

Heights Elementary PTO Meeting General Meeting Minutes

Date/Time/Location: November 12, 2020 at 7:00 via ZOOM.

Meeting called to order: By PTO chair Manjula Riley at 7:03 p.m.

Present: All Heights PTO board members, Dr. Dion, Mr. Crehan and approx 29 participants

1. Welcome and Introduction: By PTO chair Manjula Riley

2. Art Supply Drive: By Art Teacher Mrs. Mellman

Shared the supplies that are needed for students. Each week she shares with the students in each grade level what supplies they will need for art that week.

Painting fundraiser just wrapped up, as well as a supply drive, with a link through Amazon.

Supply kits are ready to go for students in need.

There will be bins in the classrooms with supplies, for any student who forgot their supplies.

3. Update on PTO: By PTO chair Manjula Riley

Shared a presentation with the families. Provided families with PTO board information and PTO connection info. Provided PTO updates. Thanked parents for the COVID funds donations and discussed where those COVID funds have been used for thus far.

Shared what the PTO has been up to in the months of October and November.

Update re: Membership Toolkit and upcoming virtual pizza party weekend November 20-22.

Thank you to kindergarten parents, money was raised and sand was put in the kindergarten sandbox.

Thank you re: Welcome Back Car Parade for volunteers and families who attended. The Chubby Chickpea and Dell's lemonade were at the parade. Was a nice event for all who attended.

Thank you to Sarah Pelletier for the Hedge Harvest Celebration Virtual Paint night!

Shared all the committees that are a part of Heights PTO. There are committees that are in need of volunteers. Highlighted the 5th grade committee -encouraged parents of 5th graders to join.

2. PTO Budget Overview and Outlook: By PTO co-treasurer Julia Li

See detailed budget information for specific information.

Reminded families to consider using Amazon smile to support Heights PTO when shopping.

3. Book Fair: By Melissa Trudeau, Bookfair Committee Chair

We just finished our fall book fair. First time it was virtual, and it was successful, with almost \$4,000 in sales! \$1300 in teacher donations that went right to the teachers. With all but \$10 of the profits we purchased 4 books for teachers in the classroom and 95 books for the school library.

Would like to have another book fair in the spring. Melissa is working with the book fair company to arrange this.

This is Melissa's last year as Bookfair Committee chair, looking for a new chair for next year.

4. Box Tops Committee: by Amy Fried & Yadelyn Mahoney, Committee Chairs

Setting goal to raise \$1,000 with box tops. Every little bit helps. Money goes directly back to the PTO. Different ways that families can submit box tops. There are still some of the old fashioned box tops, they are still acceptable to submit (as long as they are not expired). Go online, register, link it Heights, and mail it in and Heights will get credit for it.

Box Tops has an app, as long you take a picture of your receipt, the app will give you credit for any purchases

If you get groceries delivered, forward your email to box tops for education. Almost every store in our area participates in this.

Prizes: Will have a monthly drawing from among those who have submitted. To participate, when you send in box tops, to attribute credit to your family's name. The app asks this automatically, when mailing it in, you can provide the name that way as well.

Can reach out to Yadelyn or Amy, abfishman@gmail with any questions

5. Spirit Committee: by Michelle Crugnale and Rebecca Corke, Committee Chairs

Sales of Heights gear has been going great. Lots of inventory is still available. Purchase through Membership Toolkit.

Currently brainstorming some fun options for spirit week.

6. Teacher Appreciation Committee: Deb Freedman

At the beginning of the year, the Teacher Appreciation Committee provided teachers with a box lunch. Heard from many that this was well received. Thank you to all volunteers who helped with this!

Next two events for teacher appreciation are in December-the Holiday Breakfast and Cookie Buffet. This year the committee is planning on having them in the library rotunda both on the same day-on Monday December 14th. This year, because of COVID, the cookie buffet items will be pre-packaged and easy to grab. All ingredients will be listed on them. For the holiday breakfast, looking for easy grab and go or pre packaged items for this buffet. We will be asking for donations for these events.

7. Diversity and Cultural Committee: by Natasha Neese Committee Chair

This is a new committee and is looking for volunteers and members!
heights.pto.diversity@gmail.com

Goal is to promote diversity and do cultural events. Discussed the committee's mission, values, and principles.

November is South Asian American Heritage Month. Various events are scheduled for this month.

Next month (December) will be a diversity month to learn what diversity means, to explore why we learn about diversity, and what types of diversity there are.

PTO Connect was created to connect all the PTO's on this issue specifically

7. Principal Update: By Dr. Lisa Dion

Dr. Dion expressed happiness and appreciation regarding positive things happening in the school and through the PTO. Very excited in regards to all the wonderful events that are upcoming.

Karen Woods and Dr. Dion are very open to adding the diversity piece into the curriculum. She values that and looks forward to partnering with the diversity committee on this.

Discussed the school improvement plan and safety plan. Looking into adding intervention and acceleration into student's schedules.

Dr. Dion discussed new teachers starting at Heights. Some that were mentioned: Vicky Schulman, new technology, will be shared with Cottage. Heather Quinn, Kindergarten, half day remote. Farah Blanchard, K teacher. New K assistant for Mrs. Nathan's class started last week. Also a new 2nd grade long term substitute teacher. The school is in great need of substitutes and are looking to hire.

Heights is looking to hire two Instructional Assistants for ASD and two for the learning center.

Teachers are doing such a great job of engaging students, especially with students learning online and in class at the same time.

Questions re: using outdoor tents in colder months. Tents are rented until the end of November; they will be taken down soon so they can be returned. Dr. Dion will be advocating for outdoor time, even when the tents are down. Will leave it up to the teachers and the students. Have the whole cafeteria empty if the kids need a mask break indoors.

Question: Will windows in the classroom stay open in cold weather? If a classroom has the proper airflow and purifier then the windows do not need to be open. The rooms that do not have the proper airflow (there are only two

classrooms that fit this description and there are no students in these classrooms, they are used by remote instructors) They are able to turn on their purifiers and keep the doors open to the hallway. Tony Kopaz has stated that this is acceptable. Mr. Kopaz comes to the building weekly to check on things.

Question re: when parents are going to be given option to switch (eg. remote/hybrid). The priority is given to those students who need to be in person for various reasons. If a request is submitted, Dr. Dion will see if it is doable. It depends on the needs of students and space in the classroom. Will also look at the reasonableness of the request.

Question re: A previous communication seemed to state that classroom choice (hybrid/remote) will be reassessed/re-evaluated after the first semester. A parent thought that it would be automatically done by administration this winter. Dr. Dion will bring this up with Central Administration.

Question re: whether there will be additional screening questions with Thanksgiving in mind. In the family update that goes out weekly, there is information on what needs to be done in terms of out of state travels (e.g. what the protocols are, which states are high risk, low risk etc.) For overseas countries, we have to look at what official recommendations are.

Meeting adjourned around 8:27 p.m.

Next meeting, January 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via zoom