

General Membership Meeting

Thurston Elementary PTA

February 9, 2010

The General Membership meeting of the Thurston Elementary PTA was called to order in the TES library at 6:32 pm by President April Uffens.

Approval of the Minutes

- December Minutes were read by Sherry as there was no meeting in January.

Action Item: Teena Seckler motioned to approve and Shari Furtwangler seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

Principal's Report

- Playoffs for Battle of the Books will start next week for grades 3-5. One team will go to Regionals which will be here in town in March. The date for K-2 Battle of the Books will be announced.
- Shari recently attended a No Excuses University retreat. The program is designed to promote higher education beginning at the Elementary level. The staff is working to draft a "Staff Commitment." Students will be involved in drafting a "Student Commitment" and Shari asked parents to think about volunteering to work on a "Parent Commitment" soon.
- The No Excuses University kickoff event is still to be decided.
- Shari asked if members knew of any printers that might donate or offer services at a discount in order to print a No Excuses University Banner to be hung at the school.
- Shari will be purchasing a digital picture frame for the front desk that will be filled with pictures that reflect a day in the life of Thurston Elementary.
- As a member of No Excuses University each child is to receive a T-Shirt printed with the No Excuses logo along with each child's expected college graduation date. Shari would like to look into having these donated but indicated that the school could pay for them with existing unallocated funds and funds that will be raised during the lottery scratch off event. The first year, T-shirts would be given to students. In subsequent years the school would provide T-shirts for new students and Kindergarten students. Parents would be responsible for purchasing T-shirts after the initial one is provided by the school.
- Toni indicated that PTA pays around \$4.00 per shirt through our current distributor as a budgetary figure for the No Excuses T-shirts.
- April suggested that PTA offer any donors a free ad in the PTA newsletter as an incentive.
- It was suggested that Universities might donate T-shirts or that TES might dedicate a fundraiser for T-shirts every year.
- It was suggested that PTA might offer an educational scholarship for 5th grade students in the form of a savings bond. This would fit in with the No Excuses program in order to get students

thinking about higher education. There would be an application process that Shari would research. Jade suggested that we wait to vote on a budgetary figure until we had more information at a future meeting.

Library Report

- Teena Seckler reported that grades K-2 have all had an opportunity to listen to all of the Battle of the Books titles. Upper grades will start their competition next week with Regionals to be held in March.
- Kindergarten students are now able to check out books in the “Everyone” section, 3rd grade is doing dictionary work, 4th grade students are working with Almanacs and 5th graders are finishing a Global Warming project.

Teachers Report

- First grade teachers Lorene Corgain, Katy Stiles, and Judy Pinson talked about incorporating the technology provided by the new building into the classroom as much as possible. Lorene spoke about a new website that she has been using in the classroom as a math resource called IXLMath.com. It is aligned with the new state standards for math and allows teachers to follow the progress of students. It also allows teachers to tailor lessons to individual students who may be excelling or struggling in certain areas. Students would be able to access the site for free from home. She has been using this website on a trial basis and students have loved it.
- This website offers programs through the 6th grade. From now through September 2010 the program would cost \$1300.00. The number of teachers wanting to implement the program in their classrooms could affect the cost and Lorene agreed to get some feedback from teachers and to come to the next meeting with some specific facts and figures.
- Katie Stiles indicated that this site keeps the children current with internet and computer skills while helping to alleviate the copy and paper restraints that they currently have as a school.
- Jennifer Rogers suggested that the school look into a technology grant to fund the program.
- April asked how students were studying math currently and whether students were all studying the same thing or if they were broken into groups by skill level. The first grade teachers indicated that children are broken out into groups by skill level.
- The first grade music program is on March 11th and teachers asked for volunteers that might be interested in making animal costumes.
- The first graders will be participating in the gift of literacy at LCC in the spring. They will go to the college for the day and every first grader will receive a backpack with a book of their choice inside.
- Shari indicated that the staff had decided to do a coin collection as a fundraiser for the people of Haiti affected by the recent earthquake. It was suggested that, for one week, kids could pay 50 cents per day to wear a hat but that she would need volunteers in the morning to collect the donations from the students. All of the proceeds would be donated to the Red Cross. The first week of March was suggested as a time to hold the event.

New Business

- April explained that Albertsons was no longer doing the community partners program and that we would no longer be receiving funds from the program as a fundraiser. Safeway still does a similar program and April is publicizing this recent development.
- We currently have 8 people signed up for the upcoming CPR class.
- Gymnastics Night would be on Friday, February 19th from 5:30-7:30.
- Some teachers still looking for volunteers to do classroom baskets for Family Fun Night.
- It was suggested that those who donate to Family Fun Night be recognized on posters or in some highly visible way by the gift baskets and by bingo or near the entry to the school on the evening of the event.
- Teena reminded us that the Book Fair will be going on in the library during the event.
- Toni inquired about door control and if it would be possible to prop pod doors open to control traffic flow on Family Fun Night. Shari said that should not be a problem.
- The Love and Logic materials have arrived for the PTA section in the library and they will be available for checkout soon. Shari suggested that the resources be kept in the Community Room and April suggested using the library but posting a note about them in the Community Room so that people know they are available.
- Toni announced that we have 254 points available through the ink cartridge fundraising program and that it costs nothing for us to participate.
- She also announced that the Papas Pizza fundraiser raised almost \$500.00 and that it was our best ever.
- April introduced information on the Staples school supply program. Parents would order their school supplies through this program and they are delivered right to the school for pick-up. The cost was around \$40.00. Summer suggested pricing out the supplies ourselves and offering the service independent of Staples. She thought we could do it for less than \$40.00 and agreed to present more information at a future meeting. Jade suggested doing an online survey on the subject.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 pm by April Uffens.