

Miller Elementary PTO Minutes

Date: Monday December 11, 2017

The meeting came to order at 9:00 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

-Treasurer's Report

- Otis Spunkmeyer Fundraiser- \$5,740, all will go into the Playground Fund.
- Poinsettia/Wreath Fundraiser- \$770, all will go into the Playground Fund.

-Playground Restoration Project

- Update on School Board contribution by soon-to-be District Superintendent Donovan Rowe: Mr. Rowe met with Mr. Naughton, outgoing Superintendent, earlier today to discuss potential funding resources in order to increase the amount able to be matched by the School Board. Further discussion is needed by the School Board, but they are optimistic that the previously projected \$50,000 may be available for donation matching. The gentlemen discussed current safety concerns regarding school grounds and the playground and agree this is of upmost priority and is the focus of the decision to help fund the Playground Restoration Project.
- Mr. Rowe and School District Grounds Maintenance Supervisor Joe Nickel surveyed the playground last month for safety. Two pieces of equipment were deemed as "unsafe" and were removed from the property. The metal teeter-totter due to rust and deterioration. The spider web climbing structure, which was not in accordance with new safety regulations stating it must be 6 feet away from the pavement. The Grounds Department attempted to move the structure, but its integrity was compromised in the process, largely due to rusted metal and deterioration/weathering. In addition, 150 yards of mulch were dumped on the playground to ensure the correct base depth for safety.
- A Tax Exempt letter has been provided by Mr. Rowe which can be given to donators for their tax records. The Donation Letter has been revised by Principle Gilbert. The letter states the purpose and need for the Playground Restoration Project and details how to donate. It needs to be widely distributed to local businesses and organizations to ask for donations. The letter will also be posted on several Facebook pages as well as the Huron School Website.
- Grants are being researched by PTO members Meghan McPherson, Leslie Masciovecchio, Selena Erickson, and teacher Mrs. Lamerand. The application process on a few is underway.
- More help is needed and volunteers can either call Meghan McPherson at 832-524-0301 or sign up using Signup Genius.
- New Donations made in November are as follows: Chapp Oil Co. -\$500, Miller Elementary Teachers-\$2000, and the Miller PTO- \$6,010 from recent fundraisers. The Grand Total so far is **\$15,820!!!** That leaves a balance of \$34, 180 left to raise to achieve the goal of \$50,000. If the Huron School District matches those donations, we will reach the estimated cost of \$100,000! A proposed timeline for completion would be to finalize plans and place equipment order by the end of this school year (June 2017.) A 6-8 week order and installation process would allow a completed brand new Playground for the start of the 2018-2019 School Year next September!!!

Principle Gilbert's Report:

- The week of January 15th will begin NWEA Testing for all grade levels, K-5. Testing will take 3-4 weeks and will be performed on computers in the Technology lab and Chrome Books in classrooms. NWEA is a National Assessment Test used to measure the growth and proficiency of students and is given 3 times a year.
- New Security protocol is in effect. All visitors must press the buzzer at the front door flag pole entrance and state their purpose to the staff prior to gaining admittance into the building. All visitors must then report directly to the Office to check in. All volunteers or visitors in the building must sign in and get a name tag. People are not permitted to let anyone into the building or hold the door for anyone else, everyone must be buzzed in by the Office Staff. Protocol is clearly posted at each entrance of the building now. This is for the security and safety of all students and staff at Miller Elementary. Everyone is asked to please follow and respect this protocol.
- With the winter weather, Mrs. Gilbert reminds parents that only students receiving school breakfast are permitted into the building at 8:20 a.m., all other students may enter the building at 8:30. Please be mindful of this schedule so that your child is not waiting out in the cold due to early drop offs. Likewise, parent pick-up has been busier than usual lately and parents are once again reminded to not arrive before 3:20 and that you must wait at the doors and not enter the school. Also, DO NOT PARK IN THE BUS LOOP, even if there is nowhere else to park. A print out stating drop-off and pick-up protocol was sent home with students again this month for parents/guardians to review.

Current Recess Concerns-

- With the elimination of several pieces of play equipment, there is growing concern over what the students are able to do to keep them busy and active during outdoor recess. The PTO provided new basketballs, soccer balls, kick balls, and footballs at the beginning of the year and they are not being used. Reasons are safety, abuse of their use by students, and that they are not inflated. A motion was made by Raeann Ramsby and seconded by Holly Bank that a 5th Grade "Playground Helper" could be responsible for making sure balls are inflated regularly and small equipment/toys are being kept up and made available to the students at recess times. The motion passed and Selena Erickson volunteered to bring in hand pumps to help with maintenance of the balls. Other items that can be added are hula-hoops, jump ropes, and Nerf balls. Anyone can collect items as soon as possible and present them to Mrs. Gilbert.
- There are 2 recesses per day and 3 Recess Aids per 150 kids during each recess time. The number is the same during indoor recess. Students are in their classrooms for indoor recess but their teachers are often not. Teachers are on their own lunch break and may be elsewhere in the building.

Honor Role-

- A motion was made by Raenann Ramsby for the PTO to recognize Honor Role students each trimester. The motion was seconded by Holly Bank and passed unanimously. A special breakfast could be provided before school as well as pictures of students being posted on the PTO bulletin board. Meghan McPherson suggested special “Honor Role” magnets that could be displayed on the student’s lockers. A certificate will also be provided to students as well as their names being read over the loudspeaker system at school.
- Students eligible for the Honor Role are any 4th and 5th grade student who received all A’s or B’s that trimester. Usually around 70 students per trimester are awarded this honor.
- Many ideas and different options were discussed about the logistics, schedule, and cost of providing a breakfast versus lunch. A possibility of working with the school’s food service company versus PTO provided food such as pastries, juice, and fruit was also discussed. Raeann Ramsby will speak with the school’s food service representative, about cost and options.
- Another idea was to give every Honor Roll Student a “Free Ice Cream” certificate each trimester which they can redeem during lunch on any day. Then provide a Special Breakfast or Lunch at the end of the year rewarding those students who made the Honor Roll all 3 trimesters. 5th grade graduation breakfast is also at the end of the year, so we need to be mindful of that. This discussion remains open at this time.

Lunch Schedule-

- A concern was proposed by Carolyn Czako regarding the current lunch schedule. Many parents and students feel they do not have enough time to eat lunch. Current lunch time is 15 minutes, followed by a 20 minute recess. Each grade has 15 minutes to go to their lockers, walk to the lunch room, collect their hot lunch after waiting in line or sit down with their cold lunch, eat, and exit the lunch room. Each table is dismissed at the 15 minute mark by the 1 Lunch Aid in the room. Students can, however, stay and finish eating instead of going outside right away. The next grade then comes in to sit down. Half of the lunch room is utilized at a time while the other half gets cleaned. 4th Grade lunch starts at 11:15, followed by 5th – 11:30, 3rd- 11:45, 2nd- 12:00, 1st- 12:15, and K- 12:30.
- Per Principle Gilbert, parents can come and have lunch with their children on any day if they are concerned about their child.
- A proposal was made to Principle Gilbert that the lunch recess be eliminated completely. Another proposal was to change the schedule, decreasing the recess to 15 minutes and having it first, followed by a 20 minute lunch. This would give students 5 more minutes of eating time. This could also lessen the students urge to hurry up and eat so they can go outside to play.
- A concern was also brought up about the option to purchase ice cream every day during lunch. Is this necessary since the time available is already short and now the kids are waiting in another line for an unhealthy snack? This is an option made available by the food service company our school uses, Chartwells. We cannot make decisions and impose them onto the company, but it is proposed that maybe we can decrease the frequency of ice cream being available to only once a week. Raeann will speak with our food service representative about this concern.

- A concern was also brought up about the number of Aids during this time period. There is only 1 Lunch Aid and 3 Recess Aids at this time. Substitutes for this position are very limited, so it is often necessary for teachers or Principle Gilbert herself to forego their own lunch break time and personally assist in this position if an Aid is absent. Employing more Aids may be necessary.
- This topic remains open at this time as Principle Gilbert deliberates.

Holiday Concert-

- Monday Dec. 18th at 9:30 is the Holiday Concert at the High School Auditorium put on by the Music Department and our talented Miller Elementary Students. A letter is being sent out with details regarding parking and the DVD order form.
- Parking is always a concern as this event draws a huge crowd. Parents and guests are able to park in the parking lot between the High School and Junior High. However, this lot is small and fills up quickly. Guests may begin arriving to park at 8:30 am. Attendees are strongly encouraged to park at the soccer field parking lot just north of the High School on Huron River Dr. There will be buses running to shuttle people to and from the lot. Shuttles begin at 8:30 am.
- It has been asked of the PTO to assign 2 people as Parking Attendants prior to the concert. Shawn Marentette will ask 2 student fathers to fill this need. They will have seats reserved for them and their spouses at the front of the auditorium.
- Mrs. Diserens has asked that the PTO have a table set up at the entrance to the auditorium to supply DVD order forms. She will be graciously donating \$1 for every DVD sold to the Playground Fund! Thank you Mrs. Diserens! Shawn Marentette, Selena Erickson, and Meghan McPherson will alternate serving at the PTO table. There will also be information about the Playground Restoration Project and Donation Letters available for distribution.

Upcoming Events-

- Detroit Pistons Basketball Assembly Dec. 13th at 9:30 am.
- "Duel in the D" Hockey Game at Little Caesars Arena on Sat. Feb.10th at 7 pm. Tickets must be purchased through the PTO by Dec. 15th.
- Popcorn Day is Friday Jan. 19th, cost is \$1.
- Possible January Events: RAC Night swim and play or Movie Night- dates yet to be determined.
- February Adult Event yet to be determined.
- Carnival Thursday March 15th.

Next PTO Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 16th at 4:00 pm in the Miller Library.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Attendance:

Raeann Ramsby- PTO President
 Holly Bank- PTO Treasurer
 Selena Erickson- PTO Secretary
 Shawn Petty- PTO Vice President
 Meghan McPherson- Co-Treasurer
 Carrie Spencer

Donovan Rowe- Superintendent
 Principle Gilbert
 Carolyn Czako
 Mrs. Czako
 Mr. Czako