Meeting Minutes Brooks PTO Meeting March 5, 2024
Location, School Library 6:00 PM-8:00 PM

Attendance:
ExComm:Whitney Dodds, Michael Allen, Christina Roberts, Beth MacEachran, Shannon Demos, Sheila Burke, Holly Hutchenson

General PTO:
Theresa Carr, Maggi Patillo, Rebecca Batorsky, Eric Wong, Matt McGowan, Kedar Wint, Shreya Bhattacharyya, Caitlin Neri

- Call to order motioned by Whitney Dodds and seconded by Mr. Allen. Approved.
- Introductions
- Approval of minutes from last meeting - motioned by Whitney Dodds and seconded by Mr. Allen. Approved.

Ex Comm Report - Whitney Dodds

- Zoom Excomm meeting didn't happen last week but communication continues and agenda was approved for today's meeting

Treasurer's Report - Beth MacEachran

- Current balance is $54,308.00.
- 1099 was submitted and accepted.
- Since the last PTO meeting, PTO has funded: Discovery Museum Traveling Science workshops for multiple grades, including K,4,5, Curious Creatures enrichment for K, Kindergarten playground enhancements (2022-2023 grant), Bulk merch order for supplies for specialists and teachers, Grade 2 field trip bus costs for Madagascar, Flyers for the food drive

Principal Demos' Remarks

- The order for extra school supplies, cleaner, hand sanitizer was well received by the specialists and teachers.
- Notes for next year - over purchased paper towels and need more antibacterial wipes
- 2nd grade going to Madagascar
- Uptick on vandalism and graffiti in the school - examples: soap bombs, writing in permanent marker in the stalls, carving into the bathroom stalls. 3rd floor boys bathroom - making holes in the walls and peeling them apart. Custodians patched holes and painted over Feb break and cleaned up permanent markers to have clean slate after break and already have new drawings. Mrs. Demos and Sheila Burke met with all the grades on the Monday after break during lunch periods to talk to students about it. Students are having to log into bathroom logs and all bathroom logs have been standardized. Lunchroom monitors changing how many kids can go to the bathroom at the same time.

- New CARES acronym - Caring for school environment, Always Keep school clean, R - E - Self control, stop and control your body to be safe. Have ideas for getting students involved in making posters/signs about caring for school, bathrooms, etc.
- 3rd grade is starting song writing with Laura Brereton and this year's theme is "Be You."
- Basketball hoops and rims had to be put away b/c were broken again. Might purchase again in April and have custodian chain them so kids can't change height of the basketball hoops
- Mrs. Demos is replenishing recess balls for classrooms.
- 2 events this month - Women's History Month and World Down Syndrome Day
- World Down Syndrome Day - March 21 - will be participating in Lots of Socks campaign
- Women's History Month (Sheila Burke) - will be keeping track of who they will be celebrating each day. Maya Angelou, RBG, Taylor Swift are examples. Making an effort to have a variety of people - female athletes, females behind the scenes, etc.

Special Items

School Merch Update - Maggi Pattillo

- Merch presale of hoodies, totes and hats went well. Pre-orders should arrive this week and will go home on the backpack express. Need to let teachers know about bundles going home in the back packs soon.
- $900 profit less the membership toolkit fees which were $200. Used profit to buy extra stock that can be sold without incurring membership toolkit fees. Estimated $700 profit from those future sales. Maggi will brainstorm what events and how to sell items.
- Maggi willing to help if 5th graders want to do an order with logo on front and something specific on the back

Encore Grant

- Location and use has been sorted

Horseshoe Tables

- Horseshoe table(s) haven't been purchased. Seems like Mr. Coates needed 2 tables instead of 1. Mrs. Demos to follow up with him about needs and how to purchase.

Cafeteria Screen

- Assistant director of athletics for MPS, Rachel Perry ordered new screens for all elementary schools and Brooks received one. It is a new screen but it is not the replacement for the large broken screen.
- Peter Cushing says there is one coming to Brooks that is no longer being used somewhere else in the district but it's not clear where that is or who is tracking it.
- Maggi and Eric to follow up on if it's helpful to have parents reach out to district.

New Items

- **Water for teachers**
    - Mr. Allen reports that budget cuts citywide have resulted in taking away teachers' water dispensers. Teachers are outraged and don't want to use the water fountains and bottle fill stations shared with students.

    - Mrs. Demos and Mrs. Burke reported that not all of our water fountains and bottle refill stations even work and has requested that those are fixed.
    - Motion was made by Holly H. for PTO to provide $500 to continue purchasing water for teacher water stations. Shreya B. seconded. Approved. This is a temporary solution while teachers and parents figure out larger solution with the city.
- **Emailing from Membership Toolkit**
    - Maggi brought up a question about directly emailing all parents who have opted into Membership Toolkit. Since it is an opt-in community, the group felt it is okay to email parent groups directly through Membership Toolkit from PTO but that it shouldn't be considered the main or only way to communicate. Facebook posts and flyers are still recommended.
    - Mrs. Demos and Mrs. Burke should be copied on those communications.

Committee Updates

4th Grade Committee Update - Rebecca Bartosky

- 4th Grade Committee has been formed and co-chaired by Rebecca Batorsky and Rebecca Metcalfe Stone.
- Event date set for Friday, May 10th, 5:15-7:30 PM
- Event will include age appropriate Knucklebones games like slack lines, real life Maria Cart, etc. Pizza, ice cream, DJ on lower playground.
- Estimated budget between $1200-$2000. Group will be participating in a soap fundraiser in March - went in Brooks Blue and FB - 30% of proceeds and considering a Medford Brewery social as a fundraiser.
- Rebecca questioned if there was money for the 4th grade event or a way to piggy-back on existing fundraising events.
- Group discussed the crossover that happens between all the committees fundraising. Mr. Allen motioned for $1K for 4th grade committee, Mrs. Burke seconded. Approved. Any leftover money will go back to general fund.

Diversity Committee - Kedar Wint

- World Down Syndrome Day March 21st - Will be getting socks printed and supporting with 21 things to do information
- Group is considering creating a family facing survey - subcommittee created
- Group is considering creating a bank of daily facts to be shared for event months (Women's History, Black History Month)
- Have begun conversations about how to celebrate Pride this year
- Magnets were purchased to be given to the educators

Enrichment Committee - Shreya and Matt

- Lots of events have taken place or planning is in place grades K-5. Lights and Lasers, High Tech, High Touch, Discovery Museum Activity and more.

- Author visit may be schoolwide visit - Mrs. Demos will work with enrichment committee on this.
- Group is considering a high energy percussion group for the field day event. Need to keep in mind about sensitive kids in the building

Garden Committee - Holly

- Spring grounds clean-up will be Saturday, April 27th in conjunction with celebrating Earth Day that is April 22nd.
- The garden committee has a date set to go out before April break and fix the garden boxes. They are working with K teachers and 3rd grade teachers that want support with planting projects for the boxes.
- We do want to make sure building is open so kids can use the bathroom.

Grants Committee - Updates submitted by email

- Megan Dowd Murray is willing to head Grants Committee this year if one is needed. Becky has stepped down.
- If there is an expected need for a grants cycle at the end of the year, proposals are typically submitted by 3/31.

Fundraising Committee - Updates submitted by email

- Applied for the Tufts community grant- $3000 to put towards Discovery Center traveling science workshops. Will find out in April if we received the grant. Funds would have to be used by 12/31/24.
- Ford Fundraising Nights 3/25 March Madness Basketball themed and 3/26 Taylor Swift themed. Help spread the word and invite friends/family. 15% of food purchased is donated to PTO
- Trying to work more cohesively with 4th/5th grade committees for remaining of the year and for 24/25 school year. The plan is to make a school wide fundraising calendar by this May so we're not overlapping our fundraising efforts. More to come, but any event for 24/25 school year which might include some fundraising component please email to fundraising@brooksptomedford.org so it can be included in the calendar. Historical events will be included already such as Fall Fest, Election Day Bake Sale, Spring Trivia, etc. Fundraising can provide a "draft" for next PTO meeting
- April Awareness campaign on Textile Recycling for timely "spring cleaning"
- May fundraiser with "FrostininBoston" on Wednesday 5/1/24 flower cupcake decorating (adults only). Location TBD Alongside with a Mother's Day cupcake presale leading up to that event for Mother's Day. 25% to go to the Brooks
- Save the date! Wednesday 5/8/24 two times for Fall Fest volunteer info session after 12pm dismissal (kids welcome) and 7pm parents only (location Renee D'Agata's house- Fall Fest chair)
- ForPizza fundraiser 5/8/24 percentage of orders goes to PTO and additionally they run a round up campaign for about 2 weeks around our fundraising night for any customer in store to round up their total bill to be donated to the PTO

- Save the Date: Fall Fest 2024 will be Sunday 10/6/24 11am-3pm

5th Grade Committee - Updates submitted by email

- The 5th grade yearbook sub-committee is currently collecting baby photos and photos of the students at school events via Google Drive. Flyers went home in backpacks, an email went out to families, and the flyer was also shared in the Brooks Blue.
- We are working with Mrs. Demos and the staff for a date for the 5th grade student vs. staff kickball game. This would be toward the end of April or May.
- Moving-on ceremony date has been confirmed for June 13th.
- Successful fundraiser at The Ford helped us meet our overall fundraising goal. We should be able to cover the balance of the Kimball Farms admission so that students do not need to contribute any additional money beyond the $20 they paid at the beginning of the school year.

Teacher Appreciation Committee - Updates submitted by email

- Events are being planned for the teachers. If interested in volunteering contact Justine Meyers.
- Lunch May 2nd
- Breakfast May 8th

Meeting adjourned. Motioned by Whitney Dodds, and seconded by everyone. Approved.