

Ben Franklin Elementary PTO

March 2025 Meeting Minutes

WHEN: Monday, March 24, 2025

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: 7:03pm **END TIME:** 7:39pm

Topic and Spokesperson	Discussion Points
<p>Introductions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Megan Coopersmith</p>	<p>- 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</p>
<p>Principal Update</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Hewitt</p>	<p>- Mr. Hewitt was impressed with the PTO sponsored Multicultural Night event. It was an awesome experience for students, families and staff alike.</p> <p>- St. Baldrick's fundraising events at BF have come to an end. On March 14, shavees went bald and raised funds to bring awareness to childhood cancer. Students also had an opportunity to help raise money by taking part in Pie Day, where students were able to pie teachers and staff in the face. The Color Run organized by Mrs. Cimorelli accompanied by face painting with Ms. Skorupa took place on March 15. As a school, a total of \$3313 was raised.</p> <p>- Students were also able to partake in the Kids Heart Challenge in an effort to raise money for the American Heart Association. This fundraising event is spearheaded by the PE teachers and over \$1k was raised by BF students.</p> <p>- The month of March started off with Read Across America. To celebrate the love for reading, a chain link was created with books read by BF students and adults. It is hanging throughout the school and will continue through the end of the month.</p> <p>- Ms. Offery will be retiring this school year. Mr. Hewitt is in the process of hiring her replacement and hopes to have a person before the school year is up.</p>

	<p>- There will be three early dismissal days in April. Parent/teacher conferences are taking place from April 9 to 11. Please start putting together plans for early dismissal. Conferences in the spring are scheduled on an as needed basis and not mandatory.</p> <p>- Reminder: Attendance is marked as excused or unexcused based on NJ state guidelines. The state categorizes most absences as unexcused even with a medical note. The only exceptions are religious holidays and Take Your Child to Work day. This is because the state is tracking instruction time. Tardiness has also become more frequent as of late. Please try to be on time when possible.</p>
<p>PTO President Update</p> <p>Megan Coopersmith</p>	<p>- The PTO School Directory was updated and the file was emailed out to families who opted in. ONLY families that opt-in are included in the directory. If your family is not in the directory and would like to be added, an email should be sent out to Mr. Hewitt. The directory will continue to be updated as needed.</p>
<p>Recaps</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Book Exchange</u></p> <p>- Petra Crevier.</p> <p>- Book Exchange took place on Fri., March 7. There were sections this year: informational books, chapter books and multilingual books.</p> <p>- Each student was able to take up to 6 “new to them” books home.</p> <p>- The PTO collects gently used books all year long. Please consider donating any books to the PTO by dropping them off in the BF front entrance vestibule. If the books are too heavy to transport, reach out to the PTO and a pick up arrangement can be made.</p> <p>- Thank you to Ms. Skorupa and her students, who made bookmarks that were given to each student this year!</p> <p><u>Multicultural Night</u></p> <p>- Ilana Hernandez and Petra Crevier spoke.</p> <p>- The PTO’s 2nd annual Multicultural Night took place on Wed., March 12. There was lots of participation from families and staff this year.</p> <p>- There were 16 activity tables hosted by families in the BF airport (gymnasium); over 21 countries were represented in the dishes that were brought in by families in the Global Marketplace (all purpose room).</p> <p>- New this year was cultural performance showcases. 4 BF students performed on stage in the Global Marketplace. BF parent, Susan Iglesias, also volunteered to be the event’s DJ playing international music in the Global Marketplace and airport background music in the BF airport.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students received a boarding pass and passport upon arrival. Up to 60 students were able to get their passport photos taken as well. - There were two raffles: one for students dressed in traditional attire and one for adults participating in the event. Plus, flowers and books were given to the students who performed.
<p>Ongoing Events</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Spring Teacher Clubs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith spoke. - Spring teacher clubs began today, March 24. Please remember to always send in a change of dismissal note for every single day of club. It helps volunteers know what will happen with students for dismissal. It also makes the school secretary's job easier.
<p>Upcoming Events</p> <p>Respective Chairs</p>	<p><u>Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by 1st Grade</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ilana Hernandez spoke. - The 1st grade sponsored teacher and staff appreciation meal is taking place on Wed., March 26. It will be a spring brunch themed with dishes like chicken and waffles, french toast, bacon egg and cheese casserole, and mock mimosas. <p><u>Dine to Donate - Shake Shack</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petra Crevier spoke. - The Dine to Donate for March is taking place on Mon., March 31 at Shake Shack. - Make sure to use the code DONATE at the register or kiosk when ordering; 25% of the proceeds will be donated to the PTO. - There may be some issues when using the code on the app so it is preferred to use the Shake Shack website instead. <p><u>Spring Book Fair</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kristen Paladino spoke. - The Scholastic book fair for the spring will be taking place from April 8 to 11. Students will get a preview day in school on Mon., April 7. - Students will have an opportunity to shop during school hours on select days. Families can shop during conferences. - The Family and Friends event will take place on Thursday night. It will be baseball themed with hotdogs, nachos and cheese, and pasta salad available for families for free. There will be activities and door prizes as well. <p><u>Teacher Appreciation Meal Sponsored by Pre-K/Kindergarten</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petra Crevier spoke.

- The final teacher appreciation luncheon will take place on Thurs., April 10. The theme is “Picnic in the Park” following the book fair’s baseball theme.
- An email along with the signup genius link will be sent out to Pre-K and Kindergarten families soon.

Teacher Appreciation Weeks

- Megan Coopersmith and Petra Crevier spoke.
- Teacher Appreciation Weeks are taking place from April 28 to May 9.
- The first week is PTO sponsored with classroom supply restocks, free coffee and classroom books, catered lunch by Woodcraft Catering with former BF parent Sal Riccobono and raffles. Smoothies will possibly be donated as well.
- The second week is in line with National Teacher Appreciation Week. Homeroom coordinators will help classrooms celebrate teachers.

Screen Free Week

- Kristen Paladino spoke.
- Screen Free Week takes place from May 5 to May 9.
- The schedule is tentative and as follows:
 - Monday: Minute to Win It at BF
 - Tuesday: Arts & Craft + Library Card Drive at Mercer County Library
 - Wednesday: Rock Painting + Krisak’s K class selling lemonade at BF
 - Thursday: At Home Activity
 - Friday: Local playground playdate with ice cream truck (treats for purchase)

Carnival

- Megan Coopersmith spoke.
- The PTO annual carnival will take place on Sun., May 18 from 1pm to 4pm at BF.
- There will be inflatable games like axe throwing, basketball and skeeball. The Snake Guy will be returning with a reptile show. This is the last fundraising event of the year so there will be lots of raffles and cotton candy and snacks for sale.
- The event will take place outdoors in front of the school. In case of rainy weather, the event will take place indoors.

3rd Grade Committee

- Amanda Taglairino spoke.
- The 3rd Grade Committee has raised enough funds for the party, yearbook and gift.
- The yearbook subcommittee is in need of class photos and remaining student surveys for the yearbook.

Election for Board Positions Needed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith spoke. - The election for board positions will be held at the May PTO meeting. Nominations for the open positions open 10 days prior to the April PTO meeting and close at the end of the April PTO meeting. - The following positions are open with the following intentions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Megan Coopersmith intends to run for reelection for a second term of President. - Ilana Hernandez intends to run for reelection for a second term of Recording Secretary. - Nicole Bottrel intends to run for reelection for a third term of Corresponding Secretary.
<p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">Questions or Comments</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All</p>	<p>Q: Is school closed this upcoming Mon., March 31?</p> <p>A: Yes, schools are closed for students as teachers have Professional Development. There will be no school Mon., April 21 as well (answered by Mr. Hewitt).</p> <p>Thank you all for coming! Stay connected with us:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ben Franklin PTO Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BFLawrNj Ben Franklin PTO Twitter: @bfpto Ben Franklin PTO website: http://bfpto.org/ Ben Franklin PTO email address: bfptorocks@gmail.com</p>
<p>Next Meeting</p>	<p>Monday, April 28, 2025 at 7pm</p>

3/24/25 Summary

1. Collected \$8032 for Spring Teacher Clubs and paid \$69 for Winter Club Supplies.
2. 3rd Grade Fundraised \$393 this month (two more deposits to complete this week).
3. Upcoming Events Payments/Deposits: \$150 for a school Assembly, \$888 for Carnival, \$105 for Book Fair. \$46 for Website.
4. Paid for remaining Science Night expenses (\$105), partial Multi-Cultural Night payments (\$74) and \$58 for Student Appreciation.
5. Other Deposits: \$120 for Second Grade Concert Raffle; \$65 from Fall Scholastic Book Fair (oops!)

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	\$ 3,215.00	\$ 1,215.00
Coin Wars Income	\$ 1,556.60	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,454.53	\$ (45.47)
Fun Run Income	\$ 960.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 841.50	\$ (1,158.50)
Dine to Donate Income	\$ 1,823.83	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 376.76	\$ (1,423.24)
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	\$ 3,549.90	\$ (1,550.10)
Insurance Refund/Reimbursements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
No-Cost Fundraisers	\$ 18.10	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Income	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Raffle/Gaming Income	\$ 1,468.50	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,686.35	\$ (813.65)
Scholastic Book Fair Income	\$ 8,689.51	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 3,982.58	\$ (4,817.42)
Spirit Wear Income	\$ 7,590.90	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 4,913.03	\$ (4,086.97)
Teacher Clubs Income	\$ 28,024.50	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 24,879.20	\$ 379.20
Third Grade Party Fundraising	\$ 1,348.70	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 578.00	\$ (422.00)
Trenton Thunder Income	\$ 2,652.00	\$ 2,750.00	\$ -	\$ (2,750.00)
Winter Event Income	\$ 1,419.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 2,100.45	
Expense Categories	23-24 Actual	24-25 Recommer	Actual 24-25	Dif
Assemblies	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 840.00	\$ 1,160.00
Bank Fees	\$ 165.36	\$ 160.00	\$ 150.95	\$
Coin Wars Expenses	\$ 36.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 55.96	\$ (5.96)
Fun Run Expenses	\$ 477.32	\$ 500.00	\$ 429.78	\$ 70.22
Day of Service	\$ 237.72	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
End of Year Carnival Expenses	\$ 2,769.26	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 888.13	\$ 2,111.87
Fall Fest Expenses	\$ 1,240.33	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,249.78	\$ 0.22
Field Trips	\$ 6,710.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 4,650.00	\$ 5,350.00
Fundraising Activity Expenses	\$ 859.58	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 684.73	\$ 865.27
Insurance Expenses	\$ 466.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 487.00	\$ 13.00
Misc Family School Activities	\$ 541.76	\$ 700.00	\$ 418.99	\$ 281.01
Misc In-School Activities Expenses	\$ 5.98	\$ -	\$ 16.75	\$ (16.75)
Operating Expenses	\$ 856.49	\$ 850.00	\$ 769.78	\$ 80.22
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	\$ 2,103.55	\$ 5,396.45
Screen Free Week Expenses	\$ 269.87	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Spirit Wear Expense	\$ 5,560.95	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 3,852.52	\$ 4,647.48
Student Appreciation	\$ 289.07	\$ 500.00	\$ 121.29	\$ 378.71
Teacher Appreciation Activity	\$ 2,664.11	\$ 2,650.00	\$ 731.91	\$ 1,918.09
Teacher Club Expenses	\$ 16,341.24	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 9,978.45	\$ 4,021.55
Teacher Request Fund	\$ 1,165.45	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 563.25	\$ 436.75
Third Grade End of Year	\$ 5,205.15	\$ 4,578.00	\$ -	\$ 4,578.00
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	\$ 1,570.53	\$ (170.53)

Income Total	\$ 65,292.74	\$ 46,888.20
Expenses Total	\$ 59,648.87	\$ 27,992.82
NET	\$ 5,643.87	\$ 18,895.38

Teacher Appreciation Monthly		
September		
October		
November		
December	\$ 171.88	Chocolate Bar
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
Total	\$ 171.88	
Budget	\$ 400.00	
Remaining	\$ 228.12	