Independence Elementary PTO

Meeting Minutes | Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2026

Attendance: Anna Wischer (Board Treasurer), Caitlin Mataic, Christopher Gbabir, Courtney Rinkenberger (Board President), Danielle Trowbridge, Emily Gerde (Board Vice President), Jessica Offerman (Board Secretary), Karen Johnson, Katherine Stangeland, Kristi Blanc (Board Member), Oliver Mogga, Peyton Gale, William Wischer (Board Member)

1. **Call to order**
    a. Board President Courtney Rinkenberger called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.
    b. The meeting minutes from the most recent meeting held January 13, 2026 were reviewed.
        i. William Wischer moved to approve the minutes, Anna Wischer seconded. **MOTION PASSED**
2. **Welcome and Introductions**
    a. All attendees introduced themselves.
3. **Guest Speakers: Kindergarten**
    a. The kindergarten team highlighted their goal-setting program for learners.
    b. The kindergarten team requested funds for a field trip to TNT Kid's Fitness and Gymnastics (~$900) and a flower pot project (~$256). Requests were accounted for in the PTO budget and approved as requested.
4. **Board Reports**
    a. Administrative report
        i. Staff member Peyton Gale provided an administrative report, highlighting the school boundary change stakeholder meeting scheduled for Feb. 11.
        ii. Peyton Gale and Karen Johnson provided an update on the BARR program, sharing that Independence is hosting a site visit with the state school superintendent and other state representatives, due to the demonstrated effectiveness of the program at Independence. They provided examples of the efforts to build positive engagement and connections between staff and learners.
            1. Funds were requested for 500 stamps (~$300) to continue the postcard project as part of the BARR program. This number of stamps will be adequate for the remainder of the school year and into part of the 2026-2027 school year. Request was accounted for in the PTO budget and approved as requested.
        iii. The school registration system will be replaced in Summer 2026.
    b. President-Courtney Rinkenberger
        i. Past Events

1. Skyzone Night: Well-attended, the PTO is waiting to learn the final total raised.

ii. Upcoming Events
    1. Ice skating at The Lights
        a. Scheduled for Feb. 26
    2. Battle of the Books
        a. The final battle with the two finalist teams is scheduled for the morning of Feb. 12. The initial battle was held Feb. 3. The PTO helped organize this year's Battle due to extenuating circumstances with school staff capacity.
        b. The winners will receive trophies, t-shirts, prizes, and a yogurt bar after the event.
    3. Spring conference meals
        a. Spring conferences are scheduled March 5 and March 10.
        b. The PTO will provide staff meals on both dates, with recommendation received from staff to set up meals at 2:30 PM to have ready by 2:45 PM on both dates.
        c. Fall conference meals were sandwiches and pizza. The PTO asked for recommendations on other meal ideas, noting ideas such as Olive Garden, Chick-fil-a and healthy options such as salads.
        d. The PTO will send out a sign-up sheet for parents to donate sides such as chips, beverages, and cookies. The PTO will purchase anything not donated by parents.
    4. Spring book fair
        a. Due to decreased staff capacity this semester, the spring book fair may be turned into a virtual book fair with a contest to see which class purchases the most to earn a Sonic slushie party. Pending discussion with Mrs. Fischer and school staff to determine if a traditional or virtual book fair will be held.
    5. Spring pictures
        a. Scheduled March 12, will need one PTO volunteer to assist.
    6. Spring Fever Bingo
        a. Scheduled March 26.
        b. The PTO will connect with a learner family who previously donated gift cards to Acapulco restaurant at last year's event to inquire about donating again for this year's event.

c. Volunteers will be needed for concessions, dobber sales, and helping making popcorn. A sign-up link will be sent to National Honor Society students for the volunteer roles.
d. The PTO will purchase glow sticks and Hawaiian-themed items to sell at the event.

c. Vice President-Emily Gerde
    i. Nothing to report this month.
d. Treasurer-Anna Wischer
    i. Reviewed expenses since last month's meeting, noting that most expenses were related to Battle of the Books.
    ii. Noted that ~$70 was received from the Space Aliens dine-to-donate event and ~$90 from the Skate City night.
e. Secretary-Jessica Offerman
    i. Nothing to report this month.
f. Director William Wischer
    i. Shared that a fundraiser is confirmed with Lundy's Ice Cream the night of the skate night at The Lights on Feb. 26. May reach out to other restaurants at The Lights to see if they would also consider doing a dine-to-donate event that day.
    ii. Planning to arrange another Slim Chickens dine-to-donate event in the spring and one additional event with another restaurant TBD.
g. Director Kristi Blanc
    i. Shared that Hornbacher's is donating a $50 gift card that will be used to purchase supplies for events or teacher appreciation efforts.
    ii. February's teacher appreciation event includes a door hanger placed on each classroom door for teachers to indicate a few classroom supplies they could use that the PTO will purchase for them.

5. New Business

a. Funds requests
    i. In addition to funds requests reviewed and approved earlier in the meeting, four additional funds requests were reviewed. The following requests were accounted for within the PTO budget and approved as requested:
        1. An English Language Learners curriculum book (~$99) and learning flash cards (~$66).
        2. A third grade field trip to West Acres Bowl to provide engagement, physical education, and math skill practice for ~$900 including bus transportation.
        3. Supplies for math game boxes for $~97.

4. Two additional wobble stools to provide more flexible seating to meet learner needs for ~$200.

6. **Old Business**
    a. No old business was discussed.
7. **Popcorn Party and Bulldog Beanie Drawing**
    a. Random drawings were held with those present:
        i. Popcorn parties were won by attendees for their learners in Mrs. Moe and Mrs. Nettleton's classes.
        ii. December's Bulldog beanie hat was earned for a student in Ms. Plaschko's class.
8. **Adjourn**
    a. The next PTO meeting is scheduled Tuesday, March 17 at 6:00 PM.
    b. Jessica Offerman motioned to adjourn the meeting, Emily Gerde seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:55PM.

Minutes submitted by Jessica Offerman, Board Secretary.