

PTO Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 25, 2024
Hillside Cafeteria

START TIME: 9:27am

ATTENDEES: Jenny Mario, Sharon Murphy, Audrey Hayek, Nikita Singhani, Jamie Noe, Kim Bargiel, Lori Shekari, Lori Verbel, Jennifer Lee, Sharon Bailey, Ms. Maroulis, Mr. Winkelstein, Dr. Barcadepone, Ms. Hillary, Lindsey Kuczma, Kalli Passias, Bernadette Kelly, Anna Chung, Bridget Adler, Sabina McGuirl, Kseniya Merritt, Jeanne Sollitto, Kate Todd, Saakshi Gupta, Caitlin DiGennaro, Alli Falciglia, Sawyer Martin, Molly Coco, Melanie Fox, Julia Simunek, Anna Lafiosca, Victoria Sidoti, Laura Diaz, Yumi Levin, Jackie DiFrancesco, Ara Seok, Elisa Mastrocolla, Jenny Bryan-Jones, Marisa Cali, Priti Sood, Clara Yum, Detective Rosada, Officer Warbrick, Officer Rubino, Officer Layng

PTO UPDATES

- Approve June Minutes
 - Lori Shekari and Lori Verbel
- Treasurer's Report
 - \$26,615 dollars in operating account
 - With these funds have been able to do some great assemblies for kids
 - Dues
 - Every class has them
 - Goes towards the pizza party, memory books and holiday gift cards for all staff
 - Any leftover money gets transferred to each grade into their grade account
 - Account starts in Pre-K and goes with them until 8th grade
 - Used for 3rd grade picnic
 - For 8th grade anything left gets used towards a big party for their class

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

- Michael Barcadepone, Superintendent
 - Playground
 - Hopefully children are enjoying it
 - Few items need to be completed still
 - Need gate by circle
 - Cutting some pipes to make it safer
 - Games to be drawn out on blacktop in next week or so
 - Brookside
 - E-sports
 - Next Thursday when kids are off, final day for set up for E-Sports
 - 3 categories
 - Games, sports, things to play
 - Competitive gaming
 - E-sports team to compete against other schools
 - Can get scholarships from these teams
 - Lounge area
 - Area for kids to relax
 - Will be putting in a bigger arcade game into this area
 - This will have games that the kids have coded themselves
 - They will get to play each others games
 - Creating a nexus between E-Sports, the technology club and this new machine
 - Also will have a broadcasting station

- Will be able to announce and work on their public speaking as well
 - Work on Brookside and Hillside is getting recognized by other schools
 - Architect getting asked about outside lunch area for kids
 - Playground getting recognized
 - Other schools love that the kids had input into this
 - Want to do something similar with their schools as well
 - Board of Education meeting last week
 - Talked about overnight fields trips
 - 6th grade overnight trip to Disney
 - May be up to \$1600
 - 8th grade overnight trip to Boston
 - Approximately \$1100
 - Will be sending out survey to parents in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade about these trips with respect to costs, pressures to go
 - Need feedback to see if they continue the trips or not
 - Question – Will this impact this years trips?
 - No, would be for next year
 - Disney needs to be planned one year in advance and planning for it started last February for 2025 trip
 - Question – Has the student council visited the playground?
 - Have not visited yet, but once fully done they will plan a visit
 - They are now in 9th grade
- Bruce Winkelstein, Brookside Principal
 - Kids are now getting into the routine, now fully into learning
 - Getting homework, testing schedules
 - 4th grade is still in transition period
 - 6th grade parents
 - Seeing a lot more HW now
 - Get used to it by the end of the month
 - 8th grade
 - HW will vary night to night
 - Want to prepare them for High School
 - Upcoming events
 - Back to School Donut Bash
 - Photo Day October 1st
 - Halloween activities at end of the month
 - Oct 2nd Walk to school day
 - 6th grade parents
 - Deposit for trips due on Friday
 - Local trips
 - Walt Disney World
 - Immersive experiences for art, economics, business
 - Construction
 - Cafeteria now air conditioned
 - Televisions to be installed soon
 - Will be doing some training for teachers
 - Then E-Sports Room will be open
 - Will be making an E-Sports Team as well
 - Will work with Mrs. Lopez-Gonzales on curriculum as part of this room as well
- Anastasia Maroulis, Hillside Principal
 - Really great start to the year
 - Playground fully operational

- Thank you to the Board, PTO and AFEE
 - With your support we were able to optimize the environment and create a great space for kids
 - Zen zone, playground area, open field
 - Want equipment to be respected
 - Drop off is a pull up, stop and drop
 - Aides are outside in the morning
 - 12:15 pick up please stay more to the right side away from cafeteria
 - Thank you for back to school treats for staff
 - September curriculum
 - We have 4 school rules – be safe, kind, respectful and responsible
 - K and 1st grade teachers teaching into behavioral expectations
 - New families, some went to preschool and some did not
 - Doing assessments as well
 - Will hear about curriculums at Back to School Night
 - Please address any issues right away, do not wait
 - Cultural assemblies
 - Next week there is a Juggling one for Hillside
 - Mrs. McGuirl bring us different programs
 - Thank you for your efforts with this
 - Grateful for all our community support
- Sharon Bailey, Teacher Representative
 - Librarian at Hillside and Brookside
 - Heads student council and runs BTV shows
 - Love to bring students from both schools together, like we did for playground

Guest Speakers

- APD
 - Officer John Rubino
 - Grew up in this town
 - Was an EMT and Fire Chief
 - Want to talk about School safety
 - Officer Layng first line of defense
 - Class 3 officer, SLEO
 - Retired officer at each school
 - Trained at very high standards for active shooter situation
 - Within 2 minutes we can be at any school in town
 - Mrs. Maroulis commented
 - We practice a monthly fire drill and lock down drill
 - Sometimes kids do pull fire alarm
 - Please talk to your kids about this
 - Officer David Warbrick
 - Started here one month ago
 - Police officer for 7.5 years
 - Some complaints about passing stopped school buses, trying to stop illegal u-turns as well
 - School Officer Peter Layng
 - All around the school
 - Please also come to me with questions/concerns
 - Detective Rosado
 - Been here for 9 months
 - Officers are walking schools every day
 - Trying to normalize uniforms for kids
 - Is dealing with a lot of juvenile behaviors right now
 - Please be mindful of where your kids are, who they are hanging out with

- Pedestrian safety discussed and dealing with animals and their droppings
 - Question – Kids afraid to walk because of bear, are there any safety protocols?
 - Detective Rosado voluntarily deals with black bears
 - There is a system that they communicate with school about bear
 - 3 categories to black bear
 - Cubs
 - Go in opposite direction if you see the cubs
 - Scared of noise
 - Clap loud or yell and bear should move away from you
 - Always move slow
 - Not a normal functioning bear
 - Question – Is the program for special needs kids still being run?
 - Blue card given to kids from the state
 - Supposed to present it to law enforcement if there is ever any engagement
 - Working to get it completely implemented in Allendale
 - All officers are trained to deal with special needs kids as well
 - Question - If you need to call police will they know about special needs kid in home?
 - Said your address shows up and get information about meds, special needs etc
 - Question – Are kids who are misbehaving younger or older?
 - Not specific to any age group
 - Talk to kids about how law enforcement acts in different situations
 - Ms. Maroulis commented
 - Parents grateful for crossing guard at George Street
- Hillary DeVincenzo, Youth Service Librarian
 - New person in Library – Ms. Anna
 - There on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
 - Will help kids to start love reading

PAST AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- Board Introductions
- Directory App
 - PTO Dues give you access to this
 - Know names, phone numbers, addresses of all students/parents
 - Please update your Real Time Data
 - This is where we pull all information from
 - Please ensure cell phones are properly labeled
 - Question – Is everyone in the school there?
 - There are a few people who have chosen for their information not be shared, otherwise everyone is on there
 - Should have gotten information from Class Parents for their link
- Past Events
 - Kindergarten Orientation
 - Welcome Back Staff Breakfast
- Future Events
 - Welcome Back Donuts 9/30
 - Picture Day reminder 10/1
 - Don't need to preorder this year, can order after
 - Walk to School Day 10/2
 - National Walk to School Day
 - Rain date 10/4
 - Prizes given to crossing guards
 - Great way to start the day
 - School Closed Camps 10/14-10/15
 - One River Art School

- Monday 10/14
 - Superdome
 - Monday 10/14 and Tuesday 10/15
 - Links were sent out with class parent emails and will be posted on social media
 - PTO Assemblies
 - Each school will have 4 assemblies this year
 - Pumpkin Carve 10/20
 - 4th annual Pumpkin Carve
 - At the Red Barn from 10am-4pm
 - \$30 per a pumpkin – tools, pumpkin and tea light provided
 - Will be a contest again this year with prizes
 - This year judges are Ms. Hillary, Ms. Maroulis and Mr. Winkelstein
 - Book Fair - week of 10/21
 - Runs from 10/21-10/25
 - 10/23 - Donuts with grown ups
 - 10/24 - Family Night at the Book Fair
 - Need volunteers before, after and during
 - When people buy books we accumulate points for teachers to get books
 - Teachers will also make a wishlist and there will be bins with books that teachers would like for their class
 - Brookside Spooky Social - 10/25
 - Halloween dance
 - 4th and 5th grade will be from 530-7pm
 - 6th and 7th grade will be from 730-9pm
 - Registration will be sent out first week of October
 - Sign up genius will go out as well for parent volunteers
- Class and Grade Parents- Updates
 - Have met with all class parents
 - Should have been receiving emails from them
 - 4th and 5th grade should have sent out volunteer sheets
 - For Hillside volunteer sheets have not gone out yet but will soon
- Current/Upcoming Fundraisers
 - Apparel Sale
 - Started last week
 - Last Day Oct 4th
 - Charleston Wrap
 - Will be starting next week
 - Wrapping paper/gift items
 - We get 40% back
- Volunteer Opportunities
 - In august sent out a volunteer interest form and will pull for volunteers form there
- Questions?

Thank you for coming to our meeting.

End time: 10:28am

UPCOMING DATES

September 26	Hillside Back To School Night
September 30	Welcome back donuts
October 1	Hillside and Brookside Picture Day
October 2	National Walk to School Day
October 2	Hillside Birthday Bees
October 3	School Closed for Rosh Hashanah
October 4	Hillside PTO Assembly
October 14-15	School Closed

October 16	PTO Meeting (9:15am, Zoom)
October 20	Pumpkin Carve
October 21-25	Book Fair