

Ben Franklin Elementary PTO

January 2024 Meeting Minutes

WHEN: Monday, January 8, 2024

WHERE: BF Library **Facilitator(s):** Megan Coopersmith

PTO BOARD: Megan Coopersmith, Petra Crevier, Rachelle Picarello, Nicole Bottrel, Ilana Hernandez, and Kristen Paladino

ATTENDEES: Principal Geoff Hewitt, PTO Board, Ben Franklin Parents and Guardians

START TIME: 7:02pm **END TIME:** 7:54pm

Topic and Spokesperson	Discussion Points
<p>Introductions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Megan Coopersmith</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board introduced themselves: Megan Coopersmith - PTO President, Petra Crevier - 1st VP, Rachelle Picarello - 2nd VP, Nicole Bottrel - Corresponding Secretary, Ilana Hernandez - Recording Secretary, Kristen Paladino - Treasurer
<p>Principal Update</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Hewitt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Hewitt wished everyone a happy new year. He expressed that it was great to have everyone back and was excited to see snow on the weekend but glad it didn't interfere with the school day. - The school's Lost and Found has been emptied. All items that weren't labeled or claimed were donated to the PTO's warm clothing drive. - Mr. Hewitt is looking forward to Multicultural Night on Wed., Jan. 17th from 6pm to 8pm. It will be the first time this event will be taking place for all to enjoy at Ben Franklin. - The third grade trout project faced some difficulty. Each year third grade students learn all about trout by raising them from eggs and releasing them into the wild in the spring. Unfortunately, none of the trout have survived; they all disappeared just before winter break. Mr. Wilson, who manages the project, will be ordering more trout. The trout will be about a month old so the kids can continue to see the life cycle. Hopefully, this batch of trout will survive as this project is linked to the third grade field trip. - Some field trips have been scheduled. Mr. Hewitt thanked the PTO for their support surrounding field trips. - Mr. Hewitt spoke about preschool expansion in the district, which was discussed during the most recent board meeting. Ben Franklin presently has a program in the school building. LHS has an early education/preschool program called Cardinal Kids.

	<p>Historically, this program has only been half day; however, starting in February, the program will be utilized as a full day preschool classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Danae Pesce (BF Pre-K teacher) will be opening the class in mid-February. Her assistant, Ms. Seales, will be joining her. A notification will be going out to parents in the Pesce classroom soon. Mr. Hewitt is in the process of hiring a new Pre-K teacher and will be shifting around teacher assistants from other Pre-K classes. New assistants are currently being interviewed and updates will be provided at the next meeting. - Due to this expansion, public preschools in the district will be free. More information can be found in the LTPS district board meeting notes. Because of limited space (maximum of 15 students per class), the lottery will still be utilized. Ben Franklin will continue to operate under an integrated model where special education students get seats first (ratio of 8 general education and 7 special education students). - There is an early dismissal day for students this Friday, Jan. 12th. Teachers will have professional development focusing on writing. - Mid-year assessments are taking place now through iReady. The data gathered by these assessments are for instructional purposes and to track progress. These assessments will take a total of 40 min spread over a couple of weeks.
<p>PTO President Update</p> <p>Megan Coopersmith</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eyes of the Wild Assembly was held Dec. 15. The school split into two groups and there were two 45 minute assemblies. PTO fully funded this for \$615. Pictures were taken during the assemblies for BF families to enjoy; the link can be provided upon request. - Field trips have been scheduled for first and second grade. Parents should look out for permission slips. The PTO covers the full cost of bussing for field trips as well as a portion of the admissions. BF families just cover a portion of the admissions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1st grade: Rainbow Fish at State Theatre - 2nd grade: Howell Farm during corn planting - The PTO is waiting in kindergarten and third grade to schedule their field trips.
<p>Recaps</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Dine to Donate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petra Crevier spoke. - The Dine to Donate for the month of December took place at Meatheadz on Dec. 12 and 13. - It looks like it went well. We are waiting on the owners to reach out regarding the check; 15% of the proceeds will be donated to the school. <p><u>Shop to Donate at Five Below</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petra Crevier spoke.

	<p>- This fundraiser took place at Five Below in the Lawrence Shopping Center near Lidl from Dec. 16 to 22. We are waiting on the check to come back.</p> <p><u>Winter Break Teacher Appreciation Gift for Teachers & Staff from PTO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith spoke. - The PTO hosted a gift wrapping event where teachers could sign up and send in what they wanted wrapped. This was a “gift of time,” where teachers and staff could get back some free time. - The PTO also set up a hot cocoa station in the Teacher’s Lounge for them to enjoy. Teachers also had the opportunity to pick out books and snacks for their classrooms. <p><u>Winter Break Student Appreciation Gift for all students from PTO</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith and Petra Crevier spoke. - Each student received an Applebee’s coupon, lollipop and Swiss Miss hot cocoa packet as a gift to celebrate going on winter break.
<p>Ongoing Events</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Warm Clothing Drive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petra Crevier spoke. - The bins at the school are currently full. We are waiting on Homefront to do a pick-up. Based on Homefront’s level of need, Petra will ask to extend the drive to the end of the month. <p><u>Winter Teacher Clubs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith spoke. - Winter Clubs started today. Families are reminded to send in a change of dismissal note each day their child attends club. A reminder email will be sent out to families the Sunday before club starts with an attachment of a Change of Dismissal note; this note is very helpful to the staff in the main office. It is also also helpful for the parent volunteers. - There were some date changes for Face Painting and Yoga clubs since the initial sign-up. Emails were sent out to notify the families participating in those clubs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face Painting is now Jan 26, Feb. 9, Feb. 23, March 1, March 8 - Yoga is now Jan 26, Feb. 2, Feb. 9, Feb. 23, March 1 <p><u>Holiday in Harmony Poster Showcase</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ilana Hernandez and Petra Crevier spoke. - We are still collecting posters showcasing holidays. Families are encouraged to send in their posters to the main office. We have some hanging up in the halls near the gymnasium right now. - The posters will be used to decorate for multicultural night. Recycled posters from previous years are welcome too.

<p>Upcoming Events</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Multicultural Night</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petra Crevier and Ilana Hernandez spoke. - Our first Multicultural Night is taking place on Wed., Jan. 17th from 6pm to 8pm (rain date is Jan. 18th). - As of today's meeting, we have 9 activity tables. Students will be given passports to decorate and will collect stamps from the different tables. Families need to RSVP to either bring a dish, host a table or volunteer their time. The idea is for families to share a bit of themselves whether it be their food, time or culture. - There will be two raffles at the event. One raffle is for those who participated (Target gift card raffle) and the other is for Ben Franklin students who dress in traditional clothing or clothes with a flag. These student raffle winners will win lunch with Mr. Hewitt (4 winners in total). <p><u>Ben Franklin's Birthday</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith spoke. - Ben Franklin's birthday is on Jan. 17th. - Before COVID, it was BF tradition for homeroom coordinators to bring in a snack for kids to share during snack time as a way to celebrate Ben Franklin's birthday. The PTO wants to bring that back this year. - Rachelle Picarello will be reaching out to homeroom coordinators and have them ask the teachers if they'd be interested in partaking in this activity. This will not be a party so it won't interfere with instructional time. <p><u>Movie Night</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kristen Paladino spoke. - Family Movie Night is taking place on Fri., February 9th. - This event was also a popular event amongst families before COVID. The PTO is bringing it back this year. - Doors open at 6pm with the movie starting at 6:30pm. The movie being shown is the Super Mario Bros Movie. - Flyers went out to families who are encouraged to pay for admission in advance. Admission is \$5 per household in advance and \$8 per household at the door. - We will have a popcorn machine to pop fresh popcorn at the event. There will be a concession stand with popcorn, candy and drinks for purchase. - Families are encouraged to bring blankets and pillows since everyone will sit on the floor. - It was confirmed that we can show the movie without paying an additional licensing fee to the licensing company. <p><u>Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by 1st Grade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith spoke. - The teacher appreciation luncheon will be on Wed., Feb. 14th. This luncheon will be sponsored by 1st grade families. 1st grade parent, Krista Gervon, volunteered to organize the event. - The theme will be heart healthy.
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	<p><u>Science Night</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ilana Hernandez spoke. - The PTO’s annual science night will be taking place on Thurs., Feb. 29th. - In celebration of Leap Day, the event will be Space themed. Families are welcome to attend for FREE. Students will be able to take part in a number of hands-on experiments and play science games centered around Outer Space. Students will also be able to visit the 3rd Grade Science Fair while in the building. - As per BF tradition, 3rd graders are invited to partake in the 3rd Grade Science Fair. It is not required for science fair participants to stay on theme with the event. - Two separate flyers will be going out at the end of the month. One flyer will be specifically for third graders and the other will invite all families to the event.
<p>Updates</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>3rd Grade Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kristen Paladino spoke. - This is an ongoing committee. The first meeting is this Thurs., Jan. 11. - The committee will be discussing the 3rd grade yearbook, class gift and party. Chairs for those subcommittees will be named. - The 3rd grade party will possibly be June 14 or 15. The committee will discuss this. - Fundraiser ideas are being developed and will be discussed with Mr. Hewitt. <p><u>Chair still needed for March’s Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by 2nd Grade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is still a need for a 2nd grade parent to volunteer to organize the teacher appreciation luncheon in March. - Volunteers are responsible for requesting donations from 2nd grade families, deciding on a theme and setting up the meal. They can choose to co-chair the luncheon and choose the date in which they’d like to have the luncheon. - Teachers are really appreciative of these meals and it’s a great way to show them gratitude. <p><u>Board position open for the 2024-2025 school year</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interested in joining the PTO Board next year? Email us!! - Rachelle Picarello is leaving us. Her youngest is a third grader and moving on to LIS.
<p>Treasurer’s Report</p> <p>Kristen Paladino</p>	<p>*Please scroll to the end of the Meeting Minutes for Kristen’s Treasurer’s Report</p>
<p>Questions or Comments</p>	<p>Q: When will Shake Shack send the check from our fundraising event in November? A: Shake Shack’s corporate office required that the PTO submit a tax form before submitting a request for our donation check. This has been submitted. There is a 4-8</p>

All	<p>week processing period. We haven't received any further information and were not informed of how much was donated to our school.</p> <p>Comment (Mr. Hewitt): Thanks for gifts to teachers and staff!</p>
Next Meeting	Monday, February 12, 2024 at 7pm

1/4/24 Meeting Summary		
1. Collected \$8509 for Winter Teacher Clubs		
2. Holiday Shop Summary: Spent \$1161 (\$630.35 in December) on merchandise & supplies; deposited \$1419.		
3. Spent \$51 for Teacher Appreciation Event; \$89 for Amerikick Fundraiser and \$267 for Movie Night (partial)		
4. Paid \$120 for Operating Expenses, including \$99 for Annual Clover Service Fee.		
5. \$115 collected for Third Grade Party.		
FY Starting Balance:	\$	35,395.33
This Meeting's Balance:	\$	44,324.93

BFPTO2023-2024

BudgetCategories

Income Categories	22-23 Actual	23-24 Recommer	Actual 2023-2024	Dif
Cash Donations	\$ 3,222.26	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,200.00	\$ (800.00)
Coin Wars Income	\$ 1,226.75	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,556.60	\$ 556.60
Color Run Income	\$ 3,246.30	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 960.00	\$ (1,040.00)
Dine to Donate Income	\$ 1,750.58	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 557.60	\$ (942.40)
End of Year Carnival Income	\$ 5,054.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ -	\$ (4,500.00)
Fall Fest Income	\$ 1,454.50	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,348.90	\$ 98.90
Field Trip Offset Income	\$ 1,587.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ (1,500.00)
Fundraising Activity Income	\$ 3,629.61	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 724.00	\$ (1,876.00)
Insurance Refund/Reimbursements	\$ 1,590.20		\$ -	\$ -
No-Cost Fundraisers	\$ 143.49	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ (150.00)
Other Income	\$ 440.05	\$ -	\$ 125.35	\$ 125.35
Raffle/Gaming Income	\$ 351.50	\$ 300.00	\$ 1,468.50	\$ 1,168.50
Scholastic Book Fair Income	\$ 8,869.06	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 4,370.89	\$ (4,429.11)
Spirit Wear Income	\$ 9,643.41	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 3,495.30	\$ (5,504.70)
Teacher Clubs Income	\$ 36,808.55	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 17,807.25	\$ (12,192.75)
Third Grade Party Fundraising	\$ 1,074.11	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 370.00	\$ (630.00)
Trenton Thunder Income	\$ 2,895.00	\$ 2,750.00	\$ -	\$ (2,750.00)
Winter Event Income		\$ 200.00	\$ 1,419.00	

Expense Categories	Actual 2022-2023	Recommended	Actual 2023-2024	Dif
Assemblies	\$ 590.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 615.00	\$ 1,385.00
Bank Fees		\$ 160.00	\$ 83.88	
Coin Wars Expenses	\$ 46.77	\$ 50.00	\$ 36.00	\$ 14.00
Color Run Expenses	\$ 712.90	\$ 500.00	\$ 477.32	\$ 22.68
Day of Service	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
End of Year Carnival Expenses	\$ 2,944.42	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00
Fall Fest Expenses	\$ 1,175.39	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,240.33	\$ 9.67
Field Trips	\$ 3,526.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Fundraising Activity Expenses	\$ 1,056.20	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 628.43	\$ 921.57
Insurance Expenses	\$ 2,082.83	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Misc Family School Activities	\$ 426.95	\$ 700.00	\$ 149.39	\$ 550.61
Misc In-School Activities Expenses	\$ 87.36		\$ -	\$ -
Operating Expenses	\$ 593.22	\$ 825.00	\$ 679.77	\$ 145.23
Other Expenses	\$ 1,239.10		\$ 1,812.18	\$ (1,812.18)
PTO Gift to School		\$ 1,200.00	\$ 2,465.55	\$ (1,265.55)
Scholarships	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ -	
Scholastic Book Fair Expenses	\$ 6,865.49	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 4,803.99	\$ 2,696.01
Screen Free Week Expenses	\$ 396.71	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Spirit Wear Expense	\$ 8,421.03	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 2,236.75	\$ 6,263.25
Student Appreciation		\$ 500.00	\$ 97.52	\$ 402.48
Teacher Appreciation Activity	\$ 3,034.94	\$ 3,350.00	\$ 826.24	\$ 2,523.76
Teacher Club Expenses	\$ 21,417.81	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 5,506.44	\$ 16,493.56
Teacher Request Fund	\$ 1,495.24	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 756.51	\$ 743.49
Third Grade End of Year	\$ 5,073.06	\$ 4,370.00	\$ -	\$ 4,370.00
Trenton Thunder Expenses	\$ 1,848.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00
Trunk or Treat	\$ 103.29	\$ 200.00	\$ 161.61	\$ 38.39
Volunteer Appreciation	\$ 50.00	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 250.00
Winter Event	\$ 616.94	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,161.34	\$ (411.34)

Income Total	\$ 82,986.37	\$ 69,550.00	\$ 34,984.39	\$ (34,365.61)
Expenses Total	\$ 61,385.42	\$ 71,605.00	\$ 26,415.30	\$ 41,963.58
NET	\$ 21,600.95	\$ (2,055.00)	\$ 8,569.09	\$ (76,329.19)

Teacher Appreciation Monthly		
September	\$ 45.30	Welcome Basket for Hewitt
October		
November		
December	\$ 278.06	Gift Wrapping for Teachers/Staff
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
Total	\$ 323.36	
Budget	\$ 1,000.00	
Remaining	\$ 676.64	