair Position:
    - New role for 2025–2026 to oversee the PTA's Facebook page and develop an Instagram account.
        - Charissa Lauren offered to assist with social media and PR efforts.
- 50/50 Raffle for Baker Bingo:
    - Pending final approval.

9. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 AM.

<u>Virtual Attendees</u>

Amanda Palermo

Shelly Patel

Heather Elmer

Emily Hand

Halley Casey

Alexandra Zanic

Kelly Meyers

Charissa Lauren

Elizabeth Cook

Jennifer Frisco

Lindsey O’Donnell

Lucy Curran

Megan Radomski

Patrick McClintock-Comeaux

Samantha Adler

Minutes Prepared By: Emily Hand, PTA Secretary