



R.M. Captain PTO

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 6, 2025
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Online: Zoom

1. Welcome / Introductions
 - a. Start: 7:00pm
 - b. Attendees: Dr. Erin Knight, Mary Jane Ruff, Jennifer Horst, Julia Drafahl, Zhu Xiaodan, Deanna Palagallo, Eileen McGaughey, Jennifer Tillstrom, Katie Huffman, Stephanie Pasch, Jenny Wand, Kaci Goldinher, Val Toothman, Fahzeela Mohamed, Claire Higgins Siegel, Karin Schute, Ireen Smithers, Nick Alt, Rosalyn Luna
2. Urgent Business
 - a. Approve minutes – motion by Eileen McGaughey, second by Deanna Palagallo, unanimously approved
3. Principal's Update
 - a. Classroom Halloween Parties - Thank you
 - i. Went very well
 - ii. Have plans for next year to revamp the timing of parade to give more time for classroom parties
 - b. Donate unwanted candy to the teachers
 - c. Character Strong - November: Gratitude
 - d. Thank you slides for PTO Wishlist items
 - i. Teachers ordered the items they wanted
 - e. Notes of Gratitude for teachers/staff - Dr. Knight will email out a Google Form
 - i. Parents and/or kids can fill this out
 - ii. Will go on bulletin board to tell staff know how much we appreciate them
 - f. Need Assistance? [Holiday Meal Sign up](#)
 - i. Can sign up to help families in need or can sign up to receive help if in need
 - ii. [Amazon wish list](#) or [Monetary donation](#) through MySchoolBucks
 - g. Non-perishable food items or personal care items - Turkey Trot (11/27)

- i. Drop off at Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving
- h. Community Teams Day (11/14)
 - i. First one was fun, will hang chain in school that students made
- i. Kdg. Sing (11/14 @ 3 p.m.)
 - i. Families are invited to watch in cafeteria
- j. African Dance in PE (Week of November 17)
 - i. Special presenter will teach the kids a special dance
- k. Parent Involvement Day (11/20)
 - i. More information to come on this, but it is meant to celebrate the amazing parents
- l. Holiday Sing (12/19 @ 2 p.m.)
 - i. Have been researching and trying to find a way to invite more than two people per student
 - ii. Working with Mr. Van Pelt on other options
- m. Spelling Bee - 3rd, 4th, 5th graders (will be in January)
- n. Thank you to Kaci for making Unity Day so special, the kids really enjoyed it
- 4. Fundraising & Event Report
 - a. St. Louis Dermatology Center 10% Giveback Opportunity
 - i. Raised \$500 for PTO
 - ii. Huge thank you to Osamuede
 - b. Family Dance
 - c. Bingo Night (11/8)
 - i. Coming up on Saturday night at Wydown
 - ii. 133 bingo sets sold as of meeting
 - iii. Another communication will go out tomorrow
 - iv. It is a family friendly event, any ages welcome
 - v. Cristina Malone and CHS athletic department donated items for prizes
 - d. Restaurant Giveback Night - Dewey's in University City (11/18)
 - i. First time that we've done this
 - ii. From 4-9pm
 - iii. Will send out flyers next week
 - iv. Need to reference Captain Giveback Night, so that 20% of sales will go to PTO
 - e. Pancake Breakfast & Book Sale (1/31)
 - i. Always a fun event
 - ii. Ask dads to volunteer to cook breakfast
 - f. PTO Auction - Viva Las Captain (3/7)

- i. It will be a fun night of gambling
- ii. Seeking Volunteers (Decorations, Auction Items, Event Planning, Set Up, Tear Down)
- iii. Actively Soliciting Auction Items
- iv. Not sure about location yet, The Heights is a possibility, but open to other ideas for location

5. Treasurer's Report

- a. Full year-to-date report that starts on August 1, 2025 is posted on the PTO website
- b. Starting to see the Bingo sales coming in (\$219 so far)
- c. Income for October: Apparel sales, Giveback activities, investment income
- d. Expenses for October: International Night, Parents' Night Out, PTO coffee, classroom party expenses, garden items purchased, conference week meals, Summer Academy Books, PTO Council dues, taxes
- e. For October, \$2,071.62 in revenue and \$4,444.34 in expenses
- f. See complete October report on PTO website
- g. PTO has ample reserves, there is a district requirement that we keep cash in reserves, but there are opportunities to spend more, multiple parents have suggested that the PTO start an investment account for money in excess of the amount that is required to remain in reserve
- h. Every April, the PTO has a budget forum, this is a good time to brainstorm about ideas for future budgets, including investments and additional spending

6. President's Report

- a. Friday Breakfast & Fill the Fridge (11/7)
 - i. Third grade (Breakfast) & Second grade(Fill the Fridge)
 - ii. Sign ups were full for both, so thank you to everyone that signed up
- b. Gaga Ball Pit
 - i. Dr. Knight brought up idea at last meeting as another for play at recess
 - ii. Vote to approve up to \$5000 to purchase a [pit](#) & [rubber mat](#), can purchase more balls, we don't have to spent full amount but want to make sure we have enough allocated to cover the full costs, including shipping
 - iii. Moveable, which will be good, in light of potential renovations/changes to Captain
 - iv. Will likely go on blacktop
 - v. Ordered volleyballs because some students were using soccer ball

- to play volleyball
- vi. Tetherball would also be fun
- vii. Motion by Deanna, second, approved unanimously
- c. Captain Kitchen + Custodial Staff Holiday Gift
 - i. Gina Nelson will spearhead donations to kitchen and custodial staff
 - ii. She will collect the money and reallocate as gifts
- d. Merchandise Available through PTO and Varsity Lane STL
 - i. Limited amounts of the Captain swag that was purchased in August are still available, limited batch additional shirts
 - ii. Cristina Malone started an apparel company, available online, she has offered to do give backs to the PTOs, she'll have a table at Bingo Night
- 7. Dr. Knight shared a Powerpoint with thank you's from the teachers for fulfilling their wish list items
- 8. Comments/Questions: None
- 9. Next meeting: January 8, 2026
- 10. Adjourned at 7:49pm

The PTO is organized for the purpose of supporting and enhancing the education of children at Ralph M. Captain Elementary through volunteer service, fundraising and fostering relationships among members of the school community.