

Independence PTO Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 13, 2025

Attendance: Kaye Fischer, Courtney Rinkenberger, Emily Gerde, Lora Stebleton, Anna Wischer, Tori Dosch, Tennille Altepeter, and Rachel Haman

Meeting was called to order by Lora Stebleton at 6:13pm.

Motion to approve December meeting minutes Anna W.; Courtney R. seconded.

Meeting Timeline

Introductions

Courtney Rinkenberger - Vice President

- December Skate City night was the HIGHEST attendance we've ever had for Skate City!
 - Birthday Giveaway (won by Skylar Tran)
 - Pie the Manager (won by Audrey Rinkenberger)
 - Skate City gave us 34 \$5-\$15 passes
 - Discussion on best way to use them so they actually get used
 - Door Prize; first 34 people in the next Skate City night receive a pass
 - Work with the school social worker to give to those families that would love to attend by maybe haven't been able to due to financial issues
- Skyzone flyers went out to teachers for Jump Night Tuesday Jan. 14th @ 4-8
 - Admission is full price, but 20% goes to Independence
- The Lights Skate Night is confirmed for February 25th
 - Meadowlark has confirmed to be joining us
 - Dine to Donate will also be running this night at Lunde's Ice Cream
- March Bingo Night Date set for Thursday, March 13th
 - Spring conferences are March 17th and 18th
 - Spring Break is March 20th and 21st
 - Michelle Bloom will get contact information for Acapulco school contact for prizes
 - Conference food from Acapulco? They would offer a great deal

Kaye Fischer - Principal

- Assemblies and Leader of the Pack continue to be a success
 - We love continuing to get the students integrated more and more
- NDST will be coming up in March/April
- STAR testing was just completed this week
 - looking to next year....
 - School Test Day; try to get more structured and routine when it comes to test days.
 - Ensuring notice goes out to all families so they know testing days are coming up.
- 114 total bags of food went out to families between Thanksgiving and Christmas break!
 - Student Council was a huge help with this
- Battle of the Books
 - Mrs. Rudolph will connect with PTO to let us know what she still needs
 - Decided no t-shirts this year, Water bottles may be a good idea?
- Referendum
 - Independence will be a voting site, open 7a-7p
 - Videos explaining the referendum and how it effects our school will be going out soon
 - Single Stall bathrooms for one area of the school (most likely the front) will be put in place
 - Updated security system with more cameras (we have a few blind spots)
 - Special Ed locations (Bulldog Den) to accommodate more Sensory Learning
 - Boundaries, however most likely not for Independence, for the high school feeder system are likely to change if the referendum is not voted through
 - We are at or near capacity for most of the schools

Lora Stebleton - President

- Field Trips
 - Some first grade teachers are requesting t-shirts again for their Zoo trip
 - Shirts are bright colored to help students stay together and chaperons to have eyes on everyone
 - How can we accommodate this but also make things less wasteful?
 - Bright colored pennies or t-shirts that are reusable - kids wear them for the day and then hand them in and they get washed and reused for future classes
 - Most kids don't continue to wear their shirts after they receive them anyway
 - We've cut back field trip funds and currently have \$12,000 in budget
 - 5th Grade Ski Trip is likely to be about \$3000 + bus fair when looking at last years numbers
 - 2nd Grade still pushing for SkyZone - can we give other alternatives? This looks to be about \$1500 looking at last years numbers

Anna Wischer - Treasurer

- It was a low spend month
- Special Ed items were received

Emily Gerde - Secretary

- Reminder to look into a thank you Giftcard for Caitlin Mataic for making all the Bulldog bone stickers for our Leader of the Pack magnets

New Business

- Funds Request
 - Mrs. Altepeter
 - Requesting an extra \$50 for her pen pals program
 - More Students have joined!
 - Motion to approve up to \$50 for Pen Pal request by Lora S; Kaye F. seconded.
MOTION PASSED
 - Mrs. Dosch
 - Requesting a Literacy Footprints Box Set
 - Part of the guided reading program
 - Would allow each group of kids to have their own
 - Motion of approve up to \$70 for Literacy Footprints Box Set request by Lora S.; Kaye F. seconded. **MOTION PASSED**
 - Lora will order
- Day of Compassion
 - 4th Graders
 - 92 kids and teachers
 - Will need 15-20 volunteers from high schools
 - listing longer volunteer times tends to bring more people in
 - Do we need T-shirts this year?
 - verdict is split
 - Teachers like the t-shirts for creating a sense of unity with all the 4th graders and make them feel special, but also agree that the kids don't seem to wear them again
 - Alternatives to t-shirts:
 - Water bottles
 - Bookmarks
 - Stickers
 - Budget is about \$2500 to cover food, items, and event
- Looking to the future...
 - Create a breakdown for each class and their field trips with total cost. Help us see what to expect, even if it's already built in to the budget
- 4th Grade Spotlight
 - Writing: focusing on Argumentative Essays. Kids get to pick a topic with 2 sides and then write about each one and pick which they feel they agree with. This year is different with the kids being able to choose
 - Math: focusing on Rounding addition and subtraction. A little bit of measurement

- Social Studies: looking at the region of North Dakota! Geography, demographics, and more and how they relate to our economy

Popcorn Party Drawing:

- Mrs. Altepeters 4th Grade class
- Liam Gerde - Miss Heise 3rd class

Adjourned at 7:04 pm.

Motion to adjourn by Kaye Fischer; Anna Wischer seconded

ECG