

Berlin Elementary PTO Meeting – March 9th, at 6:30pm

Present: Joseph Dhara, Tracy Kent, Elaine Smith, Amy Ovitt, Shannon Gardell, Carrie Minkler, Melanie Arena, Rachel Turetsky, Matt Turetsky

Introduction by Mr. Dhara, our new superintendent

- Overall goals
 - to grow the relationships between the district and the PTO and the district and the community
 - will be meeting with town librarians to facilitate the community growth
 - increase student/parent voices

Principal's Report

- Friday, March 12, 2021 – end of the trimester
- Friday, March 19, 2021 – report cards will be sent home with children
- State testing for 4th and 5th graders
 - Still waiting on final guidance from NY state
 - Confirmation TBD
- Friday, March 19, 2021 – Rock Your Socks Day
 - Raise awareness regarding Down's syndrome
 - Several members of BES staff will be running in 5K to support this cause
 - BES staff/students are asked to wear "crazy socks"
 - Proposal for PTO contest where winner of the "craziest" socks in each grade level will receive a prize of crazy socks, funded by the PTO
 - Prize incentive to increase participation
 - Voted on by student (perhaps in a similar manner to how elementary students receive merits)

Treasurer's Report:

- Beginning balance (as of February 1, 2021): \$4,725.82
 - \$258 was paid to Utica insurance
 - \$163.97 in reimbursements
 - \$0.33 earned in interest
- Ending balance (as of February 28, 2021): \$4,304, 18
- Earmarks
 - Helping Hands: \$3,525.93
 - Band: \$68.00
 - Enrichment/Character Education: \$557.99
 - Drama: \$453.87
 - Science: --
 - Library: \$4.25
 - Playground: \$297.89
 - 5th Grade: \$0.06
 - Ambassadors: --

Fundraising

- Kids Korner Albany fundraiser
 - Rough estimate of total amount sold: ~\$12,000
 - Rough estimate of total profit: ~\$6,000
 - Final numbers TBD
 - Proposal for PTO-funded grand prize to family who sold the most items
 - BES blanket/cup proposed
 - PTO pleased and thankful for schoolwide participation
- Distribution Day: Friday, March 26, 2021
 - Delivery – estimated for ~2pm
 - Will need volunteers to organize and distribute during dismissal
 - Propose that remote learners may pick up ~2pm
 - Will ask parents to pick up children if they anticipate that child will be bringing home a large number of items and to let us know if they will not be able to pick up and will need items stored
 - Contact Tammy Whitman regarding potential storage of items in BES refrigerator/freezer (since some items will be arriving frozen) for children who are absent or whose parents cannot pick up Friday afternoon
 - Potential for alternative pick up to occur Monday, March 29, 2021 @4:30pm during meal pick up time for those who cannot make it Friday
- Due to success of this fundraiser, potential option for Fall fundraiser with Kids Korner Albany (popcorn, snacks, etc.)

Spring Pictures (Lifetouch)

- Tuesday, April 13, 2021 (in-person students) and Wednesday, April 14, 2021 (remote learners)
 - Currently ~50 children who are working remotely
 - Will create online sign up for remote learners using Sign up genius
- Need volunteers

Teacher Appreciation Week

- First week of May
 - Need to brainstorm ideas to acknowledge how teachers have persevered and adapted over the last year due to COVID-19
 - Need something “spectacular”
- Coordinate bus driver appreciation, as well, during same timeframe
 - Potential for breakfast/brunch to be sponsored by PTO in new bus garage lounge (if ready to use)
 - Unless COVID-19 guidelines change between now and then, will need to provide pre-packaged food/drinks
 - Perhaps work with Stewart’s – need to confirm
- Tuesday, March 16, 2021 – recognize that a year has passed since lockdown occurred and thank teachers
- Idea for thumbprints of every child on a tree at BES – TBD

Recruiting New Members of PTO

- Since many members of the PTO have students who will be moving on to middle school in the next 1-2 years, need to recruit parents with younger children to keep PTO going
 - Proposal for “mentoring” program where parent can shadow PTO member to learn about duties/responsibilities
 - Potential for recruitment to occur during Wellness Fair at Berlin MS/HS in May or at future event when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted

Next PTO meeting to occur: Tuesday, April 13, 2021