



## PTO Member Meeting Agenda

February 25, 2021

- **Welcome**

- Approval of [January 2020 meeting minutes](#); voted and approved

- **President's Welcome**

- Pamela Leopold attended a virtual meeting with School Board Rep, Laura Jane Cohen and PTO Presidents; Provided great information on Return to School; Ms. Cohen is excited about students back in the classroom and plans to visit schools
  - Return to School Decorations
    - Many schools are decorating; Do we want to decorate the entrances or give welcome bags to teachers? Since we miss the first group, we might want to do something the last week students return; If you have suggestions, please send them to Pamela
  - PTO Events / Celebrations
    - Governor Northam approved sports with 250 attendees and other outside gatherings; Ms. Cohen is going to clarify what this means for PTO events and things like an outdoor 6th grade celebration
  - Playgrounds
    - Ms. Cohen is going to the Board to see if they can approve opening school playgrounds; Fields are muddy and kids have no place to play
  - Ms. Cohen stressed that teachers are not to be teaching directly to their laptops, but to the general class
    - Principal Skerker purchased Owl cameras for every classroom
      - These cameras track the teacher as they teach naturally and move around the classroom; Principal Skerker praised the Technology Department for all of the logistics; They set-up a universal docking station so the hookup is the same in every classroom (great for Specials Teachers); They are also providing training to all of the teachers

- **Principal's Report**

- The first Scotties returned to the building this week! (Pre-K and Kindergarten); Kids all did a wonderful job keeping masks on and social distancing; Since parents aren't allowed in the building right now, they are working to create virtual classroom tours; Thank you to everyone for being mindful of buses and walkers back on the roads
- Next Group returns March 9th (1st and 2nd Grade)
- Town Halls are scheduled over the next few weeks

- Principal Skerker and Ms. Azimi will host meetings for Spanish-speaking families on March 2nd and 3rd
  - Thanks to everyone who participated in the February Food Drive
  - Focus on Literacy and Reading in March
    - Students have been out of the classroom for 368 days; This month teachers will focus on rebuilding and repairing relationships through stories
    - Read Alouds; Staff will record read-alouds to share with students; one for each day in March
    - Read-a-Thon information will go out on Monday
    - Library Scanners
      - Principal Skerker and Ms. Stevenson determined that they need 3-4 touchless barcode scanning stations for the library (~\$25 each)
      - Membership voted and approved the purchase of the scanners and Principal Skerker will send a link so the PTO can purchase them
    - Book Drive will be held on School Picture Days (March 24th and 25th) where students can donate books they no longer need
  - Thank you to everyone for your support, flexibility and resiliency
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- **Committee Reports**
    - Treasurer
      - January Financials
        - Expenses last month totaled \$2,057.97; Included Paint Night supplies, payment for Ms. Miller, and Teacher Supply Fund
        - Incomes last month totaled \$2,100.84; Charleston Gift Wrap, Virtual Bingo Night, Chipotle Restaurant Night
        - Account Balance as of 1/31/2021: \$26,876.07; Overall, we have spent more this year than we have brought in
        - The PTO's VA Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption is up for renewal; It is currently pending approval in the online system (can take up to 90 days)
    - Programs
      - Virtual STEAM Nights hosted by Hope DiGiusto
        - 1st Event was a success; Huge thank you to Karen Lee and Paola Buitrago who personally delivered all of the kits to families; 23 families participated
        - 2nd Event is March 19th; Registration is open on the website
        - Spread the word about future events
      - All-School Assembly
        - Extreme Science, Monday, March 23rd

- Event will take place (~45 mins) immediately following morning meeting; students will be provided a link to go directly into the event
  - PTO believes it is important to host STEAM Events and help with science learning which is hard in a virtual environment
- Read-a-Thon
  - Read-a-Thon information will be sent this week; March 1-26
  - Prizes (Barnes & Noble Gift Cards) will be awarded to the student in each grade who reads the most pages and the two teachers whose classes have read the most
  - Reminded the Pre-K teachers on the call that they are invited to participate; kids don't have to be able to read themselves to participate, they can be read to
- **New Business**
  - Equity Committee
    - If you are interested in participating in this committee, please email George Economides
    - Book Club
      - The Equity Committee's Book Club met 6 times and had good conversation; 11 people participated; They are looking at focusing on a Podcast next if there is interest
    - PTO Informational Meeting with Spanish-speaking families
      - Karen Priftis did some research and found that there are 33 BBES students whose families request documents in Spanish; Several other families request documents in other languages
      - If there is interest, representative from the PTO will participate in a facilitated meeting with Spanish-speaking families to provide information on the role of the PTO; will ask this group if there is a want to have PTO minutes translated
      - George Economides will work with Ms. Azimi to determine if there is an interest for an informational meeting and set up that meeting
      - It was noted that there are other non-English- non-Spanish-speaking families that would also need to be considered for translated materials and sessions
    - Membership Fee
      - There was a discussion on whether the \$10 membership fee is a barrier to participate in the PTO and whether the form being in English is a barrier; George Economides suggested getting rid of the fee altogether effective immediately; The idea to get rid of the membership fee was presented in the past and voted down by membership; It is included in the by-laws that PTO members must pay the membership fee, but the specific amount is not specified
      - It was noted that on the form it says if you are experiencing financial hardship, you can request to have your fee waived (this request goes to

the Principal); Membership fees brought in ~\$1,600 for the PTO last year to be used on programs

- There was a discussion on whether the Membership Form could be translated; Principal Skerker noted that eNotify allows for translation, however schools are not allowed to send newsletters through that application; The News You Choose is written only in English, however Ms. Demick figured out that if it is attached to the BBES website, it can be translated with the website if a user chooses a different language
- Crystal Lamb provided feedback based on her experience with a different elementary school; The County is able to provide translation to schools at no cost; She also suggested that perhaps having to email the Principal for a fee waiver might be intimidating to some families; PTO Board noted that we are not privy to information on families' financial situations
- Karen Lee is looking at the website to see what translation options are available and if there is a cost; Can the website also switch the language for the membership form? Will bring findings to next month's meeting
- The Board noted that the PTO is very conscious of different economic levels and ensures its activities are inclusive for all children; There is an avenue to request fee waiver, if necessary; Scholarships are provided through the PTO for after-school programs; Wristbands are provided to families in need for large PTO events; Yearbooks and t-shirts are purchased for students who cannot afford them; Formal membership is not required for people to participate in the PTO - you can still attend, speak and share your thoughts and ideas at meetings and attend all events - you just cannot vote on measures if not a member

- **Announcements**

- Keep your eyes open for BBES emails detailing the next STEAM Night, All-School Assembly, and Read-a-Thon

- **Open Floor**

- Thanks to all who joined tonight's meeting, especially since it was the first week back in the building for many

- **Adjournment**

- The next PTO Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 18th