Bach PTO July Meeting Agenda
7/10/25 9am

In attendance: Heather Esper, Ali Krauss, Jen Larson, Megan Miller, Matt Reubens, Julius Alexander, Alex Blyer, Tracy Swinburn, Dara Moses, Ryan Buck, Kirsten Roque, Jon Morosi, Sarah Kathleen Barbrow, Jaimien Delp, Julius Alexander, Vinal Desai Burbeck..

Principal Report - Heather Esper

A. Usually we begin with an update from the principal, but we currently have no principal due to failed search.
B. Update on Failed Search -
    a. Due to confidentiality agreement Heather can't speak about specific candidates but agreed with the district's decision not to move forward with any candidate. Feels that this shows the district's commitment to taking the time to find a good person.
    b. Search has been re-opened, the first application period was only open for 4 days,and at the end of the school year, so hopefully candidates will have more bandwidth to apply at this time of year. Hope to have someone by Aug 14th PTO meeting.
    c. Questions:
        i. Were the candidates internal and now it is being opened to external candidates? No, all external candidates in the first round.
        ii. WIll previously submitted surveys still be considered? Yes, the district is just giving people more time to submit feedback if they haven't already done so.

President's Report - Heather Esper

A. Approve May meeting minutes
    a. First: _Ryan Buck___ Second: _Matt Rubens____
B. Huge thanks to the leads of the BEST Fest and Ice Cream Social, and those organizing summer playdates
    a. Thank you to everyone who helped. BEST fest was only in its second year, because Collete started the dens two years ago, everyone loves them, and we've been told they will continue at Bach without her leadership.
    b. Sarah B comment: We received a handful of BEST Fest feedback form responses - generally positive comments! Organizers had a debrief meeting and we are in good shape for next year.
    c. Thank you to those doing grade level playdates, always done kindergarten, but now expanding to other grade levels.
C. Discuss calendar of events for next school year
    a. Calendar of PTO events and meetings can be found here.
    b. Heather had a meeting with Collete at the end of the year to discuss the calendar, but that was before the district released their Calendar so a few

changes are needed. District put out a two- year calendar, helpful, fewer early release days so they may be responding to parent feedback on that.

i. July - Milkshake Factory meet up July 14 4-9:30pm
ii. Aug - Need to determine new date for meet and greet - new principal will be deciding this. New principal should ideally be starting August 11.
iii. Sep - Need co-lead for new family dinner, moving it up to be earlier in the year based on feedback from families.
iv. Oct - Bike/walk to school day will be Oct 8.
v. Oct - Need to move Fun Run rain date from 10/10 to another date as there is no school 10/10 https://www.a2schools.org/about-aaps/calendars.
vi. PTO meetings will still alternate between morning and evening, but based on feedback we are moving it to In person in the evening from 5-6pm, hopefully parents who utilize aftercare can attend while there is care and then pick up their kids. People can also always bring kids to PTO meetings.
vii. January - STEAM night, this is new, we will be combining family science night and ART night. We will be highlighting activities of the science olympiad, and moved it earlier to help with recruitment for the science olympiad, find coaches, let younger kids see what it looks like.
viii. Feb - movie night
ix. March - Bengal Bash will be moved to a Saturday night. Attendance was low this year and feedback was that Friday was hard. Colette thought more staff might attend on a Friday but that was not the case.
x. May - Teacher appreciation week: Teacher appreciation week nationally is the first week in May but this could be held any week that is convenient. Ali has a survey to ask parents and teachers about who is motivated to volunteer, what teachers actually want for teacher appreciation week..
xi. May - Ice cream social: This year ice cream social and field day were on the same day, makes getting volunteers hard, also a lot of sweet treats in one day. Heather thinks they are scheduled for different days this year but will check.
xii. May - Suggest moving May 14 PTO meeting at 5pm to prior week (May 7 at 5pm) as May 14 is a half day, or make the May 14 meeting a morning meeting.
    1. Question - Is that week teacher appreciation week? Overlap might make it hard to attend. Teacher appreciation is the week before unless we move it. Suggest keeping it May 14, move it to the morning.
xiii. June - no events.

c. Disability awareness not on calendar - is that going to happen again? Previously Colette brought it up at a midyear PTO meeting, and then we set it up.. Recruiting volunteers is hard, but not sure we can plan it ahead. Ali will reach out to Karen and see if we can set that date earlier.

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D. Volunteer update for 2025-2026 school year.
    a. Need co-event lead for New Family Dinner
        i. Sarah B comment: I'd like to reach out to Jess Gronemeyer. I think she'd be a potential co-lead for this. If folks think that's okay, I'll move forward
        ii. My last year as PTO president (anyone interested in shadowing the role this year to help with the transition?)
        iii. Heather will be stepping down next year, Dara will be graduating out, so both roles will be open. Heather has tried to streamline the position to make things easier to pass down, i.e., created a volunteer coordinator role/ so that the president has to do less, and have family or community members lead the events.
        iv. Dara reminded us that we will need someone to take over organizing spirit wear next year.
        v. To support transitions there is a Google drive - for every event there is a folder. Example - New family dinner - you can see what was done in past years, so next team can take it over. Anyone who decides to lead an event will have access to guidelines, event set up requests that need to go to Keyla/Custodial, etc.
        vi. For each board position - If you are transitioning out next year please document your institutional knowledge and how you do things in your folder so the next person has that resource.
E. PTO communications committee - Working with Pete and Alexandra Terhorst (Sarah Valencia's in-laws) to develop a new communication strategy, which is outlined below:.
    a. Plan to send weekly PTO messages (Wednesdays) in newsletter format. Pete and Alexandra will have a limited Membership toolkit account, they are content creators for newsletter but can't see any family info.
    b. Creating a google form to capture inputs into the weekly PTO newsletter.
    c. Thoughts on incorporating rotating art into the top banner? - Lots of support for this idea.
    Question: What if we expand this to be any kind of visual - could be photo or art? Do we need to worry about consent? Collette knew everyone who was on the no photos list, the new principal won't know that. We will include instructions to submitters about getting consent.
    d. Will put calendar of events at the top of the email so people who just want to know what is happening at a glance can see it there
    e. Have not found an easy way to add texting as an additional communication mechanism - might explore this as part of School of Information project (below)..
    f. Created a free nonprofit Canva account
        i. Who would like to join the Canva account?
            1. Sarah B?
    g. UMSI Student Consulting Proposal - Sarah B is the lead, please review! We are applying for a student project through the UM School of Information. Sarah B is putting together the proposal,and students need to bid on it, but the idea is to get

information on how the PTO can communicate batter, how to bolster involvement, make things more inclusive/equitable, and understand what communications people are getting/not getting. Get a lot of feedback about people not getting info about events, so there is a piece missing in the communications strategy. Provide input on the google doc proposal by 1 pm today if you have thoughts, she wants to get it submitted today.

F. As time allows share google drive set up with PTO board members

Upcoming events/updates (respective leads)

A. Fun Run
    a. Looking to get started earlier, especially with fundraising. Actively looking for volunteers. Interested volunteers should email Jen Larson jen.gidleylarson@gmail.com
    b. Lap tracking - Something that comes up every year is before Heather came, there was lap tracking. But we would need to think through the logistics of tracking and tying donations to laps run.
    Comment: Intentionally moved away from it because it was becoming really competitive, don't want to make the faster kids the stars. Easier to collect donations rather than tally individual connections.
    c. Last year did the class with most runs got a prize? Used to do that. Creates a little competition between classes, but teachers didn't like it. Didn't do that this year. Could do it across grades, but need to touch base with the teachers.
    d. Need to think through what our fundraising goal is.
    Question: Is there a way to work with the teachers to work with teachers to have kids write a note asking people to donate? Jon - That is a great idea, makes it more personal. Need to get teacher buy in.
    Question: Do we have specific projects we are supporting? Goes to the general fund. That is helpful to include in communications. Last year we included quotes on how the teachers use the funds, what a difference it makes. Also include amount PTO spends per kid.
    Question: How much are the credit card processing fees and membership tool kit fees? Chose membership toolkit because previous company took a large cut, but costs are increasing with membership toolkit so we are looking for another platform, that is part of the UMSI project.
    Comment: Membership Toolkit should be offered on a district level rather than every school paying separately for a membership, but not sure how to coordinate that.

B. Summer Playdates - Coming up in August, expanded to all grade levels, organized by Sarah B.
    a. Communications overview handout to pass out at playdates
        i. Vinal had the idea of using these playdates to answer questions/provide important info for new parents. Much of that info doesn't go out until 1 week before school starts. Want to create a hand out with FAQs like what do I need to bring, where do I go, etc. and maybe QR codes for more info.

ii. Vinal and Sarah B meeting July 18, looking for input for the handout: what are some FAQs, or perhaps things Bach parents wish they knew prior to the school year? Other kinds of volunteer opportunities?

iii. Point people towards parents wearing spirit wear to answer in person Qs.

Comments: Lots of support for this - some parents willing to help. Email vinal.desai@gmail.com if you have ideas on what to include.

iv. Sarah B question: Also, closer to the beginning of August, can I have the PTO send a blast out to all families with the flyer of the schedule of play dates with a QR code? SB will draft!

C. Lego team Update from Julius Alexander
   a. Began a lego team for 4th and 5th grade, has 18 participants, will cap at 20.
   b. Happy to see a place to provide documentation, would like to contribute further to this about the lego team.
   c. Lego community sponsorship/ grants available for new teams to buy lego sets that would be used year to year, but need to be affiliated with a school. Julius wants to partner with the PTO, will apply for the grant. Is there a mechanism for him to make the purchases and then be reimbursed by the PTO if the grant comes through?
   d. Megan - Yes, we can just create a line item to track the pass through. Julius pays and get reimbursed.
   e. Grateful for leadership in lego team.
D. Sustainability Committee - Kirsten
   a. Thinking about how to reframe sign up genius into a survey. Deliberately vague to start out with. Have emails of people interested.
   b. Fundraising drive during football games? Trying to get composting set up at the school this year. May be possible for Bach families to do fundraising drives on Football Saturdays, maybe sell something.
E. Book Discussion Update - first time we've had a book group, it went well. Action items are below:
   a. Phone book concept - Push to foster non-screen communication between kids via land lines, could put together a school phone book so kids can call each other on the phone. Could have families enter info into a google sheet, where they can remove it if they want to?
   b. Letters to the board - Want to write letters to the school board, want secondary level schools to have clear bans on cell phone levels, need to start that process now before our kids reach that level. Not sure how to coordinate this.

Next meeting August 14 9am (virtual only) - hoping the new principal can join.

Motion to adjourn meeting

First: Matt___ Second: __Ryan__