

McMurray Elementary PTA Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 9:17 am.

President's Remarks – Geeta Welden, called the meeting to order and reminded the group that parents should not park in the spaces marked for traveling teachers. She also told the group that new flyer procedures would be coming out which will include the procedures for online flyers. The purpose of the Nominating Committee was explained and interested parents were asked to volunteer. Karen Bovalina, Gina Wells, and Mary Pat DiRenzo agreed to take this on. The motion to approve was made by Lori Cuervo and seconded by Jodi Hannah.

Principal's Remarks – Dr. Freado began by thanking the current PTA Board and all volunteers for all they have done this year. He explained that the PSSA writing test was taking place, and that the 5th grade has seen a lot of growth in their writing skills this year. The teachers are anxious to see how they do on the tests. The 4th grade will be starting the "Write to Learn" program soon, and more teachers are being educated on it. Preparation for the next school year is beginning. There are projected to be approximately 1,027 students enrolled next year, so no new staff additions are anticipated at this time. Several things being considered are: expanding the mobile computer labs; providing projectors in all classrooms and a review of the science curriculum. The technology curriculum plan for two years out is to be determined. No large initiatives are foreseen. The group discussed parking concerns at the school and Dr. Freado will look into where certain staff is to park during the school day. It was also mentioned that, although the students were given the choice, they decided not to switch the lunch/recess times for the remainder of the year. Student Council reported that the school store is still going well and that they sell out of products every two weeks. They also suggested: additional healthy food options in the cafeteria, such as soup and fresh fruit; better quality chicken; more side options and other "specialty" days besides Pizza Hut. Dr. Freado stated that Mrs. Rush is working very hard to respond to some prior suggestions, but that staffing constraints could pose a problem. The issue of metal cafeteria trays was discussed, and Mr. Stoehr mentioned that some studies have found that cleaning the metal trays might use more energy than using the disposable trays.

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report – Sarah Lindsay asked if there were any questions regarding the register report. None were asked. Jodi Hannah moved to pay the bills. Deb Smith seconded.

1st Vice President's Report – Carol Planitzer stated that sign-ups for after school classes were complete; classes began last week and will run through March 16. She stated that we've banked 1500 points for Giant Eagle Apples for the Students. Also, please keep bringing in your papers and place them inside the ABITIBI boxes at the entrance to the school. The Reflections assemblies have been scheduled for Monday, February 23 and the projects are currently being displayed in the glass cases. Carol also mentioned that our PTA received Membership Awards for having faculty and more than 50% of the school enrolled, and reporting our dues by September 1st.

2nd Vice President's Report – Jodi Lesniakowski told the group that 765 yearbooks have been ordered, and that the ordering period is over. There may be some extras once they are delivered. She also stated that she is currently looking for a Relay for Life Co-Chair.

3rd Vice President – Barb Calfo reported that the next Area Council meeting would be held on February 19th, at 9:15am. She also thanked the volunteers who helped out with the last Teacher/Staff appreciation luncheon on February 4th. The bus drivers were happy to be included.

4th Vice President – Michelle Smith reported that Cindy Chapman, of the Activities Committee, rescheduled Movie Night for the 5th grade, and that she needs volunteers. She reminded the group that the deadline for the newsletter is the 15th of the month and to plan accordingly since the newsletter is bi-monthly. Michelle commended Sandy Levin and Jackie Platt for the wonderful job they are doing with the newsletter. Constant Contact sign-ups have increased since reminders have been sent out. The total is now 460 families. Michelle also explained that a Weekly Bulletin containing important dates would be emailed out every Thursday, except for the week a newsletter is sent out. Committee Chairs were reminded to be sure to get any flyers to the VP the Friday before, if it is to be included in the Thursday Weekly Bulletin. Michelle told the group that the next School Board meeting would be February 17th at 7:30pm, and that the next Spirit Day would be February 27th. Discussion took place regarding Power School automated emails and teacher comments.

Old Business – Karen Bovalina stated that she made a few changes to the Standing Rules, and passed them around to the group. Deb Antonucci made a motion to approve them, and Jodi Hannah seconded. They were approved.

New Business – Barb Calfo and Carol Planitzer discussed fund raising for this year and said that next year's board will need to be mindful of the fact that there will not be extra money available. They said that Sally Foster did not meet its expected numbers this year, but it does give a 50% return. Many others do not give that much. Geeta Welden informed the group that the Girls on the Run program was being held at the PT Recreation Center and that sign-ups were beginning. It is a program for girls in grades 3-6, which encourages health and self-esteem.

Guest Speaker – Art Teacher Annette Burke and Assistant Art Teacher Amelia Yates presented a slideshow of the process they and the students underwent to create the new mosaic, which was recently installed. Two 6th grade students spoke to the group about what they enjoyed about the project, which was part of the Artist in Residency program.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am.

These minutes were recorded by Joanne Jaworski, Recording Secretary, McMurray PTA.