

Nichols Elementary School PTSA Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2016

Officers:

Co-Presidents: Megan Gallant & Ally Taccogna

Co-Vice Presidents: Cyndi Hill & Amanda Delise

Treasurer: Sharon Zajac

Co-Secretaries: Amy Bracco & Jen Briganti

- **Review/Approve September's Meeting Minutes** - Kerry Whitham and Mrs. Joss
- **Review Treasurer's Report** - Review of budget ~ Question: Why aren't earnings listed yet? Answer: We haven't earned anything yet; next month should show earnings from fundraising, Rita's night, etc. Earnings must be reported in a month's cycle.
- **Student Council Report** - Victoria Trolio (6) and Cathlyn Pinto (5) shared latest exciting news including Rita's night fundraiser. Sept 26 first whole school meeting where kids talked about hopes and dreams for the year. Spoke on the importance of respect to others. This script will be read on a TV station set and posted on the Stratford's web page along with reports from other schools! This is one way that our district is working to promote our schools.
- **Principal's Report:** Mrs. Dilorio
 - GOALS: Ron Clark - "Moving the Bus" and What educators should be teaching if students are not coming to school with these things (absences and tardys, etc.). Each Monday, Mrs. Dilorio reviews a goal for the week; ex. Attendance, respecting other comments and opinions (responsive classroom), answer and write in complete sentences. Teachers reinforce this in the classroom. This actually helps us on tests as well as in our social skills.
 - Whole School Meeting - Student council presents and then they go over news and announcements and have a "share" at the end. Responsive Classroom design team (trained members) created new this year and come together every couple of months - Rotation of other teachers presenting. 4th Grade received grant towards the purchase of a book by Maria Dismundy called "The Little Linebacker". It's theme is determination, growth mindsets and setting a goal. The author will be reading the book to the students over a skype session. Taking the "Foot" theme: Math Day will follow the next day: how far can kids throw the football, (pull in math coaches) Every classroom got a book for the money.
 - Literacy Committee ~ teachers coming from other schools to also learn, they get to watch the model being demonstrated at Nichols. Vicki Soto foundation has been donating items to the Stratford school district. Most recent donation is Beautiful Hands by Bret Baumgarten and Kathryn Otoshi. The Literacy committee wants to do something with a "hands" theme (all school activity).

- Car Loop: Mrs. Dilorio encourages parents/guardians to call the police at the moment you see something happening chaotic – traffic related outside of the school (vs. calling her first) ~ this is what will push the town to do something. Mrs. Dilorio has asked parents/guardians to not get out of their cars to help children with the exception of kids who may have special needs. An initial meeting with an architect was held this week. We are working with both the BOE and City Council/Public Works to keep both sides informed and hopefully moving positively forward! I will update the group on this topic in separate postings. Parents in attendance agreed that having the police at the school during starting time has helped with the left turn out of the drop off circle.
- **Teacher Introductions:** Kindergarten Team Mrs. Joss, Ms. Floramo, and Ms. Cook
 - Loving the new white boards! It is like having a giant iPad on the wall! The team is working hard to incorporate technology into their curriculum to make interactive and interesting lessons in math, phonics and sight words. There was a collaboration with Wilcoxsin to discuss how to utilize technology in education.
 - Lots of fun: In September they held a pirate-themed “Talk Like A Pirate Day” celebration, a Johnny Appleseed Day where they made applesauce in the classroom, visit from the fire department to ask questions and talk about community helpers, and had a parade through 1st Grades for reading celebration (lots of last year’s Kindergarten students were so excited!) The pumpkin patch field day is happening next week and Miss Cook needs volunteers.
 - They have seen a bit less letter recognition and reading skills than in previous years. Currently working on a writing celebration and a Mickey Mouse celebration coming up (read stories, writing). After conferences, planning on an ABC/123 kind of night for Kindergarten families to practice letters, sounds and #s and provide some take-homes.
- **Upcoming and Current Events**
 - **Cyndi: Fall Fundraiser** - The deadline was extended which seemed to help a little bit, though we made a little less than budgeted
 - **Megan: Sterling House Food Drive & Hat Day** - Pushed towards Thanksgiving to help fill the food bank, but also give the parents some relief from too many flyers and activities. Need to speak with Student Council regarding the kick off start.
 - **Megan: Rita’s Night** - Haven’t gotten the check, but we definitely didn’t do as much as last year. They are always very generous and it’s so fun.
 - **Jen: Coupon Book** - We’re selling the coupon book, but will only send the flyer home. If someone wants to purchase, the book will go home. In the past, some people forgot to send back the books or it was a struggle to remind students every day to do so.
 - **Sign up for automated, digital fundraising!** - We will try to set up some computers so folks can sign up for Amazon Smile, Shoparoo, etc. during conferences. 6th Grade Committee will see candy and air fresheners.

Conferences will be held Nov. 29th and Dec. 1st. They were pushed a bit later to line up with the report card schedule.

- **Cyndi: BJ's Membership Drive** - Flyers will hopefully go out this week (10/20) and will run for 2 or 3 weeks. Option will be for only 13 months vs. 15. Still get one month extra (vs. 12 month in-club sign up).
- **Cyndi: Harvestfest** - It will be held on Sunday, Oct. 30th from 2 - 4. Games are all repaired from last year, waiting to hear back if we will have our hayride. Sears Family will again provide a bigger and better haunted house and we'll have a DJ. We have a tentative facepainter, donations still needed for donuts.
- **Ally: Trunk or Treat** - Will be held immediately after Harvestfest (to start close to 4:00) Donations of candy needed. We have 12 trunks so far. Police Department coming maybe Firetruck
- **Kristin: Book Fair** - Book Fair will not be held on Friday as all classes have already had their library time (Friday is all repeats) Scholastic sent a Clifford outfit. He made some appearances for the Kindergarten classes. Lots of volunteers this year and we appreciate all the help we can get! It has been wonderful!
- **Taxes and Financial review** - Complete and up to code
- **Amy/Jen: PTSA Membership Drive** - We have 134 memberships and we are only waiting on FOUR staff members to get 100% participation and win the water cooler! UPDATE: TWO staff members
- **Amy: Turkey Bingo** - It will be held on Friday, Nov. 18th. I have details to understand and work out. We will need volunteers as we will be selling popcorn and hot dogs this year. 6th Grade will have raffle baskets. Need to check with Mr. G about calling (UPDATE! Mr. G will be there!!)
- **Megan: Barnes & Noble Event** - Will be held Saturday, Dec. 3rd from 12 - 4. The online bookfair will continue for 1 week, so those sales will be added to our total. Parent volunteers needed! We made ~ \$1,000 last year. It's also Teacher Appreciation Day so teachers get 25% off that day.
- **Cyndi: Email Distribution** - Get on it if you are not on it already ~ very informative. Updates on events, but also half days, picture days, etc. Will include volunteer requests for the month and the coming month.
- **Amanda: Stop & Shop** is back on for points for education, ShopRite you have to re-register each year, Shoparoo (Target isn't doing it, Big Y isn't doing it)
- **Ally (on behalf of Traci): Box Tops** - Last Day to turn them in in Friday, Oct. 21st! Top class will get to watch a movie and the top earners will get \$5 gift certificate to the school store.
- **School Store** - Is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, depending on which grade your child is in - gift certificates, lots of fun stuff. All set for volunteers.
- **Ally - School of Excellence**: We are enrolled in the School of Excellence through CT PTA. Surveys will be going home this week or will be posted via Survey Monkey. It recognizes that we made the effort to be a school of

excellence. Nichols does a lot, so we want to recognize what our school and families do.

- **6th Grade Committee: John Butz** - The 6th Grade committee earns money to help fund the 6th Grade end of the year banquet and picnic, also to help offset the costs of Nature's Classroom
 - Yankee Candle fundraiser just went out; made \$350 for bottle redemption, vendor fair is Nov. 5 and Chowder Pot food truck will be here. Sports Center - will be starting in Jan / Feb / Mar / April two of which will be ice skating. Just finished mums sale and car wash this past Saturday. Seeking out someone who would donate a building/ indoor garage for car wash during the winter months. Election Day – 6th grade will be will selling coffee / muffins and don't forget to buy your air freshener. Casino trip moving to January. Breakfast w/ Santa on the 17th of December. Other ideas being considered and kids want to do basketball game and volleyball game.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10.

Attendees:

Judith Joss
Tara Romero
Diana Dilorio
Wendy Floramo
Samantha Cook
Danielle Mazzucco
John Butz
Tracey Troilo
Kerry Whitham
Chris Pinto
Kristin Iodice
Marlene Guzman
Amanda DeLise
Jen Briganti
Meg Gallant
Cyndi Hill
Ally Taccogna
Amy Bracco