

PTO Meeting 10/16/23

1. Start meeting 8:04

2. Attendance

- a. Jess Seeman, Katharine Barnes, Rebekah Thomson, Corey Lazar, India Whitcombe, Heather Lochridge, Robyn Dori, Stephanie Darosa, Laura Jordan, Liz Moriarty, Brent Brown, Casey Esposito, Charles Granquist
- b. Approve minutes

3. PTO Update (10 min)

- a. Jess Seeman: Vote to approve Jess Seeman and Katharine as authorized signers on all authorized school accounts. Rebekah Thomas seconds. All in favor. Remove Nicole Cabot and Ellen Biskus as authorized signers.. Rebekah Thomas second.
- b. Square One fundraiser
 - i. Kids make art work and then print it in various ways such as water bottles, blankets, and stickers etc.
 - ii. As a school we have a certain goal to meet in order to have the most profitable fundraiser. Students will see the progression towards their goal and if achieved, will have some form of reward such as a popsicle party or extra recess.
 - iii. Jess will get more info from Ellen on timeline and deadline.
- c. Teacher grant request - vote
 - i. Plymouth Plantation Field Trip for 2,3,4,5 classes
 1. Robyn: 2/3 Starting Wampanoag unit of study. 4/5 will study American studies and go into more depth to the formation of our country. Classes will visit a working gristmill and tour the Mayflower. We would like teachers and parent volunteers. It's a powerful trip and awesome for them to visualize.
 2. Requesting \$1,044.37. Jessica Mason motion to approve. Jess Seeman second. All in favor.
- d. Subcommittee update (follow up from last meeting)

- i. Stephine DaRosa has been communicating with Wampanoag director. Conversation sounds very optimistic and positive! She is talking to Janet Vanderhoop about Cranberry Day and the aspect of harvest.
- ii. Robyn: I talked with Janet Vandehop and other reps. They want to come to the classroom and share artifacts and make connections with present day and historical tribal life. We will be having all classes go to the cultural center in Aquinnah. We are talking about what to bring to the turkey trot celebration. It's in the works!

4. Principal Report (10 min)

- a. Susan was not present as she was at the UIRSD meeting.
- b. There is a billing issue about compost but not present to discuss.
- c. Upcoming new mulch bill needing to be approved at next meeting.

5. Teacher Report (10 min)

- a. Robyn: We are moving and making shifts based on the current HVAC construction situation . It's going better than expected at the CCC. It's a nice cozy space and kids seem to be enjoying it. Hoping it will be wrapped up as soon as possible.
- b. Open house this year. Curriculum night was canceled because of moving. Teachers felt it wasn't very successful. Hoping next year it will be able to go back to normal.

6. Treasurer Report (10 min)

- a. We are currently looking for a replacement. Please ask people into the community! Brent has put many things in place so it will be an easy turnover and the program is easy to use. It's all online. It takes about 3-6 hours a month including attending and reporting at monthly PTO meetings. Software is called Money Minder. Basic accounting software specifically made for nonprofit and PTO groups. If someone can navigate quickbooks they could easily use this software.
- b. Report:
 - i. Refer to the statement for current balance.
 - ii. We have \$6,000 for PTO grants for field trips. Last year we allocated \$5,000 and we used about \$4,100. We hope teachers take advantage of that account.
 - iii. **There is a current PTO surplus of \$23,000.** It goes back to covid year when kids weren't going on field trips etc. Last year's surplus was \$10,000. Propose to adjust the funding formula to push funds to the Outing Program. PTO

activities costs aren't rising as quickly as OP costs are rising. Past formula 50/50 with PTO and OP. Brent will put together a new formula option to approve at the next meeting.

1. Let's have teachers and staff brainstorm some supplemental things on their wishlist that wouldn't be on their budget that they could use the money for.
 2. Splitting fundraising money: 50% goes to PTO 25% goes to OP and 25% goes to classes. When we get to the Shenandoah the class account for the ¼... half cost comes from 4th grade and remaining balance comes from the 5th grade class. ½ of that cost is paid for by the OP. When the ski trip comes, the OP and the funds left over to the 5 accounts pay for that. It's a combo of an OP account and the class account. In the past we've made it work because of donations.
 3. Rebekah: This is amazing and kind of unheard of! It should take pressure off PTO fundraising. In the past we've had contributions from parents to offset the costs. Although the funds are there, it's still not a bad idea to keep asking parents to contribute a little. We shouldn't feel all the pressure to fundraise.
 4. Jessica M.: Are any of our accounts sitting in an interest bearing account? Brent: Only the classroom accounts. It would be worth considering moving funds into an interest bearing account. Factor that in as one of the options.
 5. Katharine: We should bring in outside art/theater programs to the school to enrich learning.
 6. Charlie: He does programs with the Charter school at Slough Farm such as woodworking, culinary, photography, daily chores etc. He works with Charter but not Chilmark and wants to! This happens 9:30-12 on Fridays. He takes 8-12 students and cooks with them.
- iv. Jess M.: Charter school sets a section of time during the school day for this.
- v. Jess Seeman: Could it be a confined project period? Coming for 2 weeks straight?

- vi. Charlie will put together an email with a bullet list of options and send it to Robyn to share with the teachers. We're all excited to make this happen!

7. SAC Report (10 min)

- a. General update
 - i. Susan is retiring in June and looking for a replacement.
 - ii. Susan and Jess are co chair of SAC, Robyn Jackie teacher reps, Jess Seeman one parent rep open. Two community reps: Amilia Decker and Ann Meyhew.
 - iii. Today UIRSD meeting where Susan formally stated her retirement. Committee in the process of debating what the future position will look like... head of school (not a year round position/summers off) vs. year round principal.
 - iv. They are also considering having the principal of the WT school Donna Lowell Bettencourt be the principal of both schools with 2 assistant principals
 - 1. SAC wants a head of school... two VP was not productive.
 - 2. Meeting thurs at 6pm to continue discussion... please join to express your opinion.
 - 3. Robyn: Faculty meeting thursday... staff feels very concerned about being a satellite school of WT. Having taught at both schools, both schools have a very different feel. There is something special about Chilmark school. We would be at risk of losing that if we had a VP under the supervision of WT.
 - 4. Write a letter to the committee about their opinion... with 3-4 core points. This is a good time to write to the school committee.
 - 5. Next steps: letter template, next meeting Thursday 6pm (location TBD also on zoom, talk to class parents, get the word out.
- b. SAC parent rep. - Changing vote. We have multiple candidates for one seat. We asked everyone interested to send a short blurb of their interest. That will be sent in an email Friday and results along with a link to vote. This will be done by the end of this week. Vote in by Monday.

8. Sustainability Committee Report (10 min)

- a. Issues with compost but not sure what that is... hasn't held a meeting this year. Remind parents that this is a sub committee.

9. OP

- a. Ski trip is almost completely booked with 5-6 parents going. All falling into place.
- b. First full week of february.
- c. Setting dates for Shenandoah

10. Next Meeting November 20th, 2023 8AM at the school

11. Meeting adjourned Jess S.: 9:26 Second Jessica Mason