

Ilchester Elementary PTA Board of Directors Meeting

September 13, 2016 – Minutes

In attendance: Amrita Assim; Krista Barron; Beth Benoit, PTA President; Regina Brown; Dr. Joy Byrd-Butler, Principal; Marissa Carothers, PTA 1st Vice-President; Dr. Mariah Carr, Assistant Principal; Christine Case; Karen Frankovic; Laurie George; Leslie Hardy, Teachers' Representative; Christina Hill; Terri Jones; Jessica Legambi; Amy LoPresti, PTA Treasurer; Anne Mager; Amy McCarthy, PTACHC Delegate; Ashlei Pinkham, PTA 2nd Vice-President; Danielle Rao; Michele Spencer; Heather Tom, PTA Secretary; and Sunny Zhao, PTACHC Delegate.

Handouts:

--August 22 minutes

--Proposed Budget Draft

Call to Order: President Beth Benoit called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. Beth welcomed those in attendance, and each person introduced him/herself.

Principal's Report: Dr. Byrd-Butler reported that the kids are off to a fabulous start of the school year. She and Dr. Carr have stopped into just about every classroom, and the students are a joy. It's been a smooth opening. She thanked parents for their support. The next major school event will be the Back-to-School Nights on September 19 and 20.

Assistant Principal's Report: Dr. Carr reported that today was the first day with Safety Patrols. We have 50 safeties this year. Also, buses are leaving the school in the afternoon closer to on-time than during the first weeks of school.

President's Update: Beth Benoit reported on the following items:

- **Boosterthon** starts on October 17 with two pep rallies that morning, one for the primary grades and then one for grades 3 – 5. Parents are welcome to attend the pep rallies. After the end of September, Beth will be sending out sign-ups for volunteer help, including water distribution and recording completed laps on students' shirts on **Wednesday, October 26, which is the day of the Ilchester Cheetah Chase Fun Run**. Everyone is welcome to come and cheer on the children while they are completing laps. Also, anyone interested in learning about what is involved in coordinating Boosterthon for our school to possibly be involved next year is encouraged to contact Beth.
- **By-Laws** are due this spring for revision, which is required by MD PTA every 3 years. Heather Tom will let everyone know further information. A committee of at least 3 PTA members will be needed to review the by-laws to determine what, if any, changes we would like to propose prior to presenting the by-laws to the general membership for approval.
- **Back-to-School Bingo** is a free event scheduled for Friday, September 30. Shannon Kraft is coordinating. Prior to Bingo, we will hold a brief general PTA meeting to approve the budget for this school year. Those who attend are encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item for donation. If anyone can come early to help set up, please do.
- **Online Training Courses for Volunteers**—Beth reminded everyone that volunteers are required to complete the Confidentiality online course and may need to complete the Child Abuse and

Neglect course. Certificates of completion must be printed out and brought to school. Dr. Byrd-Butler added that the Confidentiality training will be offered during Back-to-School Nights, and parents will be able to sign certificates in their children's classrooms.

- **Join the PTA**—A last reminder that every PTA officer and committee chairperson must be a PTA member.
- **Upcoming events and volunteer opportunities**—
Boosterthon and Back-to-School Bingo have already been mentioned.
Book Drive prior to the holidays. Last year, our principal received a request from another principal to do a book donation, and 700 books were collected for children to take home over the holidays.
529 College Savings Plans recently sent information to Beth about presentations that they do for schools. Please let Beth know if you're interested into looking into their offer.
Certifikid has a rewards program about which Beth received an email. Please let her know if you're interested in looking into the program and reporting back.
Winter Coat Drive—PTACHC has again asked local PTA's to participate in the Coat Drive. We've done well with collections at IES in the past. Beth has a large box to place in the front lobby, and Miss Rose will store it safely at night. When the box gets full, custodians will put the items in bags. Volunteer(s) are needed to take donated items to the HCPSS ARL on the designated date; Heather Tom volunteered.
- **Other notes/news**—A **trifold brochure with info about the IES PTA** will be in the next Friday folder. Thank you to Christina Rosendorf for formatting and printing it.
A reminder to keep a **committee procedure document** about what's being done on your committee so that it can be passed along to future volunteers on the committee or given to the 2nd Vice President to help us have continuity in our activities.

Treasurer's Update: Amy LoPresti reported on the following:

- We received a really nice **thank you note from Deep Run Elementary** for a donation of books made on the occasion of our previous administrators' retirements. We donated 30 books to Deep Run and made a cash donation to Fidos for Freedom.
- The **audit from last year is almost done** and will hopefully be done by next week.
- Everyone on the Board of Directors should have received new forms via email today. Please use the **new forms for Deposit and for Disbursements**.
- **Proposed Budget**—The vote by the general membership is going to be held prior to Bingo, and we need to vote on it tonight to bring it to Bingo.

We have a balanced budget and two requests from Dr. Carr for the use of \$500-\$600 that we have available to allocate. Dr. Carr discussed the two requests:

Safety patrol belts and badges—Dr. Carr asked for funds for new belts for safety patrol; she is currently borrowing some from another school. Also, after 3 weeks, safeties will be official members of Safety Patrol, and she would like to hold a ceremony to give them badges. The anticipated cost of the badges is approximately \$100. Dr. Carr noted that she is talking to the students about the importance of being responsible with their belts.

Brunch for School Bus Drivers—To improve communications and let bus drivers know we understand they are an important part of the greater school community, Dr. Carr would like to invite bus drivers to a brunch at school. We have about 20 buses that come in and out of IES about 3 times per day, including bus drivers for RECC students. During a brunch, Dr. Carr could give bus drivers her card, share expectations, and let them know she is there for them. Bus driver safety week is in October. She's requesting \$250 toward brunch. During discussion, questions were raised as to whether a brunch for bus drivers is consistent with the PTA's mission, whether it should be a PTA or school expense, and whether there is precedent for PTA funds going toward something for bus drivers. It was noted that the BBMS PTA gives gift cards to bus drivers as a thank-you at the end of the school year. Discussion in favor also touched on the benefit to the greater school community of having positive relationships with bus drivers and on the potential benefit to student safety. It was also discussed that it is worthwhile to carefully consider a new expense, and Dr. Carr was asked to do some data collection on whether it appeared to be worthwhile, if she holds the brunch, especially to help with budgeting for next year.

A motion was made to approve both of Dr. Carr's requests in the budget. The motion was seconded and approved.

Continuing on the budget, Amy noted that there is a special purpose items category that could possibly be used in the future for the above and such items that have been suggested as a canopy tent for the playground, items for art, and items that could be used to provide storage on the backs of students' chairs in classrooms.

In terms of Income, Amy also discussed the anticipated fundraisers, with Boosterthon being the major one. Amy also went over anticipated Expenses, including Operating expenses and Program expenses. She discussed what we anticipate each grade level will do in terms of special, year-end activities. Our emergency reserve is between \$18,000 and \$20,000. The net income for the year is anticipated to be 0 as it is supposed to be.

A motion was made to approve the budget as discussed. The motion was seconded and approved.

PTACHC Report: Amy McCarthy reported on the following items from the most recent meeting:

- The majority of time was spent discussing the work of the indoor air quality committee. A highlight of their plan is that each school will have semi-annual walk-throughs performed, and afterward, parents will have online access to the report from the walk-through at their children's school(s). Also, teams are being created within schools so that there's good communication.
- The diversity committee that was formed in response to concerns that arose last year was also discussed. The committee is looking for staff members at each school to be liaisons.
- Pilot programs at some schools to have a self-serve salad bar or fresh fruit and vegetable bar were discussed.
- Homewood School, which is a county-wide school focused on intervention for students' behavioral needs and for students' special education needs, was discussed. The staff is very dedicated and loyal, but there is no PTA at Homewood to support them. PTACHC is asking local

PTA's to do what they can to support the faculty at Homewood. A flier was distributed with suggestions that range from providing food items for a staff breakfast to making contributions toward Homewood's recycled treasures sale, which offers gently used and new items in a holiday store for students to purchase with play money they have earned as positive reinforcement. Homewood is in immediate need of food incentives and gift card incentives; their budget for PBIS incentives was recently cut. Individuals can help whether or not an entire PTA does. Last year, IES PTA and BBMS PTA worked together to provide breakfast items during Staff Appreciation Week.

Committee Reports

Box Tops—Terri Jones is the Box Tops coordinator for IES PTA. She sought input regarding prizes for Box Tops collection. Ideas such as 15 minutes of extra recess and/or popsicles were discussed. Having different prizes appropriate for each grade level was also discussed. Ideas for promoting the contest were also discussed, including a bulletin board display to encourage competition and teachers' reaching out to room moms to remind parents about the contest.

Crayola ColorCycle Recycling Program—Terri Jones is the coordinator. Crayola will take any markers (anything in plastic casing), but no crayons, for recycling. The items are sent to a facility where they are turned into fuel. Last year, with the help of Mrs. Kettering, we sent in 2,000 markers. A flier will go home in a Friday folder.

Cultural Arts/Artist-in-Residence—Beth reported on behalf of Kelly Green that she worked on a grant for an artist-in-residence for 5th grade with a smaller project for Kindergartners. This project will be a fused glass display that will be permanently mounted in one of the school's windows. For next year, Kelly will work on a poetry artist-in-residence, since Mrs. Hoge has indicated an interest in that for 4th grade classes.

Giant A+ School Rewards—Heather Tom reported that parents can now register their Giant card number online at Giant's website for this year's program. The actual program, in which Giant donates money to the school based on spending at their stores, begins in October and ends in March. Giant sends a check to the school during the summer. Parents who are already enrolled and do not wish to make any changes don't need to do anything. Mrs. Hardy noted that she has seen at other schools computers set up on nights when parents are coming in so that parents could use the computers to do those kinds of enrollments. Heather will submit an article for the PTA newsletter to promote the program.

Kindergarten Liaison—Anne Mager reported that the play-date for kindergarteners went really well.

Bulletin Board—There will be a lot of Boosterthon decorations going up.

PTA Membership and Donations—Tina Hill reported that approximately a third of IES families have returned All-in-One forms. Just over \$3,800 has been donated to grade levels, with a wide variation among them. There's been just over \$3,600 in direct donations made to the PTA. The deadline for returning the forms had been Sept. 16; but, with the back-to-school nights coming up, we will have a push for parents to send in their forms. We will have a table at back-to-school nights and can have forms available there. During the report, ideas were discussed as to how to encourage parents to make donations through the All-in-One forms. One of the ideas was for teachers to include during

presentations in their classrooms during back-to-school nights the ways in which funds donated are used and a thank you for funds donated in the past. PTA memberships are currently at 150, and we'd like to encourage more staff members to join. Beth will mention when speaking to parents that anyone can join throughout the year. Tina will work with Beth on the thank-you letter that will be sent out to those who have sent in their completed All-in-One form.

School Directory—Beth explained that contact information for a PTA school directory is provided by HCPSS from information that parents fill out and must opt-in when completing their Family File online through HCPSS Connect. Dr. Byrd-Butler noted that it is the school's goal to get 100% participation for the Family File. Everyone is encouraged to provide their emergency contact information through HCPSS Connect.

Spiritwear—There were \$350 in sales of spirit items at the Open House, and that does not include t-shirt orders that were placed.

Square 1 Art—Danielle Rao reported that Square 1 Art activities have officially begun; the art teachers have all the related supplies they need thanks to the efforts of a couple of parents.

Talent Show—We don't know if a date has been discussed yet.

Workbooks—Karen Frankovic reported that this year will be a little different regarding workbook orders, in part because 3rd grade teachers have opted out of using workbooks. For 2nd grade, we currently have 60% of parents who have sent in their donation to go toward workbooks. Last year, each grade level that used workbooks had about 86% of families provide donations. To review, because workbooks are consumables, the PTA purchases them to assist staff and then asks for a donation from parents.

Reminder for all PTA members: Please send newsletter items to Marissa Carothers.

Adjournment: Beth Benoit adjourned the meeting at 8:41 pm and thanked everyone for coming.

Next meeting: The next meeting of the IES PTA will be Monday, October 17 beginning at 7:00 pm in the school's media center.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Tom
Secretary