

Park Forest Middle School
Remote PTSO Meeting
September 16, 2020

Emily Brandenburg, PTSO President, opened the meeting at 5:33 pm.

Those in Attendance (recorded from google meet participation list):

Jennifer Pencek, Emily Brandenburg, Sara Brennen, Karen Wiser, Roberta Knapp, Tiffanie Condrin, Danielle Fulmer, Timothy Dzurko, Christopher Felsman, Lisa Jimenez, Sonya Miller, Nathaniel Hollister, Kristi Brawley, Molly Gazda, Molly Tomlin, Paul Homa, Selina Huang, Shannon Wang, Chad Weight, Jon Bucher, Rich Schmidt, Samuel Seidel, Sara Brennen, Verna Kale, Emily Brandenburg, Pat Weaver, Cathy Taylor, Maureen Kelliher

Mrs. Brandenburg welcomed everyone to our first google meet remote PTSO meeting and thanked everyone for their patience. An email will be sent out to record attendance and so solicit questions and comments.

Secretary Report by Mrs. Kelliher

Review/Approval of Minutes of February 2019 PTSO meeting

Motion to Approve: Mrs Knapp

Second: Mrs. Conklin

Review/Approval of August 2020 Board Meeting minutes

Motion to approve: Mrs Taylor

Second: Mrs. Weaver

The PFMS PTSO will communicate with parents and teachers through Facebook, the PFMS PTSO webpage, and emails from Mrs. Brandenburg.

Treasurer Report by Mrs. Weaver

Pat Weaver introduced herself to the group and gave an update to the PFMS PTSO finances. The current balance is \$19319.77. We have a higher than usual bank balance because of in-school closure in March. We have earned \$1009.05 using the Giant program and \$25.79 with Amazon Smile. The budget for 2020-2021 school year has line items removed because of the unusual school year situation and no field trips. Budgeted amount is \$16204.95.

Mrs. Weaver has written one check for \$3000 in gift cards to Jersey Mike's for the PFMS faculty and staff as a thank you for the wonderful job they have done. She received lovely personal emails and notes of thank yous from the staff.

\$2500 in mini grants are available to teachers, faculty, staff for special projects. The mini grant forms can be found on the PFMS PTSO website. Complete the form and get it approved by Dr. Wiser or Mr. Walker before the next meeting. Email approvals can also be done by contacting Mrs. Weaver or Mrs. Brandenburg.

Budget Approval 2020-21 School Year

Motion to approve: Mrs.Knapp

Second: Mr. Dzurko

Fundraising by Vice President

Cathy Taylor introduced herself to the group. Boxtops have changed from manually clipping to scanning on an app. Amazon Smile is an easy way to raise money for the school; choose Park Forest Middle School, State College as your charity. Weis is running 'Weis for Schools' which is similar to the Giant program. Direct donations are also available from Paypal or check. Mrs. Taylor is checking other fundraisers through restaurants. Because of the economy, the PTSO is not looking to do direct fundraising, but will look for other means of raising money while supporting local businesses.

Concerning Teacher Wishlists, teachers are encouraged to fill out wishlists for the PTSO website. The link to the PFMS Teacher Wishlist is on the PTSO website where parents can donate goods for teachers. Mrs. Knapp helped explain how helpful and useful the list is to teachers and staff. The library is interested in ANY books that families are interested in sending into the school. They lost inventory with the unusual spring and would like to rebuild their library available to students. Thank you for your generosity. Also donate at the SCASD teacher support Facebook page where teachers also post needs for the year.

PTSO Vision for the 2020-21 School Year by Mrs. Brandenburg

Mrs. Brandenburg asked 'how is the PTSO relevant during the pandemic?' She hopes the group can remain flexible. Typically fundraising is a focus to support the school. The PTSO's first goal is to improve communication. The second goal is to recruit interest in the community. The third goal is to serve as a positive voice and support for our teachers. The final goal is to support student wellness...social, mental, physical health. Please send any ideas to the PTSO. An example of supporting students was the reusable mask initiative from the summer where parent groups made/donated masks to the schools for students who need them. Each meeting will have teacher and principal insights. Mrs. Brandenburg would like to try to find students to be involved in the meetings. Mrs. Brandenburg said the best of the PTSO meeting is learning about the school from the principal and team teachers.

Principal's Report by Dr. Wiser

Thanks to the board for supporting PFMS. We have a great start to the school year, and students have been amazing with in-school and remote. Staff is working incredibly hard. Normal reported items are not occurring right now. Dr. Wiser encourages parents to contact her if they have any questions or concerns.

Team reports

6th Grade Wolves: Mr. Schmidt reported. Math is starting a Prime Time unit, factors and number subset operations. Science students are working on an online leaf project and students are sorting using dichotomous keys.

6th Grade Mountain Lions: Ms. Condren reported. Attendance has been amazing! Reading and writing is going well and social studies is studying the paleolithic period.

7th Grade Timber Rattlers: Mrs. Knapp reported. It has been challenging to report as a team representative because they don't have regular team meetings this year, and teachers don't have all of the students in their classes. Teachers were very pleased with attendance and participation of students. Technology/canvas is a lot to learn but everyone is having a good start to the year.

7th Grade Cardinals: Reported by Ms. Fulmer. The team is still trying to get used to changes, but teachers are pleased with how well things are going and impressed by how the students followed mask and social distancing rules when in school. Music is studying music history and theater. Music ensembles are scheduled. English is writing realistic fiction, Ac Lit is building classroom community and completing an understanding literacy unit. Art finished a ceramic unit and started drawing.

7th/8th Grade Falcons: Reported by Ms. Homa. The team has enjoyed students so far. In Ac Lit class, students are studying how to identify main ideas. Science classes are comparing data from forces, and math classes are working with rational numbers.

8th Grade Gray Foxes: Reported by Mr. Felsmann. Same Math and English as other 8th grade teams. Tomorrow is Constitution Day! Social Studies students are learning citizenship. The team's teachers are getting to know the students better each day, so each day is smoother and better. Mr. Felsmann wishes they had all the students in class though.

8th Grade Black Bears : Reported by Mrs. Gazda. Students are connecting and getting better at sharing ideas. Teachers are learning with students and keeping positive attitudes.

World language: Reported by Mr. Hollister: Marty Young came in to help out and cover a Spanish class until a replacement began. Jennifer Cao just started recently. Huge thank you to Marty for covering the class. The world language teachers are working day by day to create a personal environment for their students.

Tech Ed: Reported by Mr. Dzurko: The students are adapting well using online software for graphic design that can be integrated into Google meetings. In a 6th grade design challenge, students used breakout rooms successfully this week. Mr. Dzurko is looking forward to getting TSA up and running. It will be fully remote and virtual on the local and state level. Any students can join.

Health/PE: Reported by Mr. Weight: Health class is business as usual. PE is tougher to teach skills remotely. The teachers are sending fitness routines to students to do.

Parents had positive feedback for teachers. Sara Brennen was thankful for teachers. She could overhear her child's teachers and was impressed by their energy and dedication. Jennifer Pensiek, a 6th grade parent, was thankful to the teachers for their time because her son was successful in remote learning, although he wishes he was in school. Molly Tomlin thanks the teachers for their work and dealing with the technology, although Canvas is troublesome some days.

Questions/Discussion

Mrs. Brandenburg acknowledges that it will be challenging to share information and ideas now. Mrs. Taylor thanks teachers, staff, and Mrs. Brandenburg for what they do. People who attended are encouraged to tell friends about the PTSO meeting so we can have even more people next month.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting: Mrs. Fulmer

Second: Mrs. Knapp

Emily Brandenburg adjourned the meeting at 6:22 pm.

**A line item was added to the budget for \$200 to buy reusable water bottles for students. The board approved the line item by email.

**A fundraiser was added to the calendar for October 25 from 4-9 pm at Champs Restaurant on North Atherton Street. The board approved the fundraiser by email.