

PTO General Meeting, Thursday, March 11, 2021 6:00-7:30pm

\*The meeting was virtual and held over zoom.

1. Welcome-PTO President, Johnny Fils-Aime
   1. I’ve been watching the school FB page and I want to see us increase our presence on social media.
2. Principal’s Update-Mme Flores-Hanson and M. Bell
   1. It’s so wonderful to have everyone here and we are doing great having the children in person and doing VLS. Most mornings I’m at lower or upper greeting kids and you might remember parents come and line up and one student comes in at a time. Today I saw each student coming out of the car and I thought what a special treasure we have with you trusting us with your special gift to the world. Each student and family is so unique. What a privilege and an honor it is to welcome our young students. Thank you for being so amazingly supportive. My goal is to increase participation to get more done and have more voices. I understand that the pandemic is still around and I understand that it takes effort to set aside time each month. We will continue to find ways to increase engagement. JFA: Our first grader is saying that there are kids who don’t go to the school on the playground at recess. Mme Flores-Hanson: They had a situation this week with a few students using the soccer field and she talked to them and told them to not mingle with other students, and asked them to not use the field again. They were getting ready for their try outs for soccer. We are putting up signs so people can’t use the fields. RebK: Do the teachers at least have a vaccination yet? MFH: The majority yes do have their vaccination but I can’t give details because it’s protected information. The teachers are more comfortable and they’re taking care.
3. Committee Reports
   1. Intern Committee-Toni Brinsfield
      1. Nothing to report tonight.
   2. Treasurer-James Lewis
      1. Nothing to report tonight.
   3. Fundraising-Ray Kirsch
      1. Plant Sale Update-Rebecca Koetter
         1. The plant sale is going well. We have the ability for parents to submit their orders for the entire month. She has collected ten orders so far by email. But we’ve still got lots of time-until March 31st to get their orders in. We’ve got the pdf on the website and also the PayPal donate button on the website. That’s very fortunate. She’s going to check with Annie and find out if anyone at upper campus has received a half sheet ad in their kid’s backpacks or if only lower has given them out? That’s the first wave of advertising the plant sale-has anyone received that in their kids’ backpacks. She also wrote up an email which is scheduled to be sent out to everyone on Monday at 5. That will be the second wave of announcement. RayK: We should remind people every week-that seems to work. MC: I’ll post about it at least a few more times on the FB as well. Possibly teachers haven’t passed out the fliers yet? JFA: We were trying to order the shirts and we can’t find the flier. Can we put the link up? MC: She wasn’t sure if that’s something that’s going through the school or if it’s PTO? Is it raising any money? MFH: Usually it’s for fundraising but this year it’s at cost. In the future we can have a parent volunteer to help and the funds went to field trips.
      2. Box Tops and Shutterfly link?
         1. Are we still collecting boxtops? And the shutterfly link isn’t working? Typically we have them sent with the students but they can still be sent via student backpacks? They’re all online through the app. You have to scan your receipt and you have to choose which school it goes to. RebK: Before you brought in boxtops and you got a gift card for the book fair but we can’t do that anymore. We will add this to our April newsletter! RayK: I don’t know about the Shutterfly link. In the past we have had a link that worked. Shutterfly was purchased by Lifetouch so possibly that has affected things.
   4. Social-Michelle Setodji
      1. Nothing to report tonight.
   5. Communications-Malia Caruso
      1. Newsletter
         1. At some point Becky was doing a newsletter. Is that something that we should bring back? There are a few things going on right now that we could put. Has anyone heard back about getting volunteer help? That could be something for the newsletter as well. There is a platform called S’more.com which is what our librarian uses. It’s a bunch of librarians that put that together and the PTO could use something like that. Let’s keep connecting and giving parents information. JFA: Newsletters were very effective in days gone by. Now everyone is on their phone—could we do a video instead? That would bring traffic to the website and it might get more of our community involved. I myself do a weekly video every Monday and we could do a quick recap 60-90 seconds and it would be much faster. RayK: Ramsey middle uses S’more and it comes as a link which has both print and video. You can have anything electronic. Certainly you can have videos and it just depends on how they format the newsletter. JFA: I do a video once every Monday and I get thousands of views. RebK: There is a flood of information that comes in so a different format that would be good. Could we also combine with the school’s newsletter? MFH: Yes I would love that and it would also streamline things. It can be done and it would put the information out to people.
      2. Directory and Website: What we are using is really hard to navigate. This would be a PTO thing and a great way to connect parents and students. We could connect room parents; we could push out an email, newsletter, etc. out to everyone. You can even put the school calendar, the apparel link. I was leaning more towards the A to Z, Ray as well. The FB viewings have been going up. She’ll be in contact about the video updates. It sounds like no one has gotten interest in the positions. She updated the website and if anyone wants to look at it and see if they have any suggestions. The donate button is working!! The last thing is that she got a request from a previous student’s mom and she is offering babysitting and nanny services. Could we keep a list or a “Where are they now?” for advertising? It would have to be a former student and related to French, it has to be a French service. Someone else had reached out and asked about how much the France trip usually costs. It’s around $3500. That’s something that is totally separate from the school. There is an agency that takes care of everything. How do we make it so we can have more students participate? Not everyone is comfortable sending their children overseas. RayK: Yes it’s 3500-4000$. At the end of 5th grade students can participate in an exchange trip. Then a group of students comes here. It used to be during the school year but it’s become pricey and now it’s after the school year or spring break. Teachers go with as chaperones. Could we do a trip to Canada? Perhaps we could do something closer and still be immersed in French? JFA: Are we doing like a golden ticket? Parents could buy a gold rush ticket and have the opportunity to buy a 100$ ticket that would go towards a raffle to win a ticket? There was a family that was saving a dollar a day and they started saving in kindergarten. We have to start thinking ahead but it’s good to have the option. We can see how it goes and see how things are as countries are opening up.
4. New Business
   1. Teacher wish lists-Amazon
      1. We should find out if we’re getting the money and then see if the link that’s on the website is working. There was another program that Amazon offered other than smile that offered a higher kickback, which we can’t participate in anymore. When you are shopping you just have to choose smile.
   2. Technology needs-teacher requests
      1. Document cameras have become a very useful tool and we have about 13 classes that would like to have a document camera. It would be a total of 1600$ and they are in stock right now. We also sent a google survey asking for wish lists. Teachers have until Monday the 15th and we’ve received 7. We told them to do it by grade level or by classrooms. Pre-K is asking for pattern blocks, both K asked for crayons, playdough mats, markers, watercolors, 2nd grade was asking for next year Mme Geimer asked for some books and supplies for the VLS kids to make puppets at home. Folders, watercolors, paper, etc. We need to talk to James about money that is in Amazon, etc. We don’t know how often. James would know. The district has provided an audio system to go with the screens. The microphones were purchased. We bought batteries. The district is buying those for us. She doesn’t think that the district could provide the cameras. Is the PTO sharing the Amazon lists? I think the PTO should share.
   3. Google Suite: MC is going to look at starting a new thing through google or possibly we could use drop box. A one stop spot for passwords, etc. would also be good and some instructions for people in the future.
5. Announcements
   1. Our next meeting is April 15th and we will create a hyperlink. Darren LaCasse will make the zoom link and a hyperlink.
6. Adjournment-Johnny Fils-Amie