

Minutes of the East Moriches PTO Meeting

April 26, 2023

A meeting of the East Moriches PTO was held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the East Moriches Middle School.

**PTO Board Attendees**: Co-Presidents – Melissa Davis & Melanie Adlah; Vice-President – Lauren Crennan; Corresponding Secretary – Maureen LaRocca; Treasurer – Patricia Specht

**PTO Guest Attendees:** The District Superintendent, Mr. Mittleman, the Middle School Principal, Mr. Holl, and the PTO Teacher Reps Mrs. Percoco and Mrs. Steuerwald were present. Mrs. Wilson, 3rd grade teacher, was also in attendance. Please see PTO Attendance Sheet dated April 26, 2023 for the names of other meeting attendees.

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:12 pm. Melissa Davis welcomed everyone.

**Minutes:** The March 2023 Meeting Minutes were dispensed after members reviewed them. The Minutes are also available online at <https://empto.org>. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Deirdre Lorincz and seconded by Beth Haney.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Patricia Specht read the Treasurer’s report. Tom Frey motioned to approve the report, Melanie Adlah seconded the motion.

**Fundraisers/Events Updates:**

1. *Completed*:
   1. Class Set of Ukuleles: The PTO sponsored a class set of ukuleles for Mrs. Ghosio to use in the Elementary School. The funding for ukeleles came from the AMA account. Maureen LaRocca worked with Mrs. Ghosio, the district music teacher, to order them. An Executive Board member presented the BOE with the ukulele proposal and the BOE expressed their appreciation to us for funding them.
   2. M.S. St. Patrick’s Day Bake Sale & Cupcake Wars: Sue Oldring was chair and said the event went well. Concessions were sold. Thank you to the 3 teacher judges: Ms. Johnson, Ms. Wilson, and Señor Sarvis. The grand prize was a $25 gift card to the Moriches Bay Deli. The second prize was a $10 Amazon gift card. Students also voted on their favorite cupcake. The winner of the student vote was awarded a $10 Amazon gift card.
   3. Purchase of 2 Rubbermaid Rolling Carts: The PTO purchased 2 rolling carts, one for each school’s main office. The secretaries love them.
   4. 7th Grade Frost Valley Breakfast: was on on Wednesday, March 22nd. Sue Oldring & Trish Specht were co-chairs. Melissa Davis ordered the bagels (80 bagels, half butter, half cream cheese).
   5. E.S. Poet School Visit: The membership unanimously approved funding for our visiting author, Darren Sardelli, on March 24th. Maureen LaRocca chaired this event. Mr. Sardelli is a local poet who grew up in Smithtown. He was relatable and engaging. His website is [www.laughalotpoetry.com](http://www.laughalotpoetry.com). The event was a huge success. There was lots of positive feedback from the teachers and parents, saying that the children were immensely inspired to become writers!
   6. E.S. Bingo Nights: Grades 3-4 was on 3/28/23. Co-Chairpersons were Beth Haney, Heather Bencosme, and Michelle Fernandez. They reported that it went well.
   7. Hardship Fund: The PTO sponsored $400 to a Middle School student for the Washington, DC trip.
   8. 8th Grade Washington D.C. Trip Grab n’ Go Breakfast: was on Tuesday, April 4th. Melissa Davis ordered the bagels. Thank you, Melissa & Trish!
   9. Second Grade Assembly: was on Tuesday, 4/25/23 at 7:00 pm. Jester Jim performed. Concessions were sold. There was a 50/50 raffle for parents. Lauren Crennan spoke about this event.
   10. E.S. K-4 Spring Pictures: were on Wednesday, April 26th. Thank you to the 6 volunteers who came to help students be camera ready.
   11. Camp Paquatuck Scholarship: The funding for this has been approved. Hope Kaufman is the contact person.
2. *Ongoing or Upcoming Business:*
   1. By-Laws Amendment Vote:
      1. Prior to the vote, some members voiced their opposition to the Proposed By-Laws Amendment.
      2. According to our current ByLaws, which state “Article IX Amendments Section 1 – Any proposed amendments to these by-laws shall be read or presented in writing at a regular meeting of the membership and tabled until the next regular meeting. Section 2 – These by-laws may be amended, altered, or adopted by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment(s) is given at the previous meeting. A minimum of 10 members must be present.”
      3. The following proposal was written at an Executive Board Meeting on 3/14/23. All Board members were present, including Melanie Adlah, Melissa Davis, Trish Specht, Lauren Crennan, and Maureen LaRocca. The Board members present were in 100% agreement that this proposal should be presented to the Membership at the March meeting and voted on at the April Meeting. This in no way indicates individual board members’ voting preferences, which are private. The Board is in 100% agreement that it up to the Membership to decide whether this Amendment should be made to the by-laws or not. It was read aloud during the General Membership meeting on 3/15/23.
      4. ByLaws Amendment Proposal Wording: The Board wholly agrees that we would like to propose an amendment to the current By-Laws. We propose to amend Article V: “Election of Officers” to more accurately match the Board elections for all positions that occurred in 2022. We propose that this said amendment specify that the President(s) and Secretary(ies) positions would be re-elected every EVEN year. The Vice President’s and Treasurer’s positions would be reelected every ODD year, with the exception of the current year. This Amendment proposal will be voted on at the April meeting.
      5. ByLaws Amendment Vote: The By-Laws Amendment passed with a vote of *21-Yay, 15-Nay, 1-Abstain.*
   2. M.S. Bike Racks: The funding for the Bike Racks will come from the AMA account. An Executive Board member presented the Bike Racks Proposal at the Board of Education meeting. The BOE has approved the installation of the bike racks and expressed their appreciation to the PTO for funding them.
   3. M.S. & E.S. GaGa Ball Pits’ Surfaces: The funding for the Gaga Ball Pits’ surfaces will come from the AMA account. An Executive Board member presented the GaGa Ball Pits’ Surfaces’ Proposal at the Board of Education meeting. The BOE has approved the installation of the GaGa Ball Pits’ surfaces and expressed their appreciation.
   4. Kindergarten Orientation: will be on May 24th. The PTO is giving every Kindergartener an Orientation T-shirt. The shirts were ordered. Blue Orientation Folders were designed and ordered.
   5. Disability Awareness “Walk in Someone Else’s Shoes”: Hope Kaufman spoke about this. Her initiative was called “Walk in Someone Else’s Shoes.” Students received a paper sneaker to decorate and write about how they can show empathy to others, treat others with kindness, and make others feel included. The slogan was “Put Yourself in Other People’s Shoes.” Participating families were also be invited to donate $1.00 or more for the Nassau Suffolk Autism Society of America.
   6. Down Syndrome Crazy Sock Day: This was on March 21st.
   7. Autism Awareness: During the month of April, students were invited to wear blue every Monday for autism awareness. There is a pajama day on April 28th to raise Autism awareness.
   8. E.S. Turn off the T.V. Week will be held during Week of May 1st. Melissa Davis was the chairperson, assisted by Nurse Romano. Children who signed contracts to turn off their televisions, and do more physical activity and/or reading, will receive raffle tickets for a chance to win a prize. Winners will receive a gift card to the ice cream store.
   9. Teacher Appreciation Week is the week of May 8 and will be chaired by Hope and Melissa. Each day will have different themes, such as “Stay afloat until June” (inflatable drink floaties, drinks, and snacks), “You’re all that and a bag of chips,” “You’re on a Roll” (breakfast coffee, rolls, and bagels), “You’re the best teachers in the world,” (catered lunch with food items from a variety of cultures). Thank you to Hope, Melissa, and all of the businesses that donated or discounted food, especially Lucharito’s, Anton’s Pizzeria, Carlos’ Pizza, Greek Bites, Good Bickle, Lin’s Kitchen, Tony’s Sushi, and the Moriches Bay Deli!
   10. Spring Spiritwear Sale: has been canceled. There is too much paperwork going through the main offices right now, with state tests and field day T-shirt order forms. We decided to postpone the sale until the Fall. There may be a Logo change in the Fall.
   11. K-4 Yearbook: Kelly Palomo is chairing and doing a fantastic job. Thanks, Kelly!
3. New Business:
   1. Presentation of the 2023-2024 East Moriches School District Budget: Mr. Mittleman presented the School District’s Proposed 2023-2024 Budget that will be voted on May 16.
   2. Mother’s Day Plant Sale is being chaired by Stacy Bartholomew on May 11-12. We need volunteers.
   3. “Duct Tape the Principals to the Wall” Fundraiser: Melissa Davis spoke about this initiative. This event is still in the planning stages. More information is forthcoming.
   4. High School Senior Scholarships (ESM, WHB, CMO): Trish is coordinating this. She is getting the list of students’ names. There will also be a Humanitarian Award.
   5. 8th Grade Scholarship: Trish is working on coordinating this with Mr. Holl.
   6. Field Day T-Shirts: were ordered and are forthcoming.
   7. E.S. Tree Planting: Michelle Fernandez had the idea of planting a tree in the E.S. Courtyard in honor of Thomas Valva’s life. She hopes that it will give the teachers and staff positive support after the difficult time they’ve all been through. Perhaps it could be an evergreen tree that could be decorated each season.
4. Questions and Comments:
   1. Mary Frey had questions about the proposed Sensory Hallway that Hope Kaufman initiated. Hope is currently working with Student Support Services to get this going.
      1. Maddie Everhart added that perhaps there could be an outdoor sensory walk as well. The Board stated that we do have a $2,000 grant from Tanger to purchase outdoor paint that could be used for this purpose.
   2. Michelle Fernandez had questions about what are (or have been) our most profitable fundraisers. The Board shared some of the fundraisers we’ve done in the past.
      1. Lauren Otto suggested having Popcorn Fridays once a month as a fundraiser (selling popcorn during lunch periods).
   3. Lauren Otto spoke of a motivational speaker named Rohan Murphy, who is also an amputee, that would be very inspirational for MS students to hear his message.
   4. Lauren Otto suggested that we start a Nominating Committee binder, and she has information to add to it.
5. **Miscellaneous:** There being no further business, Tom Frey motioned to adjourn and Melanie Adlah seconded the motion. The PTO meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.
6. The next P.T.O. Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 24th, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Elementary School.