

PTO Meeting 11/17/20

Chair: Tara Davis

Meeting Participants: Katie W, John A, Mallory, Mary Kaufmann, Jen S, Abbie M, Evon V

1. PTO Updates

- a. **Gratitude Padlet** - Thank you all for your contributions!
- b. **Helping Hands & Happy Hearts** - Tara purchased several copies of Owl Babies from Everyone's Books using PTO funds. She dropped one off to Kristina Weeks' family with new baby, along with Everyone Eats meals, all of which was very much appreciated. Sadly, it was also announced that Grace Freeman's aunt passed away due to Covid. Abbie volunteered to make/deliver a sympathy card.
- c. **Living School Yard**
 - i. Tara submitted an application to the Walmart Community Grant Program.
 - ii. Tara's contact at Brattleboro Savings & Loan pitched "**Pennies for the Playground**" to their President and Marketing Team. Tara also plans to make a pitch to River Valley Credit Union in conjunction with their School Savings Program.
 - iii. Tara D is collaborating with Tara Gordon, garden coordinator, to implement a bird feeder program in response to teacher requests. Tara G will make some simple bird feeders with PreK students. Otherwise discussing ways to fund start-up (need 2 tube feeders, birdseed, storage container) and ongoing expense (seeds). Perhaps make little bird feeders to help fundraise? Also exploring the idea of creating a kiosk for bird sightings/seed library as a potential way to involve community members and get additional support. Will need to coordinate maintenance, and stressed the importance of including all students/grade levels in shared responsibility.
 - iv. Tara D was invited to join the Farm to School Committee, plans to attend her first meeting on Dec. 16th, and will report out at the next PTO meeting.
- d. **Science Fair** - Tara spoke briefly with Erek Tuma. No concrete updates at this point, still in early planning stages. Erek will touch base with upper el teachers after break. Teachers had originally suggested the end of Feb. Possibility of including lower el? How to implement virtually - make videos? Pipe into classroom (like BAMS)? Expectation - to be done at school or home?

2. Principal Updates

- a. **Gratitude Padlet:** Very well received, everyone loved it and was so appreciative to get such positive and touching messages.
- b. **School Wide Celebration:** Each class is reading a different book and doing an art project around the story. The selection of books was diverse and teachers were finding different ways to incorporate it into their time at school. We included the remote classes as well and have invited them to create snowflakes that can be dropped off at school to be displayed in the halls along with the other artwork that each class creates. We plan to send home pictures of class' creation.
- c. **Snowy Owl Project:** All of the owls have been chosen by Oak Grove Staff. Gifts are coming in steadily and are due by 12/21 for distribution.
- d. **Planning for Second Semester:** We are working on plans for the transition from two days to four days at the end of January. Classroom teachers and other staff have been working on operational plans for the school day. There was a family forum last night where many great questions were asked. We are continuing to take feedback from staff and families to help with our planning. We will be working on creating a timeline for families as to when information will be collected and shared.
- e. Please complete the learning option survey for spring 2021 by Thursday!
- f. **Pathway:** We had some "construction" vehicles here today to create a path for the winter season from the side gate to the basketball hoop area. This path was added for ease of access to the school building while the side gate is being used for drop off and pick up. By creating a formal path we will be able to maintain the field space for playing and Greg will be able to snowblow/shovel a safe walkway for students who enter the gate on Clark Ave. in the morning.
- g. **Winter Gear:** We have been able to outfit students in need of gear with money from Kids in Coats through the United Way. We have also received donations for gear to keep here at school. Gear is washed in between wears by different students and returned to the rack for use again.
- h. **Pennies for the Playground:** Tennis balls continue to be brought in. The bucket is about $\frac{1}{2}$ full of change and bills.
- i. **Budget:** Presented a level-funded budget to the business manager. That is what will be presented to the board. There is a school board meeting tomorrow.

- j. **Parent Survey:** At the leadership council meeting it was discussed as to whether or not this is the right time to distribute a survey. It will be discussed again at a later date. It might be beneficial to do the survey in preparation for the next school year when, hopefully, things are a little more normal.
- k. **Virtual Story Time:** Something our AST team was thinking about. We need to discuss the logistics further and are looking for feedback as to whether or not this would be of interest to families. It would occur about twice per month in the evening. *Response is positive. Suggestion was made to schedule around witching hour/dinner-making time, 4:30-5. Also noted that kids will need their chromebooks, which means it needs to be on a Tuesday afternoon/evening. Special request for the Governor to be a mystery reader. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer!*

3. Member Share

- a. **Artful Ice Shanties Design-Build Competition (Karla)** - potential opportunity for joint collaboration to sponsor playhouse for LSY
- b. www.silvergraphics.com (Jaimie Scanlon) / **Artsonia (Karla, Green Street PTO)** - Karla first suggested this as a possible fundraiser last year. Jaimie recently suggested a similar idea. Need to gather more info. Seems like a good idea! *Who wants to take this on?*
- c. **Seasonal Photo Booth** - Fall Photo Booth was such a success, possibility to continue throughout the year with seasonal themes. *Snowpeople or ice sculptures anyone?*

4. Share/Brainstorm ideas for virtual Family Fun events. **See GOOGLE.DOC*

***Parent Perspective:**

Discussion about how snow days are being handled this year...

Katie mentioned getting a reminder from her 3rd grade teacher about last night's Family Forum. She had made this suggestion, among others, to admin at the previous, poorly attended Family Forum as a way to help improve communications and promote parent engagement. She appreciated that her input was taken into consideration!

***Meeting Attendance Raffle:**

Gift card to Porch - Abbie Morse

