Meeting Minutes

Douglas Elementary PTO

January 16, 2025 Douglas Elementary 3:30Pm

**Board Members: Birdie Holley, President – Ingrid Benson, Vice President – Chris Bowman, Treasurer – Raechel Hardin, Secretary – Michaelle Gust, DES Principal**

Meeting called to order by: Ingrid Benson, Vice President Attendance: 6

Board Members not present: Birdie Holley, Chris Bowman

Minutes: October meeting minutes approved via email.

**Officer Updates**

**President: Birdie Holley** (birdiewester@gmail.com)

* Renee, who will succeed Chris as treasurer next year, will collaborate with Christina, the middle school PTO treasurer, in February to familiarize herself with the software and related processes.
* Birdie met with Mark Niedlinger and he has acknowledged our request for the school to cover a majority of the costs for transportation during field trips. Ideally, they will inform us of the amount they plan to contribute, and we can then decide whether we want to cover any additional expenses. This will be addressed in the 2025-2026 budget.
* **Vice President: Ingrid Benson** (ingbenson2@gmail.com)
* No update.

**Treasurer: Chris Bowman**  (cjames.bowman@gmail.com)

* Chris was not able to make it to the meeting but the current budget will be posted to the website along with the minutes.

**Meeting Information**

* **Principal Update (Michaelle Gust):** Students will have Martin Luther King Jr. Day off, and there will be an in-service day on January 31. Winter break is scheduled from February 7 to February 10. The PBIS assembly will take place on the 24th at 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM, serving as a reward for students who have met their puff ball goal. This fun assembly will include popcorn for Popcorn Friday. The next Market Day is on January 30, and the funds raised will go toward the 5th grader’s Michigan Adventure field trip. On January 30, the students will also attend a performance of "Willy Wonka" at the high school, presented by the high school students. Tickets are available for purchase now; please visit ClassDojo to find the QR code for ticket purchases.
* **Teacher Update (Mrs. Hale):** No Update.
* **Visiting Author Update (Amanda):** This event will be in April and will be in collaboration with the SCA to integrate the Failabration theme into this event. More information to come soon.
* **SCA Update (Whitney):** There are many opportunities for the third-grade students to enjoy some of the programming offered by the SCA. They have on display at the Art Center the Exhibition "[***We hope you fail better***](https://sc4a.org/event/we-hope-you-fail-better-2/)," featuring the work of New York Times Best-selling authors Brad and Kristi Montague. Their claim to fame came from their viral web series Kid President. They have written a handful of children's books and are wildly inspirational! Our district has the opportunity to meet Brad and Kristi and create artwork of their own!
	+ **1. Classroom Outreach:**

“*If you’ve ever tried to do anything you’ve likely messed up a time or two. If you’ve ever been disappointed or discouraged, I have great news for you… Everyone makes mistakes. All the people you’ve ever known had messes, misses, and breaks*.”

* + **Key Concepts & Ideas:** Design Thinking, STEAM, self-acceptance & growth mindset, artists & inventors from history, creative problem solving
	+ **DES program period:**April 14 - May 9, 2025
		- 3-4 visits + 1 visit to the SCA, 45- 60 minute sessions
		- Confirmed Assembly on April 23  -- highlighting [Fail-A-Bration](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/735873/fail-a-bration-by-brad-and-kristi-montague/) with Brad and Kristi Montague
		- Cost free
		- What can you do with a bad idea? Elementary students will explore how lots of bad ideas can still result in something good. Focusing on the sentiment “try, try again,” students will learn about the creative process and how failure is not the opposite of being an artist – but part of it! Using recycled art, students will create their own 3D upcycled sculptures that represent how we can overcome the worst of our worries and make something beautiful from a mess. Students will create a series of sketches, engage in reflective writing and creative problem solving games, on the way to creating a work of art.
	+ **2. Field Trip to visit Exhibition *only*:**
		- Bring your class for a special look at [***We hope you fail better***](https://sc4a.org/event/we-hope-you-fail-better-2/)exhibitionnow through May 16, 2025! Visit includes a tour of the gallery, hands-on art making related to the artists’ work, and reflective writing. Explore failure and its essential role in the creative process.
		- Can schedule anytime, by request
		- Typically 60 - 90 minutes on site  / $7 per visitor
		- [Complete our Field Trip Registration Form](https://forms.gle/4LtdeDhVdNhKteZ29)
	+ The third grade teachers have reached out to the SCA to find out more information about scheduling field trips and taking advantage of this opportunity.
* **Family Dance (Joelle/Kelli):** Kelli Bowman has offered to collaborate with Joelle on planning the family dance. They are currently in the planning stages and will begin by presenting a few theme ideas to the fifth graders, allowing them to make the final decision. They welcome any theme suggestions from PTO members as well. Once the theme is chosen, they will work on invitations and paperwork with Kim Sharda, aiming to have the invitations ready with all the necessary information to be sent out at the beginning of February. This will give everyone at least a month to plan for the family dance, which will be held at the elementary school. This year, the lower and upper grades will be combined for the event, promising a fun time for all.
* **Holiday Workshop Update (Alison/Traci):** This was a well-organized event and was very successful. Alison has agreed to take on the task of heading this committee next year as well.
* **Book Fair Update (Becky):** DES received a check from Scholastic for $1089.24 that was profit from the book fair. This check should have been made out to the PTO so it needs to be determined whether the entire amount should be used to restock the book vending machine or if a portion should be used to pay back DES $878.50 since they purchased books in that amount from the book fair. We are in the process of finding answers to this question and will have an update at the next meeting.
* **Color Run/Screen Free Week Update (Lauren):** Schultz park is reserved for the Color Run on Friday April 25th from 5:30-7:00pm. Ingrid from the Saugatuck/Douglas Library is working on planning some coordinating library events for that week. Lauren will also ask the SCA to collaborate with her and provide a fun activity for the kids during the event as well.
* **Music Instrument Request (Mrs. Smoltz):** After the holiday concert, the PTO contacted Mrs. Smoltz to inquire about the possibility of purchasing more ukuleles so that all students could use them during their concerts. Mrs. Schultz responded, expressing her gratitude for the inquiry but mentioned that she found it difficult to justify the expense of additional ukuleles since the students only use them for two minutes each year during the concert. She is planning to present a proposal to the PTO in February regarding the current condition of the drums and her desire to gradually replace them. Once the proposal is finalized, she will share it with the PTO, indicating that she would prefer to allocate funds toward new drums rather than ukuleles at this time.
* **Lunch Trays Proposal (Kary):** Kary previously mentioned in a PTO meeting the idea of using metal lunch trays for students instead of the plastic ones currently in use. She contacted Michaelle, who then reached out to the lunch staff and kitchen personnel. They informed her that they have just purchased new trays, so they will hold off on acquiring additional trays for now until they are needed. They will consider the metal trays when they make an order for new trays sometime in the future.
* **March Book Madness Update (Gracie):** Gracie Bosch contacted the PTO to inquire if there were funds available in this year’s budget for the fifth grade's March Book Madness. The total cost for the books was $593, but only $450 had been allocated for this line item. She requested an increase of $150, which was approved by the board. Gracie then proceeded to order the books through Amazon.
* **Member Comments:** Someone proposed that we consider using Literati instead of Scholastic for the book fair in the future, as Scholastic has not been the easiest to work with. This might be an option for us to explore for future book fairs.

Meeting Adjourned At 4:03 pm

Minutes Compiled By: Raechel Hardin, Secretary