

Ilchester Elementary School PTA Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes – November 15, 2016

In attendance: Beth Benoit, IES PTA President; Marissa Carothers, 1st Vice-President; Dr. Mariah Carr, IES Asst. Principal; Laurie George; Christina Hill; Terri Jones; Amy LoPresti, Treasurer; Momina Malik; Amy McCarthy, PTACHC Delegate; Ashlei Pinkham, 2nd Vice-President; Jeanene Reeves; Tonya Sigalas; Heather Tom, Secretary; and Sunny Zhao, PTACHC Delegate.

Call to Order: Beth Benoit called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Handout

--October 2016 Financial Highlights

Assistant Principal's Report—Dr. Carr reported the following:

- Report cards were sent home today, along with MAP reports.
- Tomorrow is Support Staff Appreciation Day.
- The bus driver appreciation brunch is scheduled for December 5.
- This week is American Education Week.
- Flu shots were given today.
- The school is now fully-staffed with lunch and recess monitors.
- Parent-teacher conferences are coming up. Teachers are looking forward to seeing everyone for conferences.

President's Report—Beth Benoit reported the following:

Boosterthon Update—

- With 98% of pledges collected, our profit from the Boosterthon fundraiser is \$29,358.23. A little more than \$100 in donations to be made by credit card remains to be received.
- We earned 129 meals to be donated in our community by Feeding America.
- Over 24,000 laps were run.
- We received pledges from 46 states and 12 countries.
- The average amount raised per student was over \$80.

Beth indicated that she was really happy with the program. She felt that Boosterthon staff members were top-notch, and students loved it. She received some negative feedback. Beth also noted that, although we still need more money to make our budget, the profit certainly helps. If IES PTA would like to utilize Boosterthon again next year, Boosterthon staff are very amenable to tweeking the program: since this was our first year, we went with their standard program. Beth suggested that, if we want to have our choice of dates, we should make a decision about using Boosterthon again by next month, since Fall dates are very popular. Beth encouraged using Boosterthon again, if a committee can be formed.

During discussion, Dr. Carr noted that she felt a decision could not be made tonight because more input was needed from school staff.

Positive aspects of our experience with the program this year that were discussed included:

--student and family engagement

--opportunities to build positive relationships with fellow parents through their engagement

--At least three students were inspired to have a lemonade stand to raise funds to be donated to what would do the most good.

--Students who do not usually like physical activity were inspired to run for their school.

--Many parents liked the program.

Negative aspects discussed included:

--Reward items were given to students during the fund-raising period. Beth noted that we could change this aspect of the Boosterthon program, if we wish to do so.

--Some parents/family members gave feedback that there was a lot of pressure to donate.

Other points raised during discussion included:

--Fundraisers in general-- we as a PTA should consider forming an overarching fundraising committee, which could, in part, create criteria for what types of fundraisers we should have. A lack of volunteers was noted as a key problem in being able to form such a committee and/or hold fundraisers. Also, a comment received from an IES staff member is that one reason fundraisers may not have been so successful lately is that more collaboration is needed between the PTA Board of Directors and IES staff. Beth noted all the ways in which information is disseminated to parents (i.e., newsletter, Facebook, web site, e-mail blasts, fliers). If parents choose not to read and/or act on this information, there's not much more that the PTA can do. Many of those in attendance were interested in further background/information to fully understand the comments.

Conclusions of discussion—The possibility of doing a survey about Boosterthon within the school community was discussed, but not finalized. Beth expressed her support for the program, and reminded those in attendance that finding a fundraiser like Boosterthon that can earn this much profit, while also offering the components of character-building and donation to the community, would be very difficult; and, cuts would have to be made to the budget without the funds. Dr. Carr reiterated that, hearing that we need more feedback and more information, she will talk to Dr. Smith about how to go about getting those.

Upcoming volunteer opportunities—

--Andrew Ulrich volunteered to coordinate the Coat Drive next year.

--Moms and Dads on Campus is in need of a volunteer coordinator.

--A program to encourage more involvement of dads at the school is in need of a volunteer coordinator.

--Candy for our troops—Thank you to Ashley Fremont-Smith for taking the lead for Candy for our troops. Beth will let us know the total number of pounds of candy collected.

School Directory—

How and to whom to distribute the directory in light of the new HCPSS requirement that it be distributed only by paper were still to be resolved so that Andrea Ulrich, chairperson of the School Directory committee, could proceed. During discussion, Beth indicated that she understood from the administrators that 85% of IES families have entered their information in the HCPSS Family File. The layout of a directory, what information to include, and how to appropriately distribute it were discussed. Follow-up—An email was sent out on Dec. 5 with a Google form for parents to use to request a copy of the directory by Dec. 9 so that it could be sent home with their children.

Treasurer's Report

Amy LoPresti reported the following:

The checking account balance as of October 31 was \$32,210.34. The savings account balance was \$1,175.14. Income of \$3,772.01 in October included the membership drive, Spiritwear fundraising, and donations. Keep in mind that the numbers discussed are through October 31, so Boosterthon income is not included.

Expenses of \$4,349.93 in October included PTA supplies for new Quickbooks software that was needed, reading enrichment, hospitality for back-to-school teacher dinner, and Boosterthon t-shirts, which was covered by sponsorship. So far, teachers are not spending their enrichment funds. During discussion, having Spiritwear sales set up outside the school for Open House was noted as a positive. Dr. Carr suggested amazon smile as a possible source of fundraising income. Shutterfly was also mentioned. Based upon Boosterthon profit, it is estimated that \$6,000-\$7,000 will be needed from other fundraisers.

PTACHC Delegate's Report

Amy McCarthy reported the following:

--A reminder that membership in PTA is open to everyone; for example, parents of elementary school students can join the PTA of their middle school.

--The new HCPSS magazine was distributed. Articles include one about the ARL, which is like a vocational-technical school. The article features a horticulture program for students with special needs through which items like wreathes are available for purchase during the holidays with proceeds going toward the horticulture program and Cedar Lane School.

--Swansfield Elementary parent Scott Brown has been recognized for encouraging parent involvement with the Mighty Men program. Perhaps he could speak here at IES to help with ideas for increasing parent involvement.

--A reminder from Amy that donations for faculty at Homewood School are appreciated, since Homewood does not have a PTA. Amy recently donated Halloween candy, and a staff member at Homewood was grateful. Amy would be willing to take items for donation to Homewood. Gently used items are being collected for the Recycled Treasures program there.

Committee Updates

Cultural Arts—Dr. Carr commented that the artist-in-residency has begun. The artist has been visiting IES, has begun working with 5th graders, and has started mentoring with kindergarten. Thank you to Kelly Green for all her hard work. An email has gone out seeking parents of 5th graders to volunteer.

Box Tops—Terri Jones reported that \$900.50 was collected in Box Tops in the most recent contest. Mrs. Perraud's 3rd grade class brought in the most. Terri will contact Mrs. Perraud to discuss the reward for the class. Terri noticed some complications with having Box Tops submitted on sheets, and she called Box Tops to find out if they prefer receiving them on sheets or loose in baggies. Box Tops responded that they do not have a preference. Terri would prefer that we not request Box Tops to be sent in on sheets, and she offered to provide a small bucket in each grade's pod for collection of Box Tops. The next Box Tops collection will come up in January.

Hospitality—Melissa Daniels is working on preparations for the conference night dinner for faculty. An email has been sent out with a sign-up genius seeking donations of gift cards to purchase items, and an invite has been sent to teachers to invite them to the dinner.

Junior Cheetah Day—Ginny Zimmerman sent a report that Junior Cheetah Day will be April 25, and the kindergarten team of teachers will hold their information night for parents that same evening at 7:00.

Restaurant Night—A restaurant night was held at Cheeburger Cheeburger, and there was a good turnout.

Square One Art—November 18 is the due date for orders.

Talent Show—Momina Malik reported that screening for primary level students (K-2) will be held Wednesday, January 25 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Screening for intermediate level students (3-5) will be held Thursday, January 26. Fliers about the Talent Show will be sent home during the first week of January after return from Winter Break. The primary students' actual show will be February 9, and the intermediate show will be February 16. The talent show is a showcase, not a competition.

Workbooks—The amount that has come in for donations for the cost of workbooks is \$3,900. The cost of the workbooks was \$5,400. A little more in donations may have come in recently. A question to Dr. Carr was whether the use of workbooks has been discussed with staff. Dr. Carr responded that it has not yet been discussed with staff, but it is under consideration for potential change moving forward.

Crayola Colorcycle—Terri Jones reported that 493 markers have been collected, and we are still collecting them.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Next meeting: The next monthly meeting of the IES PTA Board of Directors will be Monday, December 12, 7:00 p.m. in the school's media center.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Tom
Secretary