MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PTO COUNCIL FOR

GLENRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Thursday September 2, 2021

A meeting of the PTO Council for Glenridge Elementary School was held, as scheduled pursuant to due

The following members of the Board were present at the meeting: Lynn Courter, Co-President; Lilly Scharff, Co-President; Kathryn Yorg, Vice-President; Sarah Boyce, Secretary; Jamie Beyer, Treasury; Denise Stouffer, Teacher-Representative; Beth Scott, Principal; Jenny Abeles, PTO Council Rep.

The following ex-Officio Advisors and members were present:  Joanne Dismore, Jamie ??, Ha dang, Vincenza Cifarelli, Whitney Lorenz, Emily Milleschnoski, Denise, Jenny Abelees,

**Call to Order & Introductions:**

Everyone is listed above

**Principal’s Report: Beth Scott**

Beth’s in her new office 😊 in the foyer space off Oxford drive, visitors and parents are being rerouted to the Oxford drive entrance. When the space is finished security will be improved (bullet proof)

Beth toured a refugee family from Afghanistan who’s children will join Glenridge next week

This is Beth’s 14th year as principal and this is the lowest enrollment since she started with just over 300 students in the school. 2 years ago we had 426. Covid has had demographic impacts, less international families – what might change due to the enrollment. All classes are a nice size. 5th grade is the largest with 18/19 in four sections, all other grades have 3 sections. K has 13, 14 in a class. She feels good about low class sizes.

We haven’t had volunteers in the school since Covid. The elementary school principals are discussing volunteers and starting slow and cautious. So far this year students have had to quarantine in the elementary schools but not at Glenridge. This is the new normal to have some families quarantine. School is happening in person with students 3 feet apart, children are gathering on carpets which we were unable to do last year. We believe that the masks are the mitigating factor with hand washing to keep the children healthy

It’s great to see the students interacting, vowed to keep an outside element. It’s reenergizing brains and making everyone more efficient. Students work, then take an outside break, and then get back to work.

Proud of the faculty, intl speaker George Kores kicked off the school year with the Clayton staff, he energized a lot of people. The faculty has learned so much since the pandemic and pivoted so quickly.How do we grow innovating practices and empower everyone to be curious.

Looking forward to leading through the year

Ha Dang’s child mentioned hand washing is optional before lunch (which it isn’t) Beth will follow-up to make sure the hand washing is enforced before lunch and snack

Vincenza asked how we can support the family from Afghanistan. Beth is working with Cameron Poole to ensure a smooth transition. 3 children are in this family.

Lilly asked if there are more families and what the circumstances are.

Sept 9 is elementary curriculum night. It’s a virtual night, parents are going to get homework/directions on Tues. Feedback from parents last year that it worked well for convenience.

As we get closer to parent teacher conferences in Oct they’ll probably offer virtual and in-person.

We still want a ribbon cutting ceremony and 5th grade plaque for soccer field. There’s been an uptick in field usage since the turf was installed. We’ve double downed on security. There are now dawn to dusk signs. The bill will come to PTO. The funds are accounted for

**Teacher Representative Report:  Denise Stouffer**

Teachers are excited to be in the building, there’s lots of positive energy. Learn at home teachers and students are excited to be back. Lots of comments on the t-shirts. Students don’t have to take their ipads back and forth. Ipads stay at the building on carts and if needed their available for quarantined students.

**Presidents’ Report: Lynn Courter & Lilly Scharff**

Welcome coffee was last week with a great turnout. Parents are excited about the school year and want to get involved and be aware of what’s going on. Planning a drop-in meeting for the event chairs and liaisons if there are questions. Joanna is updating the handbook which will get circulated.

Joanna added a section on the google drive site for documentation/knowledge retention. Promote the drive as a place to look for info and to save info. We’re not going to publicize the link but can get to it.

There were budget numbers that she couldn’t get for taste of the world and the art walk. Are we doing that this year? We need an update from the superintendent on the art walk.

Asked Lynn to look at the last page about grade liaisons.

Haven’t had strawberry fest in 2 years so we’re losing knowledge on info getting passed down. Stacey ends up getting a lot of questions. Example of taking on work for picture day.

As part of read-a-thon Joanna got the number of students/class and will post on the google doc.

Need to add a general correspondence of president’s file as well

Some people are having issuing syncing calendars. Beth said it’s best to click on the calendar on the site. The calendar system is now web based. Lilly asked Denise to make sure the website has instructions how to sync. Joanna will check to see what she’s supposed to change

Jenny – district wide events are populated by district. School specific events should be updated by the office staff.

Stacy can add to the calendar. Denise will help look into it

**Vice-President’s Report:  Kathryn Yorg**

A few spots are still open for grade liaisons. Can a 4th grade parent do it as a single liaison? Laura Thompson said she’d be happy to assist. Need another 2nd grade liaison. Kathryn will move from 5th grade fundraising to 2nd grade liaison.

Need 2 people to volunteer for Spanish heritage, 1 for black history, and 2 for Indian cultural event. This could be a good opportunity to add something different/new. It would be nice to have parents in the building and present on the grounds. The district hasn’t put the brakes on events but we’re being cautious. It’s currently hard to combine food with anything because masks aren’t on. Put an open call in the next PTO email with a soft ask for more volunteers. We can also ask for ideas on events pandemic style (virtual/drop in) Discussed that families could all do a craft or activity instead of a food event.

At a parkway school they turned their intl night into a virtual platform. New family orientation brought that forth. The intl dinner allowed that. We had previously worked with the demographic to find out what we should honor in order to bring community together and raise awareness. Diwali and color runs were so appreciated.

Lynn will forward to Beth some names of people to reach out to on Spanish heritage

Joanna pointed out for merge of culture we had one event as a focus. 2020 was the Indian Culture event with a color run that was canceled. The colors are purchased, opportunity to pull this off – run/walk around the block with volunteers throwing out the colors.

**Treasurer’s Report: Jamie Beyer**

Mary gave a wrap up from last year. She sent the budget from last year, we ended with a net deficit of $4k, after pulling money from reserves for the soccer goals and brick engraving. We had raised funds for those. Last year we budgeted to raise $3k for funds for excellence and we only raised $1k. Goal is a balanced budget. Raised $3,350 for food pantry. Don’t need to raise as much this year because the money is still there. Talked last year about funding $700 for summer reading. Mary hasn’t gotten the bill yet. Beth will check on the bill. The $700 isn’t in the current proposed budget. In the past we used scholastic funds from the book fair for the summer reading. We aren’t using scholastic for the book fair since it’s virtual and Scholastic has less diverse book options.

Jamie – we made several cuts on events that brought in money.

PTO dues $5k budgeted and have only brought in half so far. Lots of discussion on how to drive payments. It could be a paper flyer (include a QR code) or specific email, have teachers reiterate in weekly emails and Beth include in principally speaking. We didn’t collect dues last year. Should we add another option on the website for people that want to contribute another amount.

Jamie has cut the colors from the Indian culture budget and cut classroom budgets

Kona ice used 2019 budget

Didn’t cut new hire budget (unsure who the new hires are)

Cut special teacher money which was cut last year.

Makes sense to Beth based on circumstances and told faculty to not use PTO as first line of funds.

There are 2 new staff members-school counselor, Jenny Todd and Ms Williams in 1st grade

The building budget can cover specials

Request to increase staff appreciation for the shirts which isn’t currently in the budget.

Would be great if there was breakfast for faculty

PTO funds paid for lunch on teacher’s first day back and t-shirts.

Budget hasn’t been approved yet, need to ensure people work within the budget.

Mary had a request to make sure all staff got t-shirts (not just teachers). Working to get 10-12 more to make sure everyone is included.

Pancake breakfast is listed as $1,500 but only costs ~$750. If we bring down the pancake budget we can then include the summer reading costs.

Funds for excellence should go to a capital project for the year.

We will vote on the PTO budget in the next meetings.

**PTO Council Update: Jenny Abeles**

Raised $9k last year in the district wide food drive. and have $1,300 left. Breakdown for families is 15 families/school went in weekly to get food or money for necessities. Jenny thinks there’s still a need for it. Jenny hasn’t spoken to her co-presidents to align. Thinks district wide drive makes sense and then we’ll divide between the schools. Some schools have more families than others. This year call it a food and necessity drive (last year was just a food drive) this will give options to give money to families for necessities. Recommends we do this in a few months ahead of the holidays.

Updating the bylaws and accounting procedures to make them more user friendly. Going to make a quick sheet as a reference.

**Other Business:**

School supply kits went well and better than last year.

**Upcoming events**

-First Claymo day will be in mid Oct led by 5th grade

-School spirit day will be earlier based on t-shirt sales. Julie Keeney (K parent) is in charge of t-shirts. Could we use kona day to sell shirts. Leaders are getting new tie dyed shirts.

Original t-shirt order date was Aug 29 – extend the deadline. Lynn will touchbase with Julie and include Jackie and circle back with Beth on t-shirt deadline.

Hope to have grade level assemblies that we haven’t had since Covid

Bullet book fair – Sept 8-15. Posters are up. Jackie sent an email to teachers to create a wish list. Email went to the community today.

Kona ice truck Sunday Sept 12 2-4.

Read-A-Thon will overlap with the above

Taste of the world isn’t officially canceled – Lilly recommends tabling it for now and revisiting it in the spring.

-School Picture Day – Sept 20. Parents can volunteer and help in the building. Beth can assist with Tracy to coordinate.

**Conclusion**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00am. Next meeting is Sept 30.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sarah Boyce, PTO Secretary