June 8th PTO Meeting

6:30-7:30 North-South Classroom

Attendees: Angie Lundblad, Gabe & Kim Schenz, Mark Jansen, Kelly Lafean, Shannon Pearson, Jessica Matyi, Kim Robertson

Principal’s Report:

* Wrapped up a great year
  + 6th grade graduation was really fun – thanks to PTO for refreshments
  + Some tears from 6th graders & teachers – they will miss each other!
* Looking forward to next year
  + Registered for WE Day – kids loved this!
  + Want to do Feed My Starving Children again
* May want to reduce the number of fundraisers – the ones driven by the kids may have reduced participation in the ones driven by the PTO (will consider this when planning for next year), however, the kids learned a lot and were passionate about what they were doing – just wrote a check to children’s hospital and a letter explaining how the kids raised money!

Mark Jansen:

* From his PTA experience in another district, recommends making sure we have bylaws and a budget with a line item for each thing
  + Attendees agree!
  + Jessica shared an example budget and recommends approving just once so we don’t have to vote on every little thing
  + Kim pointed out that many members place value on the act of voting to approve spending, so we will need to make sure we announce that we’ll be approving a budget and we will need to continue to honor that tradition for expenses outside of the pre-approved budget
* Another idea would be Birthday Books – Kids get to pick put a book from the principal’s office on their birthday
  + We could likely support this using Scholastic Dollars

Dates for next year (Angie):

* Thursdays are the traditional meeting time, but new Treasurer, Mel, has a conflict
* Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are difficult for many regular attendees – Kim can’t make these work, many families have religious activities on Wednesdays, no one wants to have Friday meetings
* A proposal was made to hold meetings on Tuesdays, but there are also conflicts there – Staff members have committee meetings, Shannon works. Later, possibly 7:30 to 8:30 would work, but this is getting late for families that attend with kids. Angie will follow up with Mel to see if

Wrap up of 2016-2017 Fundraisers:

* Family Fun Day – negative cash flow, probably due to bad weather, but people that were there had a great time and food trucks were good!

Activities we want to fund next year:

* Already approved busing for fall field trip
  + Jessica says Target provides grants that may cover things like this (bussing for the arts)
* Family Fun Days – want to do these monthly next year (Lego Night, Game Night, Pumpkins, STEM night, book bingo)
  + Jessica is request a budget of up to $150 for up to 5 nights throughout the year
  + Angie recommends having each classroom sponsor a month (provide volunteers, bring sides…)
  + Pumpkins and STEM night will have costs associated with them, too
* Art Adventure - $250 budget
* Classroom parties – budget TBD
* Fundraiser prizes
* Playground equipment (replacement)
* Arts and Academics Fair
* Book Fairs
* 6th grade graduation
* Don’t want to do turkey bingo again

Open House is August 16th:

* PTO wants to have a table
* Will include volunteer forms and student directory info release forms in the classroom packets
* Will have sign up for emails from the PTO at the table
  + Jessica noted that the negative back and forth on some of the email exchanges at the beginning and end of the year were a turn-off and recommended that those exchanges be kept within the board
  + Kim R agreed that the emails weren’t helpful, but noted that many of those strong opinions were not from board members, so we need to make sure others aren’t shut out of the discussion
  + Gabe recommends using Mail Chimp again (or something like it) so there’s no reply to all option

“Internal Audit” follow-up:

* We received the letters from the IRS
  + We have 2 EIN numbers
    - Both are still active, but haven’t filed Form 990 under either number since 2014 – don’t think this is a problem because of our low level of fundraising and expenses, but this needs to be verified
    - Need to write to IRS to let them know which number we plan to use
    - Can’t keep operating under either if no longer affiliated with PTA Minnesota Congress (not a PTSA); we need a new number for a PTO
* Jessica says we were waiting on bylaws to file for the new EIN and so that should be able to move forward now. The group agreed to disagree about whether this was communicated to the rest of the organization (meeting minutes and emails state the opposite) and causes of the delay in approving bylaws.
* Some discussion about whether it still makes sense to be a PTO rather than PTSA
  + Benefit of PTO seems to be in the flexibility – Jessica says there is some good training on each of the roles on the general PTO website
  + Benefit of the PTSA was in having the resources (training, templates…), but there was the drawback of having to pay dues and we always struggled to get 20 members, and sometimes struggled to keep 4 officer positions filled
  + Some in the group still regret not having gone through the activity of weighing pros and cons of each before Shawn moved forward with PTO activities, but agreement seems to be that because much of the money to start the PTO was already spent it makes sense to continue down this path
* Jessica says she and Shawn have all of the President’s and Treasurer’s records and will turn them in to the office by the end of next week. All receipts will be available and the necessary records will be provided to show how spending maps to approved items.
* Jessica says the bank will need a copy of the meeting minutes that show Angie and Mel are the new President and Treasurer.
* Jessica recommends printing the meeting minutes and putting them with the records for that year as the folders seem incomplete and she and Shawn struggled to find records from prior years when they first started. Kim R will print the minutes.
* Kim R has updated the PTSA’s grant request and reimbursement request forms for the PTO. These new versions have been emailed to Julie Anderson who has been asked to print them and make copies to be kept in the CME PTO Mailbox.

Other business:

* Lego robots
  + Kim R approached Sam Panek and she is willing to be the “teacher owner” of these if the PTO can prepare materials for her.
  + Kim S described full LEGO programming unit that she’s seen at other schools and wants us to try to develop something like that for CME
  + Angie is part of a First Lego League group that works with the EV3 robots and will try to help us get them prepared
  + The major issue when trying to use them at the LEGO themed family fun night was that it seemed to get stuck in downloading the commands from the laptop to the robots – the robots were built and the demo ran as it should
  + Gabe will also continue to look into it
  + Note: Gabe has one of the kits and Kim R has the other two
* Kelly is requesting that the PTO pay for water bottles – should fill out a request form