

## Minutes of CES PTO Jan 7 , 2025 Meeting

**Officers:** Aaron Zain, Heather Cobb, Jen Rice, Mia Park, Tyson Stoddard

**Attendees:** Aaron Zain, Jen Rice, Mia Park, Evin Liljengren, Laura McGuire, Brendan Mahoney, James Grzybowski, Tyson Stoddard

Motion to begin at 6:00 pm.

### **Approval of December Meeting Minutes (Mia Park)**

- Motion to approve minutes 6:00 pm by Evin Liljengren and Heather Cobb seconds.

### **President's Report (Aaron Zain)**

- Happy New Year!
- Overall goal for 2025 (Spring AND thinking about volunteers for Fall semester) more volunteers and more donations.
- The PTO wants to clearly communicate that the more parents invest in school, the better the resources for our kids.
- Every fundraising year will be money spent the following fiscal year. As a non-profit, our budget is lean and accounts for a 25% buffer.
- In the past few years, PTO has had an anonymous donor for thousands, so we have been privileged not to have to fundraise as much as needed to maintain the organization.
- Aaron would like to see the PTO to be self-sustaining without the donation. So instead of putting large donations in the operating budget, we will set funds aside for the special projects budget to contribute above and beyond to the school. Those in attendance agreed.

### **Principal and Teachers Report (Tyson Stoddard)**

- It's nice to be back!
- Ms. Waz and Mrs. Clark did a great job
- Language Arts curriculum during Professional Development Day for teachers
- Next Tuesday, Band and Chorus Concert.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Bingo Basket Raffle (Brendan Mahoney)**

- 2/28 Friday in CES gym
- The week of the event, baskets will be on display for students to start buying raffle tickets and build excitement.
- This year, each class will be responsible for creating their own basket. The room parent will help coordinate volunteers.
- Donations will be due in each class by Friday 2/21.
- The weekend before 2/22-23 will be the time for each classroom to create a basket and bring to school on Monday.
- Still looking for volunteers. Brendan will send out an email to those parents who expressed interest in helping with the Bingo event first. Allison Abramson and Aaron Z. are helping with resources and guidance.

#### **Spring Fling (Aaron Z on behalf of Caitlin Calder and Meg Stewart)**

- Tentative May 17<sup>th</sup> Spring Fair
- Have volunteers interested in helping, organizational meeting pending

### **Cultural Arts (Laura McGuire)**

- 4th grade are doing "Molly Brown" program with VRHS Jan 13, Feb 10th
- January-February: If any teachers want, they can invite Hartford Stage, but if not then teachers expressed interest in Eli Whitney Workshop - with wood structures that students build.
- Terra String Quartet (March)
- Later in spring: Motoko, Nemo Patel, Tree House Players

### **Room Parent Coordinator (Becca Sinusas)**

- Enrichment snack cart for teachers, 2nd grade this month: collections on 1/15th, 1/16th and snack cart will spread joy on 17th.

### **Yearbook committee (Adele McAndrew)**

- Please send craft night pictures, Jan 24th

### **Treasurer's Report (Heather Cobb - get report from Heather)**

December to January is a quiet month for financials.

**Expenses** = \$193.14 Reimbursement to Allison Abramson for Holiday Craft Night

**Income** = \$6.67 Bank Interest

In early November, we applied to be a participant in the Essex Savings Bank Community Investment Program. We were notified that our application was selected! Each year, the Bank pledges up to 10% of its after-tax net income to non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations operating along the shoreline. Each organization will receive funds according to their proportion of the total vote. Ballots listing all participants will be available in all Essex Savings Bank offices. Customers enrolled in Online Banking may vote online. Each Essex Savings Bank customer can vote for up to 3 participants. Voting will begin February 1, 2025 and conclude February 28, 2025. Results and checks will be distributed in April 2025.

### **Old Business**

#### **Merch Fundraiser (Jen Rice)**

- Spirit Sale (used by Deep River) Feb 3-16th
- Very easy to work with sales people, reasonably priced, prices marked up \$8 to raise funds for PTO.
- Will publicize at concert with flyer and backpacks next day

#### **Fish Tank Fundraiser Tshirts (Aaron Zain and James Grzybowski)**

- School needs to replace existing fish tank, over \$12,000
- James is pursuing sponsorships from Rotary, Whelen, etc.
- Heather is sending out sponsorship info to same local businesses as Halloween Town
- T-shirts
  - Jen Rice found Endless Stitch, Middletown, 1 color \$11.99, 50 t-shirt minimum to be the most economical choice and local.
  - Mia Park and Dave Nesdale will work on t-shirt design - base it off of the fish tank mural?
  - Want to get t-shirts out asap
- Aaron does not have time to pursue grants. Could someone help? Fish tank may qualify for therapeutic grants. Someone who has time to make phone calls and research whether there are grants out there.
- Laura McGuire brought up the idea of doing a crowd source fundraising platform, e.g., YouChoose Fundraiser. Will try this after reaching out to the community first.

#### **Crazy Class Photos (Tawnya Ertel)**

- Tawnya is working on it, no update right now.

### **New Business**

- Parent Meet and Greet (Aaron Zain) - tabled for now

### **Comments**

- Discussion about whether t-shirt fundraiser is an efficient use of time, resources as opposed to crowdsourcing or direct donation. This fundraiser will follow the heels of the merch sale, which may reduce interest in tank shirts. Aaron advocated for the t-shirt as a community builder. To not overwhelm CES community with requests to help us fundraise with apparel, PTO will not publicize the Chester Merch sale as a fundraiser but as an opportunity.

Next PTO meeting is 6-7pm on Tuesday, Feb 11<sup>th</sup>.

Motion to adjourn at 7:10 by Aaron Zain and Jen Rice seconds