

Goff PTO Meeting Minutes September 15, 2009

Attendance: Vicki Brock, Mary Anne Chylinski, Susan Gesten, Jen Gonyea, Ryan Groat, Barb Hamilton, Pat Hughes, Cheryl Kennedy, Joanne O'Leary, Tracey Pezzolla, Renee Seney, Jen Serian, Steve Taylor, Natalie Wagner, and about 14 other parents.

PTO Officers and Principals were introduced.

Old Business:

Entertainment Books: This fundraiser is the primary source of income that supports the PTO budget. Last year it brought it over \$12,000, but this year we budgeted \$10,000, (as the incoming number of 6th graders is smaller). Cost is \$30 and books will be going home with students this week.

Open Houses: 9/16 - 6th Grade Open House 6:30 pm
10/1 - 7th & 8th Grade Open House 6:30 pm

PTO will be at these events with parent volunteer sign-up sheets, indicating availability (day/eve). Library will also have tables and PTO will supply some refreshments.

School Pictures: Dates are 10/14 & 10/15 during scheduled gym classes.

The PTO received a request to consider a new company for school pictures. Steve Taylor reported that we can consider other options, but EGCS D has a package with all the schools, so we would need to coordinate any change as a whole school district.

Halloween Happening: Scheduled for 10/23- all grades invited.

The teacher who coordinated this in the past is unavailable this year. PTO will increase level of support from \$100 to \$500 dollars, and will recruit volunteers for decorating (on 10/22 at 3 pm) and running the haunted house and clean-up afterwards.

Activity Night: First 6th grade activity night – 9/25 6 pm. (pizza & soda to be served)

Jen Gonyea will check with the Student Council and share the results of a survey they conducted last year about what types of activities the students would like during Activity Nights.

PTO Funding request Forms: PTO will re-instate these forms for staff to request PTO funds. We will need the names of the coordinators for each program/item in the budget to inform them of the new procedure. Form will also be posted on the Website.

Budget Review: We reviewed the PTO budget line by line and discussed the rationale for changes. There was extra money in the budget leftover from last year due to three factors: 1) fundraising raised \$3,000 above anticipated amount; 2) staff did not request the full amount budgeted for certain items, resulting in \$1,300 extra, and; 3) \$6,000 was leftover from the previous year and was not spent.

Open Discussion on Budget:

Ideas were generated on how to allocate the extra funds, as outlined below:

1) Jen Gonyea proposed a one-time PTO contribution of \$2,000 to support the three school trips (Nature's Classroom, Philadelphia and DC).

Passed: A motion was proposed by Natalie Wagner and seconded by Barb Hamilton.

2) Mary Anne Chylinski proposed the purchase of a Mac Computer to replace the Dell PC. This would benefit all students as well as teachers/administrators and would help with presentations and the morning TV show. The cost would be approximately \$1,300 with a 3-year warranty. School District funds do not cover this cost.

Passed: A motion was proposed by Barb Hamilton and seconded by Pat Hughes.

3) The PTO would like to spend \$100 to make a donation to the Fire Department in memory of Goff secretary Barb Lehman, who passed away over the summer.

This was unanimously passed with a motion from Cheryl Kennedy

4) Steve Taylor requested a large electric grill to be used to support student activities at Goff such as team picnics. A gas grill is not allowed at Goff due to insurance concerns. After discussion, we decided to research the cost of this and report back at the next meeting prior to having a vote.

Other Issues Discussed:

A parent expressed concern over last year's Rachel's Challenge program. She pointed out that while it's a good message, parents didn't get to review the video before it was shown, and didn't have an option to opt out. Several children were very upset by the program and it made them feel less safe at school. This year, the film will not be shown, but they plan to continue the Rachel's Challenge Club with the message of taking better care of kids who get picked on.

Another issue raised was the need for a parent meeting about Nature's Classroom prior to the trip. The purpose would be to learn more about the program and to specifically know who the parent and teacher chaperones are. Steve Taylor will work on this for this current year, and Ryan Groat is committed to improving communication.

In general, parents would like the Goff staff to discuss potentially controversial programs with parents prior to implementation.

Joanne O'Leary from the Guidance Department offered to do a presentation for parents and the PTO about some of the issues that kids are facing.

Next Meeting – October 20 at 7 pm in the Cafeteria

Submitted by: Susan Gesten