

Meramec Elementary School PTO Meeting

Thursday, October 27, 2016 8:45 AM

Attendees: Jenny Abeles, Dottie Silverman, Stephanie Gross, Patty Li, Jessica Lucas, Bridget McAndrew, Katie Cotsworth, Lisa Jackson-Terry, Mary Powers, Tanya Vedantham, Mark Keough, Bella Keough, Jeff Orgel, Jay Epstein, Laura Seelbach, Jennifer Chan-Wong, Willie Brandon, Beth Gracie, Sabina Garfinkel

Call To Order & Welcome (Jenny Abeles)

Completed Events (Jenny Abeles)

Movie Night – Very successful, increased attendance

Raffle – Raised \$600

Staff Appreciation – House of Wong lunch for teachers at October conferences, came in under budget

Alderman Berger and Mayor Sanger re: Centene Expansion Project: This is the most significant capital expenditure project in the community in a number of years. Centene HQ here is currently in downtown Clayton. This new project expanding their office space starts at the corner of Hanley and Forsyth, continues down Forsyth. Centene is adding 1000 jobs in Clayton, needs to add to its campus with an office tower, parking garage at corner of Hanley/Forsyth. The first floor will be “mixed use.” The plan is to also add 120 condominium units and a second parking garage. In addition, a civic performing arts center built by Centene will be used by the city for theatre, meetings, etc. Second stage development will be a second office building with hotel. \$800 million is the projected cost of the project. The city is negotiating a development plan that will include an abatement – 1) 40% tax abatement for 20 years, condos excluded from abatement 2) 50% tax abatement on personal property associated with new offices. The tax revenue the school district will receive from this project (once completed) is estimated to be \$2.5 million/year, up from the current \$450,000/year. State of Missouri also providing a tax credit package for the project. Visit the city website: http://www.claytonmo.gov/Government/News/Clayton_Considering_Proposed_Public-Private_Partnership_with_Centene_s2_p3009.htm for more details, or contact your Alderman.

Room Parents Halloween Party (Jennifer Chan Wong & Mary Powers): Every class except 3rd grade has submitted a plan for the Halloween Parties. Snacks and drinks are in-house already and ready to go.

Yearbook (Beth Gracie): Picture retakes Nov. 7, 8-10:30 am. Yearbook cover contest to tie in with the book fair, theme to be “citizenship,” based on the election year. Contest will run Nov. 19 (Book Fair) through Jan. 6. Reminder to Room Parents to take photos of your Halloween parties. Drop boxes have been created for parents to put pictures in for each PTO event.

Book Fair (Sabina Garfinkel): Nov. 19 is the official event at Barnes & Noble, and parents can also shop online the 5-days after and in-store for a week following if the purchaser mentions Meramec. Gift cards do not count towards our total. We receive 15% of the purchases – on everything with the exception of gift cards or e-books. If we sell under \$2000 in merchandise, we receive 10% of the proceeds in cash or 15% in gift card. If we sell \$2-10,000, we receive 15% in cash or 20% in gift card.

Voted on how to allocate the \$3078 in Scholastic Bucks from last year's book fair to Meramec teachers and Staff. Each classroom teacher will receive \$100 to replenish their libraries. \$100 to reading specialist. Lisa Jackson-Terry will make recommendations on how to allocate the remainder of the dollars to specialists. Motion approved.

Helping Hands Food Drive (Bridget McAndrew): Food drive is going well. More snack food is needed, less pasta and other dinner items. Lunches of Love items will go home on Nov. 11; finished products will go to St. Peter & Paul on the 14th.

RRR/LMR (Tina Murtha):

Let Me Run - Season is going well - boys are learning a lot of good character, confidence and team building skills, in addition to building up their endurance to running a 5K. We are nearly 3/4 through the seven week season, culminating in the Nov. 12 5K at Tower Grove Park.

Read, Right & Run - First (optional) school meeting is Oct. 31 - we meet (7:30-8:20 am) the last Monday of each month through March, except December when we'll meet on Dec. 12. Tina will distribute the journals during this meeting and make sure all students not in attendance have them by Nov. 2. Registration is open through Nov. 11 at: <http://gostlouis.org/rrrm-register> (cost is \$20) - as of Oct. 19, 22 students are registered. No teachers are available to assist in the monthly meeting - if a parent would like to help out, please let Tina know. RRR is open to all students, grades K-5. Students are challenged to READ 26 books, perform 26 good deeds to RIGHT the community and to RUN 26.2 miles (any athletic activity counts toward each mile). Program culminates in a 1.2 mile run in Forest Park on April 8, 2017.

Funds for Excellence (Jay Epstein): We are \$600 ahead of where we were last year, at \$11,300 right now. We are a little over 50% participation school-wide.

Treasurer's Report (Jay Epstein): See Treasurer's Attachments. Motion to approve report approved.

Communications (Jessica Lucas): Working on Sign-up Genius e-mails for Wish Lists for each teacher.

Parent Connections (Jessica Graetz): All grades have a party host. 4th and Kindergarten parties are complete. We are waiting to hear back from the volunteers as

to when the other parties will occur. The host families are leaning towards the spring. One glitch Jessica did notice is importing the contact emails (received from the office staff) into Evite. The contact list was complete; however, only half the emails were received by the intended recipients. Going forward, the parent connections committee will use the Buzz Book list to distribute all correspondence.

Principal's Report (Lisa Jackson Terry): Staff request for World Kindness Week, Veterans Breakfast funding the food for \$200. Motion approved.

Staff Request for One School, One Book (Katie Cotsworth, Reading Specialist): Program is where entire school community is reading the same chosen book at the same time at home. Helps build community, focusing on reading aloud at home is still very important. Book under consideration is Charlotte's Web (this is a secret). Audio books available, books in other languages will be available. There will be a suggested reading schedule that coordinates with classroom work, kids are given a copy of the book after the assembly and will take home with schedule for parents to read. Program is asking for 112 student books, totaling \$670. This is about 1/3 of the student books. Read to Them Foundation is purchasing the other books. Motion to fund the project approved.

Adjournment (Jenny Abeles)

Next Meeting Thursday, November 17th 8:45 AM