

Minutes of the East Moriches PTO Meeting

October 9, 2024

A meeting of the East Moriches PTO was held on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 7:00 pm in the East Moriches Middle School.

**PTO Board Attendees**: President - Melissa Davis; Vice-President – Lauren Otto; Secretary - Maureen LaRocca, Treasurer – Trish Specht.

**PTO Guest Attendees:** Ms. Pesce, Middle School Principal, was present; as well as PTO Teacher Reps Mrs. Steuerwald and Mrs. Percoco.

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:05 pm. Melissa Davis welcomed everyone. Babysitting was provided by the NJHS.

**Minutes:** The September 2024 Meeting Minutes were dispensed, and members reviewed them. The Minutes are also available online at <https://empto.org>. A motion to approve the September 2024 minutes was made by Mrs. Steuerwald and seconded by Alexis Heinz.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Trish Specht read the Treasurer’s report.

**Events/Fundraisers Updates:**

1. **Completed**:
   * 1. **2024-2025 Budget Vote:** passed unanimously, thank you.
     2. **E.S. Open House:** 9/17; Membership drive
     3. **M.S. Open House:** 9/18; Membership drive; members will receive emails with information about PTO events, volunteer opportunities, etc, as well as have access to our private Facebook group.
     4. **E.S. Ice Cream Social:** 9/20; for Summer Reading Challenge participants; Melissa Davis. The ice cream social worked out very well; there were more participants this year. Parents of children who did not receive ice cream because they didn’t complete the Summer Reading Challenge were disappointed. Due to this, we are thinking about possibly either canceling this event or revising it to be more inclusive of all students’ abilities. The reading log portion of this event is run by the Reading/Library department, so any changes to be made must go through them. Thank you to Ultimate Ice Cream for providing the ice cream at a discount.
     5. **M.S. Picture Day:** 9/25
     6. **E.S. Picture Day:** 9/26; We had 2 volunteers to help the students be camera-ready.
     7. **Spiritwear Sale:** 9/16 through 9/27; The spiritwear sale was very successful this year; we had a lot of orders. There will be another sale in the Spring and we may possibly be changing the logo. Alexis Heinz asked why we don’t sell spiritwear at events, etc. It was explained that we’ve tried that in the past and it is not cost-effective. We also do not have the mom-power to hold spiritwear sales.
2. **Ongoing or Upcoming Business:**
   1. **Believe Fundraiser:** 9/20 through 10/9; Trish Specht. We are at $15,000 in sales. The PTO gets back 40% of sales as a fundraiser. Paper orders are due in school by Thursday, October 11. Online orders are open until Friday, October 12. The orders should be delivered by Thanksgiving.
   2. **Cheddar-Up** online payment system; Trish and Lauren started a new way to pay for membership, donations, and other things.
   3. **Scholastic Book Fairs:** Lauren Otto; Volunteers needed. We especially need MS parents to help out on Friday, 10/11 during 5th and 6th grade. Teachers were given the opportunity to create electronic wish lists to grow their classroom libraries.
      1. M.S.: 10/10 & 10/11; At the MS, Lauren will be conducting raffles to motivate students to participate. Students can receive 1 raffle ticket per transaction that includes at least one book purchased.
      2. E.S.: 10/17 – 10/18; At the ES book fair, there will be a door prize.
      3. E.S. Evening Fair: 10/17; will be the same night as the Harvest Fest to encourage sales. Each person attending the Evening Book Fair will receive a raffle ticket to be entered in a door prize raffle.
   4. **E.S. Harvest Fest:** 10/17; Olivia Ruddick, volunteers needed.
   5. **5th & 6th Grades Halloween Dance & Trunk or Treat:** 10/25; Caitlin Giorgio is chairing the dance; Will Beckenhaupt is chairing Trunk or Treat, volunteers needed. The dance starts at 6:30. At 7:45, students with wristbands will go out to meet their parents outside at Trunk or Treat. At 8 pm, the rest of the students will be released to their parent or guardian to attend trunk or treat. DJ will announce departures. There will also be a spooky walk (in the gym) leading into the trunk or treat. If you would like to decorate a trunk for Trunk or Treat, please email Will Beckenhaupt at [gaylebeckenhaupt@yahoo.com](mailto:gaylebeckenhaupt@yahoo.com). If you can’t participate in decorating a trunk, please consider donating candy to help defray the costs of candy for the parents who do. There will be monster cans in the MS lobby to collect candy donations for Trunk or Treat. Thank you to Ace Hardware in Center Moriches for donating the gift card prizes for the Trunk or Treat event.
   6. **E.S. Halloween Costume Parade:** 10/31; Melissa Davis. Students dress up in costumes and parade around the bus loop twice for their parents. This event is weather permitting. If the event is held indoors, parents are not invited. Instead, administration will film the parade and email to parents.
3. **New Business:**
   * 1. **Candy Buy-Back Fundraiser:** 11/1; Maureen LaRocca. We are partnering with orthodontist Vic Grazina for this fundraiser. Dr. Grazina’s office is collecting unwanted Halloween candy to send to American troops overseas and local food pantries. The PTO can earn $1.00 per pound of unwanted Halloween candy that we collect (up to $200). The collection will begin on November 1. There will be monster cans at each school to collect donations of candy.
     2. **E.S. & M.S. Picture Retakes:** 11/6
     3. **E.S. Red, White & Blue Day:** 11/8; Colin Salmaggi; This event is for veterans and their families only. Students sing songs to honor the veterans in our community. This year, we need to provide chairs for the veterans to sit while they are waiting to be checked in to security. We will also provide healthy refreshments for them to enjoy.
     4. **We need Chairpersons (or co-chairs) for the following upcoming events** (Lauren)
        1. **E.S. K-1 Milk and Cookies Event:** 11/14; Alexis Heinz volunteered to chair the Milk and Cookies event. Mrs. Percoco will advise. The purpose of this event is to promote the love of reading between parent and child. It is supposed to be a quiet event where parents and children can snuggle together and enjoy books. Last year, parents were very social during this time, and the chatter was distracting. Mrs. Percoco requests that everyone try to maintain a quiet atmosphere for this event.
        2. **M.S. Spelling Bee:** 11/19; Maureen LaRocca. Co-chair needed for refreshments. There are 2 winners from each individual class’ spelling bee. Those students will represent their grade level in the school-wide spelling bee. There will be trophies given to the first, second and third place winners of each grade and a trophy given to the overall school winner. Refreshments will be provided for the spelling bee participants and their families.
4. **Questions and/or Comments:** Please keep comments or questions to under 3 minutes.
   1. Jamie Macholz had a comment about the ice cream social. She suggested that the Summer Reading Challenge Reading Log be made more age-appropriate. Students in Kindergarten should not be getting the same reading log or expectations as a 4th grader. The reading log should match the grade level expectations for the child (ie: Younger students can draw a picture about their favorite part of the book and dictate a sentence, etc). Samantha Nicolescu would like the tradition continued and felt that kids who did the challenge deserved the reward.
   2. Lauren Otto expressed that Kelly Palomo, 4th grade yearbook chair, suggested the possibility of a custom yearbook cover. She suggested having a contest to create the school yearbook cover. There would be an additional cost of $2.00 for each yearbook. The PTO purchases yearbooks for all of the 4th graders. We will have to see if this extra cost fits into our budget.

There being no further business, Mrs. Steuerwald motioned to adjourn, and Lorraine Baierwalter seconded the motion. The PTO meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

The next P.T.O. Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Elementary School.