

Benfield PTA Meeting
October 14 2019
7 PM start time

Attendees:

Jess Posey (board)
Katie Carlin (board)
Sue Myers (board)
Lisa Crislip (board)
Amy Gilbert (board)
Stephanie Walsh
Gayle Wolfe (board)
Sharon Ward
Paul Madden
Jessica MacBride
Lizzie Willis
Allison Holcomb
Kristyn Krohe

President Report:

- Membership totals
 - 95% of eligible families joined the PTA
 - total of \$11,000 in sponsorship dollars raised
 - total of approx \$13,300 raised with membership/Patron's drive
 - Back to School Night budget vote by general membership **voted and approved** 256 to 6

Treasurer Report:

- Membership and Patron's Drive totals
 - Membership \$4,055 (exceeded goal of \$3,000)
 - Patron's Drive \$9,235 (below goal of \$12,000)
- September expenses
 - mulch, PTA dues, teacher wish list, Stripe transaction fees for PTA website, field trip deposits, 2018-2019 Sea Perch expenses
- October expected expenses
 - musical rights, custodian and cafeteria appreciation events, soccer nets, teacher gift cards for membership drive

Principal Report:

School Improvement Plan overview: every county school writes a school improvement plan based on testing, classroom assessments, etc.

Three action steps for Benfield:

1. Social/Emotional Growth - *Ensure all students, families, employees, and community members feel welcome.* Indicator of success: Increase percentage of students, families, staff and partners who report feeling like a valued member of the school or school system community
 - Look at specific time plan during the week to allow students to share their stories, build relationships between students and teachers. Some stories could be shared in monthly newsletter.
2. Parent Input - based on MDS 3 survey results last year, only 63% of parents responded that they knew about things that were done well at school by their children. Mrs. Myers would like feedback about what we can do to help promote parents hearing positive things about our kids.
 - Twitter feed, Facebook page
 - Two way communication tools like ParentSquare or Class Dojo - could be a good tool for clubs, too. Way of getting quick message out.
3. Academic Growth - *All students are prepared for college, career, and community.* Indicator of success: Increase percentage of students in grades 3-5 who meet or exceed expectations on standardized reading and mathematics assessments.
 - Focus on writing - grammar and early literacy for younger students
 - Mathematics - looking at content standards

How can the PTA be helpful? Are there programs or other things we can do to support these efforts? Mrs. Myers will take away and consider.

VP of Administration Report:

no update

VP of Fundraising Report:

\$11,000 in premier sponsors

First Home Mortgage is this month (October)

Cunningham's is next month (November)

Four restaurant nights, supported by same organizers as previous year to align with end of marking periods

All Amazon gift cards delivered to teachers who had 100% PTA participation

Spring Adult Social - there will be a group to support auction component. Need a group to support party planning aspect.

Harris Teeter rewards - Benfield is not linked up with Harris Teeter. They have a "Together in Education" program that we can participate in, advertise. Benfield earns 5% back on Harris Teeter brand items. There is a one page application and we send W-9 (Amy to assist with this), they will provide us with a code to advertise and a check once a quarter. Code can be linked to VIC card, used at checkout, or provided to cashier at checkout. **First vote, need all board members present to approve any proposals. Voted and approved.**

- It was noted that Giant's program is being discontinued. Safeway may have a similar program.

Volunteer Coordinators Report:

- Someone has volunteered to chair for every requested event/need. Volunteers will be contacted to confirm involvement.
- Health room volunteers have been finalized for vision/hearing
- Next major volunteer event - Grandparent/Senior Friend Day (November 26)

New Business:

- Booster-thon discussion and vote

Company that will organize and run a fun-run for Benfield. All kids participate in run. Company keeps track of participation rewards for kids. Most fundraising is done online, video created for fundraising to be shared on social media. Pledges are per lap or flat amount. They will amend program to suit our needs. Will not focus on "who raises the most" - focus of classes is character building and positivity based on a theme (this year "Wild West")

Booster-thon has different program levels.

- Booster-thon Live - 2 weeks ahead, pep rally for kids, team of people to do classes in two weeks leading up to run, then all set up and advertising for run. Receive 65% of profit (estimates based on community support, demographics, etc - low end \$28k, high end \$35k).
- Next Level down - 2 weeks ahead they will do pep rally for kids, parents run all classes, company will come assist during run. Receive up to 75% of profits.
 - Mrs. Myers noted that many fundraising companies split profits at much lower levels (50%).
 - Lisa noted that, based on input from the company, many schools opt for the higher level of involvement/lower profit share in first few years, then transition to a more parent involvement/higher profit shares after program is established.
- Potential dates: need to be cognizant of Jump Rope for Heart (February 7 through March 9)
 - Dec 2-Dec 11 - not an ideal month for fundraising
 - Jan 18-Jan 24 - too close to JRfH
 - Jan 28-Feb 6 - too close to JRfH
 - April 15-April 24
 - May 19-May 29 - too much equipment in gym due to Special Movement at end of May, May 29 is 4th grade Arlington Echo date

Booster-thon participation and April dates voted and approved.*

Benny's organizer supports Booster-thon fun-run, and has proposed eliminating the "fun-run" aspect of Benny's due to challenges with organization/logistics. Would turn Benny's to more of a fair/carnival type community event. Viewed as a positive development.

- Outdoor Classroom

Music Elements - AACPS Architect approved plan with music and arts area for outdoor classroom. Has not been implemented.

Volunteers are coming during recess, bringing supplemental materials, sending feedback.

Stage is most popular area. Chalk and instruments are frequently requested.

Committee decided on functional items for music and arts, got quotes for materials and installation.

WildChild provided guidance on placement, made adjustments based on how students are using space.

Want to be cognizant of ADA path access.

Severn Grove Ecological provided estimates on 3 drums and a chalkboard, then additional items.

Committee believes it's more fiscally responsible to do everything at once based on shipping charges and labor contracting alone. Requesting \$18,000 (+\$8,300 over current budget allowance of \$9,700)

Gaga ball was part of original plan, has been eliminated (to be discussed later in agenda) - didn't fit with original mission of Outdoor Space.

Do teachers use this area for instruction? No, generally they don't. It's used for only 20 minutes of recess a day. Teachers can be restricted because of recess times, but 1st and 5th graders have used outdoor space and outdoor classroom, 2nd graders have used for tree unit. Next professional development day, Arlington Echo representative is coming to speak to teachers to encourage use and involvement.

Is still a space that touches all Benfield students, even if time is limited. Makes more sense to continue to build this out and look for ways to encourage its use by increasing instruction time or more recess time (is there parent/community support for this?). Would be a good dedicated spend for Booster-thon funds.

Voted, but need electronic vote and discussion from whole Board**

- Sharon Ward new program presentation

Would like PTA to sponsor a BookVendor vending machine. Teachers can award golden coins, kids can get a book from the vending machine. 20 different titles/200-300 books.

Customizable, could be Benny's Books or something similar.

\$3,000-\$3,500 for vendor, \$1,000 for books/recurring cost

Can create bookmarks to reward good behavior, could tie into book fairs and fill ourselves, can be part of positive reinforcement/positive behavior identification effort Mrs.Myers discussed in Principal's report.

Voted and approved.

- Gaga Ball Court discussion (possible vote)

Introduction of topic - kids love the game. Octagon, any number of kids can play as long as they fit, ball is hit and if it hits below waist you're out, otherwise keep playing, if the ball is hit too high/out of octagon, whoever hit it is out. Similar to dodgeball, but not as risky/accident prone.

Soccer alternative. The wider the space, the more kids can participate. There are portable options that can fit into gym. Others are stationary (resin/plastic or wood). approx \$1,200. Mrs.Myers to research feasibility based on risk assessment. **No vote. Keep on agenda for next meeting.**

- Soccer Goals purchase discussion (possible vote)

Mrs. Clark requested soccer nets and goals. Nets already purchased. Goals are \$2,000 each, she requested two.

Kids potentially aren't playing with nets that were previously purchased, either because they're not being set up or because they prefer the larger goals that are already in place. Would need volunteers to separate kids. Would need to identify way to ensure goals aren't inadvertently damaged by Parks and Rec. Mrs.Myers to evaluate whether or not we need two more soccer goals, or whether nets and current goals suffice. **No vote. Keep on agenda for next meeting.**

- Movie night discussion and vote

With postponement of Variety Show, there is time in the Fall to plan another PTA event/non-fundraiser Committee formed to organize a Movie Night at the school

Proposed date November 15 6:30-8:30

Kids can wear PJs, bring blankets, popcorn, possible candy table (funds raised allocated to 5th grade graduation)

Would need to budget custodian cost for clean up. could gym side be opened up if we protect the floor?

Would need to RSVP/cut off with fire code, can be managed on PTA website.

Voted and approved.

8:30 PM end time

*Post meeting contact with Booster-thon representative, April dates are no longer available.

18 Apr is earmarked as the Benny's BBQ date (latest it can be done due to the musical, testing and pool opening in May). There is a company that provides the same website support and fundraising tracking that costs \$499 - we could put on a pep assembly and do the run the 17th during school. Then Benny's could be a celebration and announcement of various incentives earned.

Need school approval and further planning/discussion.

****Subsequent electronic vote, based on email below, voted and passed.**

At Monday's meeting we had enough members there to vote and pass issues as long as it was a unanimous decision for the present members. We had one agenda item up for a vote which was not a unanimous vote and so therefore I am sending out the information provided by the outdoor learning/classroom committee. Their request is for an additional \$9,000 to be used for the purchase and installation of the next phase of outdoor space which is a planned music and arts area. The original overall design PDF depicts the layout of the outdoor area and shows where the proposed area would be. This entire plan (phase 1 and phase 2) was approved by the previous board and the county. The positioning of the area may change after final instruments are selected to accommodate accessibility. The music and art file shows a variety of instrument options, with the drums and chime wall being the main components being requested. The project is currently approved for \$9,700 in this year's budget. After further research the committee decided it was financially more responsible to complete phase 2 all at once (ie to save money on shipping costs and installation). Approval of this funding assigns \$18,700 to that line item in the budget. Please reply all with your vote as this is a complete digital revote. Many of you missed out on the discussion and so I am listing the main pro and con points that came up. These are comments made by various people and not put in any order and not provided as opinion, just food for thought for those who could not attend, as we decide.

Cons-

- 1. A lot of money has gone to the outdoor classroom and it is not used in that manner*
- 2. Do we need an investment of this size in an area that is used for 20 min a day?*
- 3. What type of longevity exists for equipment of this type?*

Pros-

- 1. It is an area that each child will use and impacts the entire student body for years to come*
- 2. Professional playground equipment will last for years and is a long term investment impacting kids for years to come*
- 3. Music play is an important part of childhood brain development*
- 4. Current musical instruments in that area have been well loved but have short lifespans and need continuous replacement*
- 5. Provides an area of play that is not sports/physical activity based for those children who are not inclined to that style of play or not able to be active at recess*
- 6. Investing in quality professional outdoor products that adhere to the nature scape theme of the area sets the example for similar initiatives in the area*