

# Ben Franklin Elementary PTO

## February 2024 Meeting Minutes

**WHEN:** Monday, February 12, 2024

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

**PTO BOARD:** Megan Coopersmith, Petra Crevier, Rachele 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

<b>Topic and Spokesperson</b>	<b>Discussion Points</b>
<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Megan Coopersmith</p>	<p>- Board introduced themselves:</p> <p>Megan Coopersmith - PTO President, Petra Crevier - 1st VP, Rachele Picarello - 2nd VP, Nicole Bottrel - Corresponding Secretary, Ilana Hernandez - Recording Secretary, Kristen Paladino - Treasurer</p>
<p><b>Principal Update</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Hewitt</p>	<p>- Mr. Hewitt provided an update on the Multicultural Night student raffle winners. All of the students who won the raffle had lunch with Mr. Hewitt. They were able to bring friends with them and had fun.</p> <p>- In Mr. Hewitt’s newsletter, information was provided about the Preschool Expansion program happening in our district. Mr. Hewitt explained that the district has five years to utilize preschool expansion funding to complete its universe (approx. 500 preschoolers). Currently there are Pre-K classrooms at BF and LES. BF Teacher Danae Pesce is leaving to lead the new full day Pre-K program “Cardinal Kids” at LHS. Another Pre-K classroom is expected to open at Eldridge Park later this year. The goal is for all LTPS elementary schools to provide Pre-K so students can go to their zoned school. Mrs. Loren Sansone will be the new teacher replacing Mrs. Pesce at BF.</p> <p>- It was also noted that there have been conversations about other changes coming to the district in the future. Mr. Hewitt noted that two full grade levels (3K and 4K) will be added to each elementary school as part of the Preschool Expansion initiative. To make room, the hope moving forward is that elementary schools will have Pre-K to 2nd grade; LIS will have 3rd to 5th grade; LMS will have 6th to 8th grade; and LHS with 9th to 12th grade. These changes may begin in 2026/2027; still tentative.</p> <p>- Field trips for K to 2nd grade have been planned. Mr. Hewitt thanked the PTO for funding and securing bussing for the trips. Right now, he is securing nurses for the trips.</p>

	<p>- Moving forward, whenever there are outbreaks of contagious infections in the classroom, letters will go home notifying others in the class. These letters will be from the school nurse; this wasn't happening earlier in the year.</p> <p>- This month is busy. Valentine's Day and 100th Day of School are this week and classes will be celebrating. The 2nd grade concert is tomorrow, Feb. 13th. We are expecting inclement weather. If there's a delayed opening, the concert is planned to continue as usual. If there is a cancellation, the concert will be moved to Thursday, Feb. 15th.</p> <p>- St. Baldrick's is happening again this year. This will be Team Ben Franklin's 14th year participating in the event. Some team members will be shaving their heads in solidarity with children with cancer. Families are welcome to participate by having their heads shaved or donating. The shave event will be taking place on Friday, Mar. 8th in the All Purpose Room. Families are also welcome to attend the event at Amalfi's on Saturday, Mar. 9th at 11am.</p>
<p><b>PTO President Update</b></p> <p>Megan Coopersmith</p>	<p>- Planetarium Assembly is happening on Tuesday, Feb. 20th. For this assembly, a dome is set up in half of the gym. Throughout the day, presentations will take place inside the dome. Students will go inside the dome when scheduled. The presentations are grade specific so students will be attending by grade. The PTO is funding this assembly.</p> <p>- LTPS Community Conversation meeting is taking place on Wednesday, Mar. 6th from 7 to 8pm in the BF library. This is a district event where the superintendent and a few BOE members visit each school and have a meeting with families to get feedback. It is a great opportunity to learn about what is happening in the district and to have open dialogue. It is highly recommended that parents attend. RSVP is recommended but not necessary. RSVP <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>- The PTO provides teacher request grants, where teachers can request that the PTO pay for things that support their classes. A teacher request from Mrs. Leventhal and Mrs. Smoots was recently granted for Project Linus community service project for all 3rd graders and their families. This is an evening event where 3rd graders and their families will make blankets and donate to children in need. The PTO paid for materials, supplies and refreshments for this event, as requested.</p>
<p><b>Recaps</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Multicultural Night &amp; Holidays in Harmony Poster Showcase</u></p> <p>- Ilana Hernandez and Petra Crevier spoke.</p> <p>- The first BF PTO sponsored Multicultural Night took place on Wednesday, Jan. 17th. It was a great turnout and a fun night. Families were enthusiastic to share their cultures with one another. Lots of families brought more food than they signed up for. There were amazing display tables where students were able to visit and get passport stickers for their passports. Many students were dressed in cultural attire and four of them won a raffle for</p>

	<p>lunch with Mr. Hewitt. Overall, the night was a success and plans are being made for next year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BF families that weren't able to attend the event participated through the Holidays in Harmony Poster Showcase. Students were asked to create posters showcasing their favorite holiday. There was a high number of participants. The posters served as decorations for the Multicultural Night event.</li> <li>- Thank you to everyone who participated!</li> </ul> <p><u>Dine to Donate at Persis Biryani Indian Grill</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petra Crevier spoke.</li> <li>- The Dine to Donate event for the month of January took place on Jan. 24 &amp; 25. 15% of all proceeds will be donated to BF PTO.</li> <li>- The restaurant offered free dessert for all orders. The owners asked if they could do another event possibly next year.</li> </ul> <p><u>Movie Night</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kristen Paladino spoke.</li> <li>- Family Movie Night took place on Friday, Feb. 9th.</li> <li>- 160 people registered for the event. Approximately 20 more families showed up the day of.</li> <li>- Families watched the Super Mario Bros Movie. The PTO rented a popcorn machine. Freshly popped popcorn and concessions were sold at the event.</li> <li>- \$498 was spent on the event. \$475 was collected from admissions. Approx. \$400 was made from concessions. One blanket was sold. It appears that the event may have been profitable by \$413.</li> <li>- Moving forward, it will be best to keep students from wandering the school and to remain at the event.</li> </ul> <p><u>Warm Clothing Drive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petra Crevier spoke.</li> <li>- The PTO Warm Clothing Drive took place from Nov. 6th to Jan. 26th. All clothing items were donated to HomeFront. It was extended from Jan. 5th to Jan. 26th since HomeFront expressed a need for more warm clothes.</li> <li>- BF families donated five hauls of clothes to HomeFront. Photos were posted on social media. It was great to see how giving the BF community can be.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ongoing Events</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Winter Teachers Clubs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- Remember to send in change of dismissal notes when your child is attending a club. It makes it easier for staff to keep track of where the kids are expected to be after dismissal.</li> <li>- Winter clubs are wrapping up and most of them are expected to end by the end of February.</li> <li>- Spring teacher clubs are being planned now.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Upcoming Events</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by 1st Grade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- Teacher Appreciation Luncheon is taking place on Wednesday, Feb. 14th. 2nd grade parent, Krista Gervon, is coordinating this event.</li> <li>- The theme for the luncheon is “heart healthy.” 2nd grade families have contributed items, food and money to make this happen.</li> </ul> <p><u>Dine to Donate at Fedora’s</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petra Crevier spoke.</li> <li>- The Dine to Donate event for the month of February will be at Fedora’s Bistro Cafe on Wednesday, Feb. 21st.</li> <li>- The owners have requested that BF families not order via the app this day because they wouldn’t be able to track which orders are a part of the event. Customers can place their orders in person or by phone. The physical <a href="#">flyer</a> should be presented too. 20% of proceeds will be going to BF PTO.</li> </ul> <p><u>Science Night</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ilana Hernandez spoke.</li> <li>- Science Night will take place on Leap Day, Thursday, Feb. 29th from 6pm to 7:30pm.</li> <li>- In honor of Leap Day, the event will be space themed. Families will be able to complete 8 hands-on experiments, play games, and visit the 3rd grade science fair. Kids will get an “Astronaut in Training” sticker upon arrival.</li> <li>- 3rd graders are welcome to participate in the science fair by choosing to present a science project. Students can elect to do a project on any science topic. They are welcome to complete a project with a friend. All participants will receive a certificate and ribbon. If interested, parents should fill out this <a href="#">form</a>.</li> <li>- There is a need for volunteers to supervise the experiments. If interested, volunteers should sign up <a href="#">here</a>.</li> </ul> <p><u>“Leap Day” Student Appreciation Gift for All Students</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- Leap Day is Thursday, Feb. 29th. All students will be receiving a jumping frog to celebrate the day labeled with “Hoppy Leap Day.”</li> </ul> <p><u>Spring Teacher Clubs Sign-Up</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- Spring teacher clubs are being planned right now. Teachers have already signed up with what they’d like to do; all 10 slots have been filled.</li> <li>- An email with a preview of spring teacher clubs will be going out at the end of the month. The link to the sign-up will be sent out to families at the start of March.</li> <li>- Volunteers are needed to help take attendance and wait for teachers to pick up students for their club. Parent helpers are offered \$10 credit and a guaranteed spot in the club for their child.</li> </ul>
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	<p><u>Book Exchange</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rachelle Picarello &amp; Petra Crevier spoke.</li> <li>- In celebration of Read Across America week, the annual book exchange at BF will be on Friday, Mar. 1st.</li> <li>- Each year the PTO collects books for this event and sets up in the hallway all day. Students are able to peruse the book offerings and take some books home for them to keep. Last year, students were able to take 5 books each. It is uncertain how many books students will be able to take home this year.</li> <li>- Presently, the PTO is collecting books. There is a need for chapter books, specifically for the 2nd and 3rd grade students. Donated books should be in good condition. PTO asks that no religious books or books with toys in them be donated.</li> <li>- This event is in need of volunteers to sort books and help students pick out books throughout the day. A <a href="#">flyer</a> has been posted on social media requesting book donations.</li> <li>- FYI: book donations are welcome all year round.</li> </ul> <p><u>Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by 2nd Grade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- The Teacher Appreciation Luncheon sponsored by 2nd grade families will take place on Monday, Mar. 11th.</li> <li>- 2nd grade parent, Katie Milford, is coordinating this event. More information will be sent out to 2nd grade families via email.</li> </ul> <p><u>Spring Spirit Wear Sale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rachelle Picarello &amp; Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- Currently, the PTO is working on new designs for this upcoming spirit wear sale (one collegiate and one Amos Mouse design). Requests from teachers regarding having a more collegiate design were received. There have also been requests to offer hoodies and t-shirts made of dry fit material.</li> <li>- The goal is to have all orders in before Spring Break so that they can arrive after the break. Therefore, order forms are expected to go out to families at the end of this month.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Updates</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>3rd Grade Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kristen Paladino spoke.</li> <li>- The 3rd grade committee is responsible for planning the 3rd grade end of year party, purchasing yearbooks, and buying a class gift, usually a t-shirt.</li> <li>- The 3rd grade end of year party is partly funded by the PTO with the other half coming from fundraisers. The first fundraiser took place during the 3rd grade winter concert. VIP parking and front row seats were raffled off. The second fundraiser is the Charleston Wrap fundraiser, where students will do straight sales. There will be no prizes. If interested in supporting the 3rd grade party, consider shopping <a href="#">here</a>.</li> <li>- The 3rd grade party is taking place on Saturday, Jun. 15th from 2pm to 4pm. The theme is “level up.”</li> </ul>

	<p>- Chairs of Subcommittees: Megan Coopersmith - Party Subcommittee; Kim Gelb - Yearbook Subcommittee; Tacquice Davis - Class Gift Subcommittee</p> <p><u>Board Position Open for the 2024-2025 School Year</u></p> <p>- Rachelle Picarello, VP2, is leaving the board as her son is moving on to LIS.</p> <p>- Interested in joining the PTO Board next year? Email <a href="#">us!</a></p>
<p><b>Treasurer's Report</b></p> <p>Kristen Paladino</p>	<p><b>*Please scroll to the end of the Meeting Minutes for Kristen's Treasurer's Report</b></p>
<p><b>Questions or Comments</b></p> <p>All</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p>	<p><b>Monday, March 18th at 7pm on Zoom</b></p>

## 2/12/24 Meeting Summary

1. Paid \$2110 for Field Trips (this is all but 3rd Grade)
2. Movie Night Summary: Spent \$51 on supplies and deposited \$183 for pre-Admissions
3. Spent \$140 on Science Night (so far), \$312 on Multicultural Night and \$9 on Leap Day Goody for Students
4. Paid \$446 for PTO Insurance (annual)
5. Deposits: \$150 from Meatheadz; \$162 for Teacher Clubs (including one withdrawal)

## BF PTO 2023-2024

### Budget Categories

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	\$ 707.60	\$ (792.40)
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	\$ 907.00	\$ (1,693.00)
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	\$ 17,969.00	\$ (12,031.00)
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	\$ 6,110.00	\$ 1,890.00
Fundraising Activity Expenses	\$ 1,056.20	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 679.58	\$ 870.42
Insurance Expenses	\$ 2,082.83	\$ 500.00	\$ 446.00	\$ 54.00
Misc Family School Activities	\$ 426.95	\$ 700.00	\$ 289.41	\$ 410.59
Misc In-School Activities Expenses	\$ 87.36		\$ -	\$ -
Operating Expenses	\$ 593.22	\$ 825.00	\$ 679.77	\$ 145.23
Other Expenses	\$ 1,239.10		\$ 1,835.10	\$ (1,835.10)
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	\$ 106.51	\$ 393.49
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	\$ 1,473.06	\$ (723.06)

Income Total	\$ 82,986.37	\$ 69,550.00	\$ 35,479.14	\$ (33,870.86)
Expenses Total	\$ 61,385.42	\$ 71,605.00	\$ 29,194.38	\$ 39,184.50
NET	\$ 21,600.95	\$ (2,055.00)	\$ 6,284.76	\$ (73,055.36)



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		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 323.36</b>	
<b>Budget</b>	<b>\$ 1,000.00</b>	
<b>Remaining</b>	<b>\$ 676.64</b>	