

**Brackett Elementary School
General PTO Meeting
Monday, November 26, 2018**

1. Welcome

2. Treasurer's Report

-Financially things are going well. PTO just approved two grant requests (outdoor games and art display boards), purchased books for SLC classroom. Trying to get funds into the classroom as much as possible. Actively looking for a new Treasurer.

3. Principal's Report

-Amy, cafeteria cashier, has cancer. Mrs. Z. is declaring Cafeteria Appreciation Week. A different grade will be responsible for a different day of the week. Let Mrs. Z. know if you have ideas about how to help her. The PTO has purchased a grocery store gift card for Amy.

4. Brackett's Rainbow Alliance Club

-Mrs. Calcaterra (4th grade). Looking for a safe space for elementary students to go to talk about themselves or their families. Open to grades 4 and 5, but have seen that there may be a need in 3rd grade as well. Students can attend all meetings or drop in. Club meets for 5 or 6 weeks every term. Had an AEF grant to start the Club. School Dept. has been very supportive and provides a teacher stipend. Potluck is in June.

5. PTO Committee Updates

a. Culture and Creativity Night

-Culture and Creativity Night went really well this year! Potluck and museum tables in the gym were well received. Share any feedback that you may have so that we can build upon next year.

b. Cultural Enrichment

- First graders are going to have a children's author come. There is an All School Assembly coming up – Tufts Beelzebubs– this is an a cappella performance. Spring will have more going on. Looking ahead, the committee is hoping to get more parents involved to support performances (i.e., a grade rep to take care of logistics with teachers).

c. Library/Book Fair

- Early morning reading program is running and people are coming. During conferences, there will be table set up for book sponsorship – parents can stop by and buy a book to donate to the library.
- Whitney Scharer has applied for an AEF grant for the One School, One Book project. The grant is to cover book purchases and materials for Brackett teachers to lead discussions about the book. Currently surveying teachers to see what book they would like chosen. Targeting January for reading. Kari suggested only purchasing one book per family.
- Book Fair went well. Raised \$2,500 that will go directly to the library to buy books.

d. Holiday Helper

- Holiday Helper program is run through the town. Brackett is sponsoring 21 kids this year. The program is going well so far. There are still more items that need to be purchased, so look at the lists if you haven't had the chance. Gifts are due on the December 3rd.

e. Annual Appeal

- Focus is not on the amount, but on percent participation. So far, 32 families have donated. It's the same families, year after year, who are donating. How can we push to get more families to donate? We need to get matching donations. Questions: Why was

November chosen? Would it make sense to open it up to grandparents, extended family? Is there a thermometer that we can use to advertise how many have participated? Would it be a good idea to have a separate thermometer for every grade? How can we make what we are funding more visible and promote it?

f. Winter Auction

- Late January-early February. Completely online with items donated by the Arlington and Brackett community. Solicitations will start going out this week. Tell Christina if you have ideas for donations. Michelle (K parent) owns a pilates studio and is interested in donating sessions. Other ideas included: ride to school in a fire truck or a police car.

g. STEM

- Rockets in October were successful with about 75 families showing up. Chemistry Week went well.
- Working on updating the STEM website off the Brackett website.
- On average, there are 15-20 students at Math Mornings.
- Created a chart with different languages on Cultural Night.
- Hour of Code is happening in January.
- STEM Night will happen in March.
- Need to buy three new egg incubators for chick hatching project. Wendy asked Garrett to email her with specifics.
- Next STEM meeting is December 12th at Robbins Library in the Community Room.

h. GIG

- Trying to recruit a couple of co-chairs.

i. Outdoor Space

- Line painting has been completed.

j. Movie Night

- A free Movie Night is being planned by Mary Wu and is happening on December 7th.

k. Art Squad

-Eric Holmes is trying to get parents involved in getting Art Squad back up and running.

I. Read-A-Thon

-It makes sense to do the Read-A-Thon in February. Gabi will work on getting a committee together. Gabi is open to getting ideas to how to go about running the Read-A-Thon.

6. New Business

a. School Picture Vendor Research

-A couple of parents are getting together to look at other alternatives for small, local picture companies. Picture companies need to be booked far in advance, so we need to work on this now to get a new vendor set for fall.

b. Call for Volunteers

-We need someone for ENews.