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MINUTES

February 27, 2023

The February meeting of the Randolph Heights PTA was called to order at 6:15pm by the president.

Welcome and Introduction

President Katie Russell welcomed all attendees. The following members of the PTA executive board were present:

Katie Russell, president
Julie Orman, vice-president
Phil Wacker, treasurer
Autumn Hubbell, secretary
Tim Williams, principal
Beth Tierney, teacher, third grade

Winter and Spring Events:

Teacher Appreciation Week (May 8-12)

Start thinking about those you may connect with (friends, classmates) to provide meals for teachers.

Talent Show

Will be back to in-person this year. Virtual auditions.

Family Picnic

5th Grade Celebration

Kindergarten Celebration

Read-a-thon Update:

Students have read 125,678 minutes, well on our way to the overall goal of 150,000! We will see how many minutes the students read in week 4, but if they reach the goal, there will be a pajama day!

As a fundraiser, the school community has raised \$9,885, which is less than \$500 from the overall goal of \$10,000!

Principal's Update:

Randolph Heights recently completed WIDA testing, which is a test all ELL students take each year.

We are through school choice season. Families are being notified, but schools haven't received official numbers yet. Randolph Heights gave tours for 70-75 families, which was a positive.

No budget information yet. It is usually received around spring break (should receive it earlier this year). Due to the democrat-controlled state government, we should expect a positive budget this year, given early proposals. Perhaps the most positive budget Principal Williams has seen in 29 years. This will allow Randolph Heights to maintain WINN and other interventionists as well as TDAS and Maker Space funding.

Superintendent Gothard held a listening session with staff about suggestions, concerns, etc. One issue Randolph Heights teachers raised was the elementary report card and how the model is outdated and could be more clear and concise. It does seem that this comment was heard, and the district is now evaluating the report card.

Staff asked about facility plan (with remodel). It was focused on right sizing, not allowing for expansion. There wasn't much of a response from superintendent on that topic. Air conditioning would only be added with a remodel.

Financial Update:

Budget has remained similar since last month's report.

Starting to see overall balance go down, which was the goal, given the covid surplus. Field trips, music residency, gaga pits are some of the upcoming expenditures. If we don't spend down by the end of the year, we may consider putting a larger amount in a nest for future projects (projector, exterior sign, or other ideas). We'll have to consider that as a PTA at a future meeting.

Gaga pit will be installed this spring, after snow melts. Should have by the end of the year.

Question: Due to large class sizes, can any of the PTA funding go towards personnel?

This is the one thing PTA monies cannot go towards. Principal Williams can use his budget for supplies towards staff, and PTA can pick up supplies, but that supply budget is only \$20,000.

Question: How can the PTA pay for music lessons?

Ms. Bowren (other residencies) are contracted vendors, so not technically staff.

Reading at Randolph Heights:

There are two areas teachers focus on when teaching reading skills:

Instructional Time and Students' Application Time

Instructional Time:

- Interactive Read-a-loud: Texts guided by Districts, Books often provided by District, but teachers supplement.
- Lesson Time: After you've read a story, there is a lesson portion.
- Focused on teaching students to 1) Enjoy and learn to love reading 2) understand different genres and 3) how we think about main ideas, parts of a story, etc.

- Lessons are also focused on Phonics, Word Strategies in k-2, for 30 minutes a day, how to navigate the challenges encountered when reading.
- Building blocks of sounds, putting those sounds into words and sentences, and demonstrating an understanding of the content.

Kids Application Time:

- Work time, try it time (reading in small groups or independently).
- Reading, writing, baggie books (older kids pick out from library)
- Teachers read with a group or students read as individuals.
- Teachers think about setting up the environment (so kids know where to go to get help, enough books, etc.)
- Book club books are in addition to the above.

Question: How can families support at home?

Keep reading to your kids (even when independent readers). Strong correlation between reading success and vocabulary. Hearing the words read by others means they'll contextualize the word and they'll figure it out from having heard it before (when they encounter it on their own).

Even if independently reading, still check in with them. Watch them read aloud. Making sure they aren't guessing words or skipping them. Ask them about comprehension.

Wrap-up:

Katie thanked members for attending. The next meeting will Monday, April 24th at 6pm in hybrid format.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.