Draft PTO general meeting minutes
Thursday, Oct 26th, 6:30pm

About 25 attendees

Carlie: Ice breaker: How have you contributed to the BSI community? Talk to someone you don't know about it.

Reading of minutes. Minutes approved.

Mr Havlik:

Your dollars at work: what PTO is currently paying for.

BEAM.
Construction Kids (CK), March 2 and 9
Architecture Design (before CK, but no date set yet)
Art Supplies. Money from PTO has been transferred to the DOE. Will be accessible soon.

K-2 Science. (Slideshow photos of the investigations and kids in classroom)
Units
K- senses
1st- solids, liquids
2nd- Earth materials

Ms Kenny is the 3-5 grades. Hired 3 days per week. Her background is as a middle school math teacher.

Foss program.
[photo]

Music
(1-8) Ms Rachel Hickman is substituting for Ms Cintula, who returns in December.

Spanish
Teacher is in the final stages of processing through DOE. Experience in elementary, middle and high school. Grades 4-8. 1-3 times per week. She is a native Spanish speaker.

Other things:
Yard painted. Very lucky with weather. Strong believer in going outside. As weather gets colder, please make sure they are dressed to go out for recess.
Buddies: teachers have buddy assignments. Planning with buddy teacher. Assigned to a class for the year. Do various activities with other class, math games and editing. 8th and 4th grade, for example, are paired together.

Wellness Council: submitted a grant for a K-8 curricula. Hope to pilot health program in the spring. Part of the wellness grant is the “move to improve”-- fitness breaks with kids. Coach Shea does training and trains teachers to integrate.

Fifth grade math olympiad: 5 math olympiad assessments over the year.

AMC Math Competition 7th/8th. Nov 14th. Something went home to invite students in 7th and 8th.

STEM Lab. Visited PS84. Inspiring to talk to NY Sun Works, who have a curriculum with the school. They have a fish farm, food production. SCA plan is scheduled to be approved this month. 2-3 months out to bid. Then hire a contractor.

Block Room: underutilized resource. Principal at PS 130 has a great block program. In touch with a private school that does blocks throughout the school. Will partner with these schools to learn how they use them.

Important dates slide: no school Nov 7th, PTC on 11/16, Family Friday on Dec 1st.

Questions from Grade Reps:
Received many questions from grade reps. Working to answer them.

Middle School AP: not searching yet. Toi is the dean and doing a wonderful job. We may hire a middle school AP down the road.

MS extracurriculars, including Band: Don’t have the flexibility to offer band in teacher’s schedules. If we have a Spanish teacher, that opens up the schedule and we are trying to figure out if Band or other clubs can fit into the schedule.

Bussing: heard about concerns. OPT only allows one bus to and from. Happy to meet with parents to discuss how we could get around this issue.

Inclusive School: feel very strongly that this is an inclusive school for everyone. LGBT. Jared Fox is coming to speak to staff and do PD on a coming Monday. He talks about inclusion for all.

Science and Dance Curriculum: will post more info on the website soon.

Space in the Yard for Play. Constant work in progress. 50m. 6 minutes to transition. Looking at ways to continue to improve transitions and maximize time.
Overnight Trips: I don’t have an answer right now. But we will have an answer soon.

Advisories this week: they are decorating pumpkins and will be on display at the harvest festival.

Parent: K and 4th. School trips. Only 1 so far.
A: reach out to the teacher and ask what is on the agenda.

Parent: 8th grader. Any chance band is coming back?
A: We need a staff member to be a part of band. Or a substitute teacher. We don’t have that right now. I don’t have a plan right now. It’s a matter of figuring out how to execute it.

Parent: In past, there was talk about 8th graders about taking Spanish proficiency exam.
A: will have to look into that.

Parent: K parent. K doesn’t really have music. Can Spanish be expanded to younger grades?
Answer: BCM does a 10 week program with the kids. With a K-8 school, you are limited to what a teacher can do. When you add up the periods that a teacher is teaching, it thins things out. It might require another foreign teacher. We don’t have that planned. Limited budget. We want the older kids to do more than one class per week.

Parent, 4th grade: behavior and classroom management. Your thoughts and plans?
A: From the first day, when I spoke to people about this position, I had heard stories. I really believe that the foundation of the school is the social and emotional experience of the kids. That’s why we moved Toi into the dean role. That’s why we brought back advisory. Toi teaches tribes in K. It’s really important to me that the kids are treating each other well and feel safe. If that’s not in place, you can’t maximize the academic side.

Q: Parent, 1st grade. TA is shared. Will another be hired?
Answer: those classrooms already have 3 adults in them because of paraprofessionals.

7th grade: science teacher is she permanent?
A: I have heard from some 3rd grade parents. Heard concern that there’s too much focus on procedure and rules. This has been addressed. There had been more than one science teacher before her and the kids were maybe discouraged.

She is with us until the end of the school year.

Q: 2nd grader, the teachers don’t teach the same way in the grade. Seems like some kids are missing out.
A: Teachers are different, personalities and strengths. But they execute the same curriculum.

7:15pm Havlik exits.

Mikael: How to read the monthly financial statement:
Top third is income
Middle third is expense
Bottom third is administration expenses
Bottom: funds transferred
Box and bottom right: money in bank is $77k, which includes about $20k of funds from last year that have not been turned over to school.

Since last meeting, raised 30% more than last year through Direct Appeal ($6,550). $4,750 in corporate contributions. Amazon contributions have gone down, which we'll investigate.

Email: treasurer@bsipto.org

Question: Why money still in Chase? Thought it was to all be moved to Investor's Bank.
Mikeal: That’s news to us.
Yulianna (asst treasurer): Easier to update Quickbooks via Chase. Investors Bank’s interface is not as developed or user-friendly.

President’s Report:
Carlie: has 3rd and 5th grader
Claire: has kids in 1st, 4th, 6th grade

Claire: Together we can do so much, quote from Helen Keller. Giving just a little bit adds up to something great. We are trying to reach out to all parents. We want to show parents more about the programs that your money pays for.

Carlie: A lot of people ask when meetings are. The school calendar can be synced to your online calendar so it shows up. If you don’t know how to do it, we can post instructions.

We need more volunteers and we will be asking for your help.

Mr Havlik said last meeting that it’s his dream to be principal at BSI. Thought that was so sweet and we are glad he feels that way.

Claire: there always groups that we don’t get to. Please reach out to the people that you talk to. Plan a meetup for your grade and talk to parents.

SLT Report: Questions from grade reps were compiled.
Topics we went over:
--Communications from school. Concerns about how much teachers should update parents. It varies by teacher. The decision from Ms. Moshura was that once a week is a reasonable amount of communication to expect.
--School Loop. Some teachers use it more than others.
--Principal Havlik said he’ll try to send updates biweekly. Weekly is probably too much.
--Lunch program. Parents concerned that the lunch period is too short. 25m to eat and 25m to play. They have to key in the OSIS number for food. Trying to get cards to make the process faster and so kids will have more time to eat. Trying to figure out how much room to give KING and free play.
--Dec 1st is first family Friday. Teachers are looking to make the morning more interactive.

Question: will it be all grades?
Answer: Usually K-4. Details to follow.

Q: Tribes and advisory: Tribes in lower grades and advisory in middle school.

Q: Music and dance curricula--long term plan?
A: These programs were place holders for science in lower grades because we didn’t have a science teacher. Quality of substitutes has been high. Dance teacher had a psychology degree.

Fundraising Report:
Mai Hoang: Harvest Festival: the weather report looks stormy. That's good! That means soccer will be cancelled! Bring your cash for tickets.

This is both a community event and a fundraiser. We are charged with raising $526k. That pays for TAs.

Direct Appeal has not gotten under way because we wanted to give the principal time to get settled. You will be getting Direct Appeal packets and there will be pie charts! The nature of this is that we don't get extra funds. Science and Spanish are not considered necessary by the DOE.

$410k is Direct Appeal goal.
We didn’t harass you on curriculum night. I have been hanging back, but Matt and I have a whole plan.

Nov 16th is the PTC. We hope you can bring in a donation. $1500 is the ask per kid, but we hope you can give what you can. Money that is raised at PTC will be matched! Stay tuned.

Nov 6th. First fundraising meeting at Grand Army Plaza library. Camp auction will be discussed. We make some money with that. Second biggest fundraiser is the gala. I think it might be a disco theme.
Ben Hom, a science teacher and 5th grade dad, is bringing bugs that are deep fried. I’ll just leave it at that. He’s going to talk your ear off about the food of the future.

Maura: Committees. 10 committees. We are going to talk about two. We need people on creative. Who can design and create t-shirts. We need a graphic designer or 2 to 5.

We also need people for the Audit committee. They work with the external auditor. We need folks who can oversee this. You don’t need an accounting background, but you need to have balanced your checkbook. We need 3 people, legally.

Shana: we are working on a survey asking about your availability and your skills. We need people to do small jobs.

We have two things we really need to fill: Nov 19th book fair. Barnes and Noble. We have people on the corners near the store handing out the vouchers. Teachers will be reading.

10 committees:
Fundraising
Audit
Give Back
Grant Writing
Logistics
Membership
Movie Night
Safety
Wellness
Diversity

We have co-chairs for lower grades for movie night. Want kids to run upper grade movie night.

Jennifer: Diversity committee
Sent out flyers to public PreK, day cares to promote testing.

Adjourned 8:06pm