

Farmington River Elementary



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Date: Thursday October 8 2015

Meeting Start: 3:15 pm

Motion to approve minutes from September's meeting approved.

In attendance: Craig Drenga, Vice President; Kathy Adams, Secretary; Ilona Packie, Treasurer; Thomas Nadolny, Principal; Meaghan Martin, Teacher; Chris Keller, Teacher; Mary Turo, Reading Specialist; Kenly Brozman, Kathy Couch, Ashley Nelson, Stacey Schultze and Sherry DeCelle, Parents / Committee Heads.

FOR OUR CALENDARS

M 10/19. Flying Deer Nature Center Assembly and K-2 Workshop

Th 10/22. Flying Deer Nature Center, Grades 3 + 4 Workshop

T 10/27. Flying Deer Nature Center, Grade 5 + 6 Workshop

Th 11/12. Next PTA Meeting at 3:15 pm in the Library

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT: CRAIG

Playground equipment in memory of Cora Barrett. PTA does wish to help support. Teacher's Union donating \$100; equipment to be a climbing "wall" with cargo net for preschool playground. Need to move caterpillar to the outside, as school must keep certain distances between playground items. Cost is \$559. Kathy Couch suggested requesting free delivery, if mentioning this is to be a memorial. Melissa Costa said preschool will make a plaque for Cora. Ceremony will be had, to include her parents, and just the Pre-K once the plaque is made up and all is installed. Keeping dedication ceremony low-key to just younger children (with older children, it tends to open up wounds). School donating \$120. School committee will be making a donation. Teachers are contributing. Others also willing to donate. Suggestion is to place plaque in a more permanent setting—such as attached to the building—since plastic playground equipment has a lifespan. Kathy C. added that we could donate \$300 from Campbell's Labels for Education to playground equipment for Cora, as well.

Family Fun Night. Craig is contacting Arlene Kiesler about her program on **bird rehabilitation**. He's checking to see if the program is suitable for all grades, and if the dates 11-6 or 11-20 of November are possible. **Grant application has to be submitted before October 15—so time is of the essence.** Laurie Flower will have tablets available in the computer room for ordering books that night, provided an adult is present. Also, if we could have students research the books they'd like, and see if they are available for ordering during library time, that would be a great use of time and efficient to assist the actual ordering process. Craig will contact Rachael Cannon about library time, and when the book information is available.

Kathy Couch is also checking on a potential activity, waiting to hear back on availability of a jump rope performer (akin to enrichment activity entertainment provided by Jump Rope Jill of 5 years ago). The jump rope performer will give jump ropes to all the kids, and is eligible for a grant; PTA does not have to pay for it.

TREASURER'S REPORT: ILONA

Teachers stepping up for the snack bar; it's been running itself.

Donation made to Berkshire Humane Society on behalf of Sunshine recipient.

PTA donated \$300 for printing supplies to school office.

Received \$170 in PTA dues; portion will be going out.

\$1,250 earmarked for Flying Deer.

\$5,629 remains in coffers.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: KATHY A.

Student submissions continue to be sent to our new town newsletter, *The Otis Observer*.

REWARD PROGRAMS: KATHY C.

Campbell's Labels for Education Update: Kathy C. is pleased to announce that Dana Pustinger will be taking over the Campbell's Labels program for next year.

REWARD PROGRAMS: BOX TOPS

Karen Yvon seeking parent Box Top Coordinator for each classroom to assist with compiling and prepping Box Tops for submission.

SCHOOL LITERACY EFFORTS: MARY

Winter Edition of Chill Out and Read program, January 2016, literacy initiative for our school. Last year, 150,000 combined student minutes reported having read books was target; the goal was exceeded, with 153,000 minutes reported. As part of reward program, the school had a snow sculpture contest. Repeating program will repeat this year, due to positive feedback. Meaghan Martin assisted by providing a chart to show how reading certain minutes per day impacts children.

Could PTA sponsor this year with a small budget? Requesting budget of \$350. Small prizes to again be given. Students that complete the initiative get a prize book from Scholastic, value \$1 - \$1.50 each (\$200 worth of such books were donated previous year). Some leftover books were used during Screen Free Week. Last year, the PTA declined to donate. In trying to determine why, it was mentioned at the time, there were a lot of requests for a lot of items.

Voted yes, approved: request for \$350 for the 2016 Winter Edition of the Chill Out and Read program.

Mary asked if anyone would like to partner for December author visit with Steve Swinburne of Vermont (we have his books currently in our library). Swinburne will work with Grades 3-6 about the process of non-fiction writing in a "writer's workshop." He will also be doing a Grades K-2 assembly that encourages expository writing. Steve would like to bring his books to sell. The cost will be \$8 - \$15, with the author personalizing ahead of time. Collecting order forms would be the job of her partner/helper.

We will place mention seeking a partner for this initiative under the Help Wanted ad of our October PTA Newsletter (we will continue and place the ad in November's issue, also, if not yet met). Tentative date to be Dec 3, with Snow Date of Dec 10 (which is also date included in Holiday Shop dates), scheduled sometime during the afternoon.

FALL FUNDRAISER—SQUARE ONE ART UPDATE: KENLY

Artwork has been sent off; each child shall receive their own, individualized Square One Art catalogue by October 19 from which to place orders for products (to include aprons, cups, mouse mats, etc.). After placing orders, we should receive all products by November 18; however, timeline might change. Kenly will inquire about pushing short window of time out longer, so kids are not selling for only one week—but hopefully, get in at least two weeks. Orders must be sent back in on the 28th. Hopefully, everyone can order themselves online; this will be encouraged. Some paper orders, if necessary, can also be submitted. Will see just our own child's artwork in the sales catalogue, not the whole of Farmington student participants. Percentage PTA earns with sales: 40%.

All items should arrive sorted by classroom. First thing to come back is a sheet of stickers; if each child takes one chosen sticker, they can apply it to a "wall of art" as Kenly suggested for all to see. It was suggested that perhaps each class gets a time slot on a given day. Kenly to check in with Tom about feasibility. Consensus is that it sounds a positive and doable idea.

Pushing Square One Art Fundraiser sales to parents: Encourage to send to grandparents, beyond the school. Emphasize the attraction for grandparents.

- Kenly will ask Laura Catullo if she can help with creating a sticker wall of art during week of Oct 19 - 28.
- Announce SOAF with details on front page of upcoming October PTA Newsletter.
- Add fundraiser details to website (Wendy or Laurie).
- Publicize also on Farmington school announcement placard out by road.

What do we want to do to create competition? Suggestions include: reward percentage of students participating, not average sales; or, alternatively, the participation rate per class, with highest overall sales per person. Both approaches described as valid. It was recommended to reward highest average sales, rather than basing reward on participation, because sales between classrooms will incrementally vary. Take an average, as with the Cash Calendar, to reward with a Pizza Party.

Suggestions given for rewards/prizes: extra HW pass, lollipop, pizza party idea for the highest percentage of participation. Everyone that participates, every kid who places an order, gets a prize. (A “free” prize is where HW pass fits in, for example.) Extra recess with a popsicle on the playground has also been popular. Would have to be the WHOLE class included. Also, every child receives a sheet of stickers, regardless if they place an order.

FLYING DEER NATURE CENTER UPDATE: KENLY

First day, all-general assembly will take place in one hour. Note: Flying Deer Nature course will take place in any weather, except hurricane conditions—even in rain. Waiting on finalized schedule to arrive.

NEW BUSINESS

Kenly asked about reviving the mid-winter Chili Cookoff. The Knox was venue. Anastasia headed up. Knox did not charge for use of space, even provided a big platter of mac & cheese and veggies. Chris Keller willing to run mac & cheese corner. Chris also suggested trying to hire the Pioneer Fiddlers; he will contact Alicia Dunaj and ask. Alternate suggestion to rehire Richard Stanmeyer’s jazz band, as previously used for the event and well-received. Chris and Kathy A. offered to assist Kenly with the event.

Mr. Keller is working on a special Revolutionary War project, to be announced at a later date.

Meeting Adjourned: 4:10 pm