

Berlin Elementary PTO Virtual Meeting – December, 8th at 6:30

Present: Tracy Kent, Elaine Smith, Amy Ovitt, Carrie Minkler, Shannon Gardell, Melanie Arena, Rachel Turetsky, Matt Turetsky, Deanna Baker, Stephanie Kneer

Principal's Report

- Despite the challenging circumstances this year, there is still a lot that we can do.
- Monthly Mindset – I Can Support Others
 - As an example of this, students are collecting donations to the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society. A flyer was sent home including information and a wish list of needed items. A video touring the Humane Society is posted on the district website and Facebook Page.
- Tuesday, December 22 is Pajama Day and the Virtual Sing Along
- Wednesday, December 23 is a virtual learning day for all students, and the last day of school before the Winter Holiday Break.
- Students return to school on Monday, January 4.

- We expressed our gratitude for the beautiful murals that were installed in the hallways. A video on the website highlights some of the murals.
- Links to the new “Berlin Elementary Mountaineers PTO” Facebook page will be posted on the old page, and the district page as a reminder to parents that we have moved.

Treasurer's Report

Balances as of 12/7/20

Earmarks:

Helping Hands: \$2,980.53

Band: \$68

Drama: \$453.81

Enrichment/Character Ed \$557.93

Library: \$4.25

Playground: \$297.86

5th Grade: \$0.06

Checkbook Balance: \$2,874.44

\$1,113.09 has been paid in teacher reimbursements.

- Charleston Wrap Fundraiser: We received \$833.30 in profit, and had total sales of @2,201.00. There was some frustration with the accessibility of the website, and disappointment in sales totals. We will look into trying something different for next year.
- In late January we will run the Dan's Chocolates Fundraiser, to be delivered in time for Valentine's Day.
- We will look into local options for a spring fundraiser.
- On January 20 Mrs. Mitchell is hosting a Digital Breakout Box event for families. She is looking to be reimbursed for around \$90 in costs. The PTO will try to cover the cost if funding is not available from other sources.

-Stewart's Holiday Match: Elaine will apply for the PTO. Deadline is January 30th. Mrs. Kent will remind the teachers that extracurricular activities, special areas, support services like Helping Hands, etc. qualify and can apply for funding. Funds are dispersed in March.

-We will revisit at the January meeting whether or not we need a deadline for teachers to spend their classroom allocations. We don't want to rush the teachers, or depleted our limited funds, but eventually we need to plan for future spending needs like staff appreciation, 5th grade graduation gifts, etc.

General

-Discussed the options for making the Pledge of Allegiance a part of all remote learning classes like it is for in-person classes. In some cases, scheduling makes this difficult for remote learning. Everyone agrees that it's important to include this everyday if possible.

-Discussed the 20° temperature cutoff for outdoor recess, and whether it's possible to get the kids outside more often, especially during this year where the kids have less movement during the day. BES's policy is in-line with other local districts. Not all kids bring appropriate cold weather clothing and boots to school. Helping Hands does have some cold weather gear to give to students in need. This year, with classes staying separated, there is not enough staff to offer an indoor and outdoor option. The office looks at local weather reports for Berlin throughout the day to make the call on current temps.