Independence PTO Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 9th, 2024

Attendance: Joe Ford, Emily Gerde, Lora Stebleton, Anna Wischer, Caitlin Mataic,

Meeting was called to order by Lora Stebleton at 7:01pm.

Emily Gerde made a motion to approve November minutes; Anna Wischer seconded. **MOTION PASSED**

Meeting Timeline

Introductions

Kaye Fischer - Principal (presented by Joe Ford)

- The food drive was a huge success. Ms. Moser, our counselor, assembled 57 bags (possibly more) of food for families.
  - She will do the same over Christmas break.
- Kelsey Elliason has agreed to be our Yearbook staff helper at Independence. Jennifer will help from the office, but Kelsey will ensure photos are taken and getting uploaded. She is also willing to help with the design.
  - PTO could consider a gift for her in the spring?
- We have successfully had three all-school assemblies. The Leader of the Pack has been well received. The students get a sheet of paper at the assembly but Jenn mails home one on card stock and a Bulldog Sticker! This way we know families get the goods and can celebrate their child.
- Jennifer in the office is sending out the monthly newsletter and also updating Facebook.
  - If we need anything on those issues, we can communicate with her. It's been great having her do this for us!
- Student Council will be organizing and sending out a video with all of the lost and found items. We will donate after break.
- Popcorn – can we have popcorn the day before break? A teacher specially request the Thursday before break.
  - December 20th (Friday before break)

Joe Ford - Assistant Principal

- No additional information

Lora Stebleton - President

- No news to report

Courtney Rinkenberger - Vice President (presented by Lora Stebleton)

- Turkey Bingo was a huge success! The amount of monetary donations enabled us to purchase 100 additional food items.
- About 266 Bingo booklets provided (we had 300)
  - Next year...
    - Less pizza. We ended up having a lot leftover and were handing out for free at the end of the night
    - More table and chair space. We pulled out the bleachers for extra seating, which worked ok, but it would be nice to have more table seating.
- Large plastic bags for popcorn parties were purchased to replace using individuals. The bags came with twist ties.

- First grade teachers received one of their flexible seating requests. The wobble stools should be shipping soon.
- We received an email from Lundy's Ice Cream at the Lights asking about partnering with them to do a Dine to Donate night.
  - Possibly tie together with the February Skate Night at the Lights? Since they are in the same location
- Upcoming Spring Event Dates:
  - SkyZone night *confirmed* for January 14th 4pm-8pm. Families can come jump during that time and the school will get a portion of the proceeds.
  - Skate night at The Lights *confirmed* for February 25th 6pm-8pm.
    - Still need to make flyers and a Facebook graphic/event for this.
  - Spring Bingo night for March. Date will be confirmed once we know spring conference dates.
    - Prizes could be restaurant or business gift cards
  - Skate City night is scheduled for April 22nd 6pm-8pm

Anna Wischer - Treasurer

- Turkey Bingo was our biggest expense for far.
  - $300 over budget
- Going forward, we need to be a bit more aware of the budget before we start purchasing to stay on track. Since we've come into the year with less than normal, we need to make sure we are really keeping an eye on what we are spending.

Emily Gerde - Secretary

- No news to report

New Business

- Special Education Teachers Spotlight and Presentation
  - 83 current IEPS; 10 in initial evaluation or pending evaluation
    - Highest we've had
  - Staff breakdown:
    - 5 special education teachers
    - 1 resident teacher through UND
    - 2 speech language pathologists
    - 1 occupational therapist
    - 1 physical therapist
    - 9 paras and 1 instructional para
      - these are in addition to the other paras at the school
    - 3 behavior technicians
    - 1 school psychologist
  - 1 SLC (Structured Learning Community)
    - Focuses on students that require social and behavioral help
    - District wide program
    - Currently serving 5 students
    - 3 behavioral technicians
  - 1 DLP Classroom (Developmental Learning Program)
    - 1 teacher
    - 3 paras
    - Currently 12 students supported throughout the day
  - Department Goals
    - Social Skills - building consistency across grade levels with skills being taught
    - Students self-monitoring academic and behavioral goals
  - Funds Request
    - Materials to help build independent task boxes.
      - Broaden box/sensory supplies to increase interest and learning
      - Use a lot of natural, hands-on playing to teach different skills
      - List of items sent to email. Total $451.11 (not including tax)
      - Motion to approve fund request of up to $500 by Lora Stebleton; Anna Wischer seconded. **MOTION PASSED**
- Donations/gifts for school teachers.
  - Facebook event set up for a PTO account? Those who want to donate to the school/classroom needs can send in monetary donations throughout the year

        - It wasn't done this year, but getting wish lists from the teachers to share with parents. Families can give gifts that will benefit the entire classroom vs just the teacher.
            - Teachers love mugs, but they can only have so many!! 😉
        - Possibly getting something up and running by Valentines Day so families can give for Teacher Appreciation Week?
    - Funds Request
        - Mrs. Hoehm (not present)
            - She updated Hallway Signs with her Cricut and would like reimbursement for her supplies. Total $26.16
            - Motion to approve fund request by Emily Gerde; Lora Stebleton seconded. **MOTION PASSED**

Popcorn Party Drawing:

- Owen Gerde in Mrs. Trowbridge's Kindergarten class
- Kensington Wischer in Ms. Urbach's 1st Grade class
- Olen Sped in DLP room

Adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Motion to adjourn by Anna Wischer; Emily Gerde seconded. **MOTION PASSED**

ECG