

Ben Franklin Elementary PTO
September 2020 Meeting Minutes

WHEN: Wednesday, September 23, 2020

WHERE: Online- Zoom **Facilitator(s):** Kim Naughton

PTO BOARD: Kim Naughton, Dina Calu, Carrie Spiteri, Lauren Berger, Stacy Donohue, and Megan Coopersmith

ATTENDEES: Principal Jay Billy, PTO Board, Ben Franklin Parents/Guardians, Arundel Clarke (on behalf of SEPAC & BEAC)

START TIME: 7:05 END TIME: 8:00ish

Topic and Spokesperson	Discussion Points
Introductions Kim Naughton	Board introduced themselves and Mr. Billy introduced himself
Principal Update Mr. Billy	<p>-Virtual learning- students are on Zoom quite a bit of the day -It has been challenging to do virtual assessments</p> <p>Plan for Return: -October 12: hope to bring preschool and Special Needs classes back to the district (about 30 kids coming back) -after that, Superintendent Kasun has not publicly elaborated further as to what, if things go well, will happen next -Mr. Billy does not think it will be anything other than hybrid before winter break, but you never know. -Moving from full remote to hybrid model takes time. It involves sharing health and safety plan, surveying student families to see who chooses either hybrid or remote, survey staff to see health needs, then figuring out how to staff. Other districts that are doing hybrid have had to hire extra teachers. -Hopewell and West Windsor had a few cases of Covid-19 and had to close for a few days then reopen</p> <p>Events at the School: -Can't do any large events. Governor says no large gatherings -even when we go hybrid, Mr. Billy doesn't anticipate being allowed to do any large group gatherings -PTO cannot sponsor large events on our school grounds -Halloween parade-probably won't be able to have the Halloween parade, but will figure out something else</p>

<p>Principal Update cont. Mr. Billy</p>	<p>Pandemic Response Team -need a committee of parents. Mr. Billy will reach out to ask some parents, or you can also email him.</p> <p>Equity Committee -over the summer, each elementary school got to hire Equity Warriors. Erica Smoots and Marisol Gutierrez are the Equity Warriors at Ben Franklin. Equity Warriors went through training on how to build equity in the classrooms. They are now training the rest of the staff.</p>
<p>PTO President's Update Kim Naughton</p>	<p>-Mission of the PTO is to raise money and fundraise in order to host events at the school and provide supplies for the school.</p> <p>-We will be taking PTO events month by month following the school guidelines and participation of previous event.</p> <p>-Cannot hold any events at the school due to liability issues. As far as online playdates, with the amount of screentime children are getting, the last thing that's needed is another Zoom meeting. PTO encourages parents to reach out to their children's friends and set-up small group play dates (if you feel comfortable). A possibility is for the virtual Homeroom Coordinator to possibly organize a playdate with the class so that way it isn't sponsored by the school or the PTO</p> <p>-While PTO cannot hold in-person events, we are coming up with ideas for things families can do at home and we will put it up on Facebook. We are hosting a Scarecrow contest in October. If it goes well and has a good response, we will come up with another activity to do next.</p> <p>-3rd graders will still have the yearbook. If you are a 3rd grade parent and want to get involved with the yearbook, email us at benfranklinpto2939@gmail.com</p> <p>SEPAC & BEAC -Arundel Clarke spoke on behalf of SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) and BEAC (Black Educational Advancement Council) -Parent University offerings and guest speakers. Next one is on October 22, 6:30pm. Dr. Tracey Drukenbrod will be the next speaker discussing strategies parents can use to help support anxiety associated with COVID-19. -BEAC is similar to SEPAC but this is for students of color, families with equity needs, training needs, or need additional support. -BEAC is having an event on October 21 at 7pm. See flyer for details. -both SEPAC and BEAC have Facebook pages and can also register if want to attend BEAC event beaclawrence@gmail.com -Registration link for the BEAC meeting on Oct 21</p>

	<p>https://forms.gle/dugMja3ag2RoENFdA SEPAC Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/2262581320537071 BEAC Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/BEACLAWRENCENJ</p>
<p>Recaps Respective Chairs</p>	<p>-Thank you to everyone that sent us your first day pictures! PTO created a video compiling all the photos and posted it on our Facebook page. Ben Franklin PTO Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/BFLawrNj</p>
<p>Upcoming Events Respective Chairs</p>	<p>-Family Scarecrow contest -Families will submit photos to our email, and we will post on Facebook and have a voting contest for the best scarecrow. We will have an option to add your address to a Google doc so families can drive by and see the creations! -hoping this will be a fun thing for families to do</p> <p>-School Spirit sale -October 2nd-October 16th. Items will be available for pick-up on November 7th. -Jenn Starr (a former BF parent) is doing mock ups now. There will be tie dyes, sweatpants, facemasks, backpack, and other cute styles</p>
<p>Treasurer's Report Stacy Donohue</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Treasurer's Report August/September 2020</u></p> <p><u>Expenses:</u></p> <p>\$2499.00 – 3rd grade yearbooks \$822.00 – 3rd grade t-shirts \$811.32 - outdoor tents purchased on Amazon \$55.64 - expo markers for teachers</p> <p><u>Deposits:</u></p> <p>AmazonSmile - \$27.96</p>
<p>Questions or Comments All</p>	<p>-Zoom PTO meeting had 41 people attending- which was a great turnout!</p> <p>BoxTops -still have the Box Tops box in the main office for anyone wanting to drop off, but since so many going digital there's a lot less now</p>

<p>Questions or Comments cont.</p> <p>All</p>	<p>-other fundraising families can help with: AmazonSmile, Stop & Shop, Shoprite -for more info, please visit our website at: http://bfpto.org/donate/</p> <p>Clothing Drive -unsure whether PTO will be doing it yet. If people are really excited to do the clothing drive, then yes we will have it. Trying to see what families want</p> <p>Homeroom Coordinator - still trying to come up with what the parameters will be before Carrie sends out emails to volunteer Homeroom Coordinators. Carrie hasn't received a big response. It was on a flyer that Mr. Billy sent out through email at the beginning of the year, and the flyer was also posted on BF PTO Facebook page. Megan will post on Facebook again asking for Homeroom Coordinator volunteers. If you are interested in being a virtual Homeroom Coordinator, please reach out to Carrie Spiteri at cspiteri0204@yahoo.com with your child's name and teacher.</p> <p>-parent asked if she can send a gift card to a teacher. Office is open every day 8-3 so can come then to drop off any gift a family wants to give to a teacher-remember to wear a mask. Another option is to send an electronic gift card such as Amazon etc. to the teacher's school email address.</p> <p>-Birthday drive by parade -parent asked if this was something that could be done. Homeroom Coordinator for the individual classroom would be involved with that, but would need to run it by the teacher since a drive by birthday parade would be during the school day so the teacher would be teaching.</p> <p>Family Contact Info -PTO is not doing an online school directory this year. Last year, the PTO used Membership Toolkit for this service and it cost \$480 a year. PTO decided it was not prudent to spend that money this year since there is no fundraising happening and the money should be saved right now. The PTO Board is looking into other cheaper directory options to use when school reopens. -Homeroom Coordinator can help get people connected in the classes -Families can reach out to their child's teacher to ask them to help connect them to another family in the class. -If it is something families would be interested in, another idea is to set up a Google drive document that all interested parents can input their info if they want to coordinate social gatherings themselves -Another idea if there is interest amongst families is to create PTO Facebook discussion groups per grade.</p>
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<p>Questions or Comments cont.</p> <p>All</p>	<p>- To help welcome new families, the PTO is trying to engage people and show what we're doing. PTO Facebook page and Mr. Billy blasts also talk about what the PTO is doing. Also virtual PTO meeting to help keep people engaged.</p> <p>- "Mum Dad" (Will Erichsen) asked if he could plant mums at the school. Mr. Billy said go for it.</p> <p>3rd Grade Yearbook & Events</p> <p>-3rd grade yearbook consists of: photos from the entire time the children have been at the school, parent quotes and special messages to children, children fill out mini surveys about favorite band favorite food etc., get interviews from 3rd grade teachers. 3rd graders typically have 3rd grade party, and usually an extra field trip as well.</p> <p>-School Photos</p> <p>-Photographer is on hold in all school districts he works with. When schools come back, he will put us on the calendar. Mr. Billy hopes to do in-person pictures by the new year. Almost all the schools are waiting it out to do the pictures. We could probably do outside pictures so perhaps that is an option. However, Mr. Billy pointed out that doing outdoor pictures while we are remote and involving booking appointments etc. raises equity issues because we need to make sure there is an option to come do pictures during the day but also at night for those families that cannot leave work to bring their child for a picture during the workday. Mr. Billy said whichever way we do photos, that is the only option we will be doing. We can't do outdoor pictures now and then something else in the spring. It would have to be just one.</p> <p>-To contact us, email benfranklinpto2939@gmail.com or message us on Facebook</p> <p>-Thank you all for coming and hope to see you again at the next meeting!</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>TBD</p>