

# Ben Franklin Elementary PTO

## November 2024 Meeting Minutes

**WHEN:** Monday, November 18, 2024

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

**PTO BOARD:** Megan Coopersmith, Petra Crevier, Lindsay Walsh, Nicole Bottrel, Ilana Hernandez, and Kristen Paladino

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

**START TIME:** 7:19pm **END TIME:** 8:08pm

<b>Topic and Spokesperson</b>	<b>Discussion Points</b>
<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Megan Coopersmith</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Board introduced themselves: Megan Coopersmith - PTO President, Petra Crevier - 1st VP, Lindsay Walsh - 2nd VP, Nicole Bottrel - Corresponding Secretary, Ilana Hernandez - Recording Secretary, Kristen Paladino - Treasurer</li> </ul>
<p><b>Principal Update</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Hewitt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Hewitt reminded families that conferences begin this week Thursday and end Tuesday. There will be early dismissal for students from this Thursday until Wednesday. Families are encouraged to have appropriate dismissal plans.</li> <li>- The Thanksgiving food drive collections have been extended until Friday, Nov. 22. The PTO is collecting turkeys to support the drive. This will benefit BF families.</li> <li>- On Nov. 12, students were able to take part in an assembly celebrating Veterans Day. 15 veterans were honored through song and poetry. It was a nice way to honor them.</li> <li>- At the start of the month, 3rd graders had the opportunity to talk to community leaders such as LTPS board members, the LTPS superintendent and Lawrence Township mayor; organized by Mrs. Smoots. Students were able to prepare questions to ask during the assembly. They learned about the election process and the duties of these leaders. 3rd graders were able to also campaign through posters and such for a service project that they hope to complete this year. On election day, all BF students filled out a ballot to choose which service project campaign to support. Ultimately, the veterans program was selected.</li> <li>- The Lost and Found is growing quickly. Families are encouraged to check to see if their child's belongings are there. Any item that is unlabeled and/or unclaimed will be donated after Winter Break.</li> <li>- Attendance: A new change this year is that parents can submit absences through the Genesis portal. Letters were recently sent home for students who had 5 or more absences</li> </ul>

	<p>(excused and unexcused). These letters will be sent out more regularly throughout the year. When it comes to excused absences, the district will label an absence as excused if there's a medical note; the state will mark all absences as unexcused, except for religious holidays and Take Your Child to Work Day, as the state tracks instructional time. Three tardies also count as one day absence. Letters sent home will include tardies as well.</p> <p>- Report cards will be posted to Genesis on Dec. 13.</p>
<p><b>PTO President Update</b></p> <p>Megan Coopersmith</p>	<p>- The first assembly of the school year has been booked with Eyes of the Wild. This is a presentation where a local expert brings in rescued wild animals and presents them to students. This is a popular assembly for the kids. There will be two back-to-back assemblies (K &amp; 1st grade; Pre-K, 2nd and 3rd grade) lasting from 45 min to 1 hour.</p> <p>- Right now, the PTO is having a turkey collection to support the school's thanksgiving drive. Families who receive a free supermarket voucher for a turkey and don't need it, please consider donating it to the drive. Smaller turkeys are preferred as it is easier for families to cook, especially in smaller ovens. In the past, the PTO has given extra donated turkeys to TASK.</p> <p>- The PTO is a volunteer run organization. To make events possible, volunteers are needed. Please reach out if you can help.</p>
<p><b>Recaps</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Trunk or Treat</u></p> <p>- Nicole Bottrel spoke.</p> <p>- Trunk or Treat took place on Saturday, Oct. 26. There were 20 trunks decorated and giving out treats to the children. There was an amazing turnout with hundreds of kids trick or treating.</p> <p>- For the first time, there were older kids not affiliated with BF who crashed the event. Apologies to trunks who had to deal with that. The PTO board is discussing plans of how to manage the event next year as we appreciate all our volunteers and their hard work to make the event what it is. We are hoping to avoid a check-in table to keep it a more casual event.</p> <p><u>Dine to Donate</u></p> <p>- Petra Crevier spoke.</p> <p>- This month's Dine to Donate was at Shake Shack on Nov. 6.</p> <p>- Due to a glitch, the PTO will not be receiving a check; instead Shake Shack will be donating a gift card worth \$100. This will probably be used for carnival raffles.</p> <p><u>Charleston Wrap Fundraiser</u></p> <p>- Petra Crevier spoke.</p> <p>- For this fundraiser, 259 items were sold resulting in a profit of \$1578.30, which will be donated to the PTO.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kids who sold a certain amount of items will receive chickens as prizes. These will be distributed to students in paper bags so the kids who didn't participate don't have to see prizes and feel bad.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ongoing Events</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Spirit Wear Sale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- The spirit wear sale will end Monday, Nov. 25. This is a firm deadline. There are new designs including the BF shield and Be Kind shirt.</li> <li>- Orders are placed with Aztec, which usually takes a couple of weeks to process. The goal is to get orders back to families before winter break if there are no delays from the vendor.</li> </ul> <p><u>3rd Grade Concert Raffle</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kristen Paladino spoke.</li> <li>- This year the PTO is bringing back this raffle for each grade's concert where families can enter for a chance to win front row seats and a parking spot.</li> <li>- 3rd grade families can enter through SignUp Genius, which will process payments. Each entry is \$5. The winner will be pulled on Dec. 2 with the concert being on Dec. 4.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Upcoming Events</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Fall Book Fair</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kristen Paladino spoke.</li> <li>- The fall Scholastic Book Fair will take place from Nov. 21 to 26. It will be fall themed.</li> <li>- Set up for the event that begins tomorrow. Students will be able to preview books and go home with a wishlist on Wed., Nov. 20. Families are under no obligation to buy what's on the list. Sales will take place during school hours and conferences from Thursday, Nov. 21 to Tuesday, Nov. 26.</li> <li>- On Saturday, Nov. 23, there will be a family and friends event with light refreshments. This will take place from 11am to 1pm in the BF gymnasium.</li> <li>- The PTO is participating in Share the Fair this year. It is a program where buyers can donate change from their purchase or other cash to be used to buy BF kids who aren't able to buy books at the fair.</li> <li>- A new change this year is e-wallets for all teachers. This will allow parents who can't physically shop the "teacher wishes" at the book fair to donate money towards teachers to contribute to their classroom library. Links to these e-wallets can be found in the PTO newsletter and letters that were sent home.</li> <li>- Volunteers are still needed for the Saturday event and preview day on Wednesday.</li> </ul> <p><u>Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by 3rd Grade Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> </ul>

- The first teacher appreciation meal sponsored by the 3rd grade will take place on Nov. 21. Krista Gervon, 3rd grade parent, volunteered to chair the event. It will be friendsgiving themed.
- This meal will take place on a late night of conferences. Krista was able to reach out to former BF parent, Sal Riccobono, whose catering company provided a discount for 8 trays of food. Sal Riccobono is offering BF families and staff a discount to order food for thanksgiving. Families interested should use the special promo code: Ben Franklin.

#### Turkey Trot Fun Run

- Lindsay Walsh spoke.
- The annual Turkey Trot fun run is taking place on Saturday, Nov. 23.
- Check-in begins at 10am with the run officially starting at 10:30am. Ms. Skorupa will be heading the warm up for runners this year.
- The registration deadline is Wednesday, Nov. 20. It is \$15 per runner; each registered runner will receive a medal.
- Families are welcome to enjoy refreshments after the run at the book fair taking place in the BF gymnasium.
- Teacher Experience raffles will be sold at this event. Winners will be pulled at the conclusion of the family and friends book fair event. Families can also enter the raffle during conferences as well. 20 experiences are being raffled off. Winners do not have to be present to win.

#### Winter Teacher Clubs

- Megan Coopersmith spoke.
- Winter club offerings and volunteer sign up are expected to be sent out to families at the end of November. Club registration will be in early December.
- Thus far, teachers have signed up. New winter theme clubs will be offered.
- For volunteers signing up to help, indicate in the comments the club your child would like to be in and sign up for the time slot you'd prefer.
- Clubs will start after the return from winter break.

#### Kids' Night Out

- Lindsay Walsh spoke.
- Kids' Night Out will take place Dec. 7 from 5:30pm to 8:15pm at Amerikick.
- Registration is \$20 per child; \$18 per child if registering multiple children.
- Registered children can be dropped off to enjoy karate activities, pizza, drinks and snacks while adults get to enjoy a night out. Siblings (4 years+) are welcome.

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	<p><u>Holiday Shop</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- The Holiday Shop will be open Thursday, Dec. 12 in the evening for students to shop with their families and Friday, Dec. 13 during the school day for students to visit with their class.</li> <li>- All items are \$1 to \$2. Students can shop for their family, friends and pets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Updates</b></p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Warm Clothing Drive for HomeFront</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petra Crevier spoke.</li> <li>- The warm clothing drive is ongoing until Jan. 13. Two hauls have been picked up so far. Presently, we are waiting to gather more donations before requesting another pick up.</li> <li>- We have been sorting through donations to find winter jackets, hats, gloves and boots to give to BF families. If you can, please put those items separately.</li> </ul> <p><u>3rd Grade Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Megan Coopersmith spoke.</li> <li>- The 3rd grade committee is responsible for planning the 3rd grade party, making the yearbook, and organizing the class gift. The PTO contributes \$400 each year towards this.</li> <li>- 3rd grade parents interested in joining should email Petra Crevier at <a href="mailto:bfptorocks@gmail.com">bfptorocks@gmail.com</a>. She will reach out soon so the committee can begin to organize.</li> </ul>
<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><b>Q:</b> For the thanksgiving drive, how many families need donations?</p> <p><b>A:</b> An email was sent out to families. So far, 10 responses were received. A total of 15 is expected (answered by Mr. Hewitt).</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Teacher club payments for clubs are going out soon as well as refunds for teacher club parent volunteers.</p> <p><b>Q:</b> Will there be another spirit wear sale after the fall sale?</p> <p><b>A:</b> Typically we have two sales each year. We may be testing an online shop for the spring through a third party vendor. There will be a sale but formatted differently.</p> <p>Thank you all for coming! Stay connected with us:</p>

	Ben Franklin PTO Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/BFLawrNj">https://www.facebook.com/BFLawrNj</a> Ben Franklin PTO Twitter: @bfpto Ben Franklin PTO website: <a href="http://bfpto.org/">http://bfpto.org/</a> Ben Franklin PTO email address: <a href="mailto:bfptorocks@gmail.com">bfptorocks@gmail.com</a>
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<b>Monday, December 16, 2024 at 7pm</b>

### 11/18/24 Summary

1. Collected \$405 for Fun Run vs. \$255 in Expenses (so far).  
Net income for Teacher Clubs (this period) was -\$197 due to refunds.
2. Paid for Chicks (\$475) and Trunk or Treat (\$150). Operational Expenses totalled \$145, which includes Signup Genius Membership, NJ Charity Registration and office supplies.
3. \$2.30 in Bank Fees; \$21.30 for Ice Cream Social Final Expenses; \$30 for Book Fair Expenses.
4. Made Deposit for Trenton Thunder Fundraiser (\$805).
5. Other Deposits: \$220 for Amerikick and \$160 in Cash Donations.

## Ben Franklin PTO 2024-2025

### Budget Categories

Income Categories	23-24 Actual	24-25 Recommer	Actual 24-25	Dif
Cash Donations	\$ 2,210.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,165.00	\$ 1,165.00
Coin Wars Income	\$ 1,556.60	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,454.53	\$ (45.47)
Fun Run Income	\$ 960.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 405.00	\$ (1,595.00)
Dine to Donate Income	\$ 1,823.83	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 167.60	\$ (1,632.40)
End of Year Carnival Income	\$ 4,171.70	\$ 4,500.00	\$ -	\$ (4,500.00)
Fall Fest Income	\$ 1,348.90	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,411.35	\$ 161.35
Field Trip Offset Income	\$ 1,216.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ -	\$ (1,200.00)
Fundraising Activity Income	\$ 2,113.50	\$ 5,100.00	\$ 634.00	\$ (4,466.00)
Insurance Refund/Reimbursements	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
No-Cost Fundraisers	\$ 18.10	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Income	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Raffle/Gaming Income	\$ 1,468.50	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 771.00	\$ (1,729.00)
Scholastic Book Fair Income	\$ 8,689.51	\$ 8,800.00	\$ -	\$ (8,800.00)
Spirit Wear Income	\$ 7,590.90	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 1,255.15	\$ (7,744.85)
Teacher Clubs Income	\$ 28,024.50	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 7,734.60	\$ (16,765.40)
Third Grade Party Fundraising	\$ 1,348.70	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ (1,000.00)
Trenton Thunder Income	\$ 2,652.00	\$ 2,750.00	\$ -	\$ (2,750.00)
Winter Event Income	\$ 1,419.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ -	

Expense Categories	23-24 Actual	24-25 Recommer	Actual 24-25	Dif
Assemblies	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Bank Fees	\$ 165.36	\$ 160.00	\$ 90.84	
Coin Wars Expenses	\$ 36.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 55.96	\$ (5.96)
Fun Run Expenses	\$ 477.32	\$ 500.00	\$ 255.10	\$ 244.90
Day of Service	\$ 237.72	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
End of Year Carnival Expenses	\$ 2,769.26	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00
Fall Fest Expenses	\$ 1,240.33	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,249.78	\$ 0.22
Field Trips	\$ 6,710.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Fundraising Activity Expenses	\$ 859.58	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 215.38	\$ 1,334.62
Insurance Expenses	\$ 466.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Misc Family School Activities	\$ 541.76	\$ 700.00	\$ 91.48	\$ 608.52
Misc In-School Activities Expenses	\$ 5.98		\$ -	\$ -
Operating Expenses	\$ 856.49	\$ 850.00	\$ 560.83	\$ 289.17
Other Expenses	\$ 1,838.72		\$ -	\$ -
PTO Gift to School	\$ 2,533.87	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Scholarships	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ -	
Scholastic Book Fair Expenses	\$ 7,399.64	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 30.12	\$ 7,469.88
Screen Free Week Expenses	\$ 269.87	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Spirit Wear Expense	\$ 5,560.95	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 436.95	\$ 8,063.05
Student Appreciation	\$ 289.07	\$ 500.00	\$ 63.59	\$ 436.41
Teacher Appreciation Activity	\$ 2,664.11	\$ 2,650.00	\$ 535.03	\$ 2,114.97
Teacher Club Expenses	\$ 16,341.24	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 894.74	\$ 13,105.26
Teacher Request Fund	\$ 1,165.45	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 475.00	\$ 525.00
Third Grade End of Year	\$ 5,205.15	\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00
Trenton Thunder Expenses	\$ 1,694.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 805.00	\$ 945.00
Trunk or Treat	\$ 161.61	\$ 200.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 50.00
Volunteer Appreciation	\$ -	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 250.00
Winter Event	\$ 1,547.33	\$ 1,400.00	\$ -	\$ 1,400.00

Income Total	\$ 65,292.74	\$ 16,998.23
Expenses Total	\$ 59,648.87	\$ 4,954.80
NET	\$ 5,643.87	\$ 12,043.43

Teacher Appreciation Monthly		
September		
October		
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
<b>Total</b>	\$	-
<b>Budget</b>	\$	400.00
<b>Remaining</b>	\$	<b>400.00</b>