

# **Arnold Elementary PTA Board and Committee Meeting**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**November 19, 2013**

**6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

**Arnold Elementary Media Center**

1. Call to order
2. Welcome and Introductions
3. Approval of September 2013 Minutes
4. President's Report:
  - a. The Dad's Club and Green Team are working to create a Nature Play Space at the school. This is an area on school grounds, to the left as you walk up to the field, which will be available for students to play and explore in. The new play space will not be structural and will not be expensive because it will integrate natural components to help connect children to nature. The first task is to clear the area then see what sort of activities the area might lend itself to. The goal is to help children feel comfortable in nature.
  - b. The PTA is looking to create a Treasurer's Assistant position to assist with the Treasurer's duties and to regularly put another set of eyes on the PTA's finances. The Assistant would complete such tasks as writing thank you notes to donors and reviewing the financial reconciliation on a monthly basis. Anyone interested should contact the PTA President or Treasurer.
  - c. The President is researching quotes for cleaning up leaves in the parking lot and on the bus circle, but most services are fully booked until Christmas. The school janitor will try to collect the leaves, but he only has a blower so the leaves must be dry. Also checking to see if this can be a volunteer project for a group.
  - d. The President is requesting that if any Committee Chairs are planning to leave their positions next year it would be good to start cultivating their replacement now to make the transition as smooth as possible.
  - e. The PTA now has a page in the school newsletter to provide important information about PTA activities.
  - f. The President is looking into having conference call capabilities at the January PTA meeting so parents could call in to listen.
  - g. For additional fundraising, the PTA is discussing providing ad space in the school directory or create an Arnold Elementary business directory.
  - h. The President is looking into providing SchoolKidz back-to-school supply kits for purchase that will contain all of the supplies required for a child's classroom for their particular grade level. This was available in years past but got dropped. Kelley Miteff volunteered to head up the effort to start the service again.
5. Treasurer's Report:
  - a. Between walkathon donations and direct donations, \$9,353 has been raised for this school year.
  - b. 2011-2012 taxes and charitable solicitations report was submitted

- c. Most PTA activities for 2013-2014 are proceeding as planned, according to budget.

6. Principal's Report:

- a. A new sewer line is required for the new housing development on Ritchie Highway, bordering the school. Since the sewer line must run through school property, the builder is also connecting AES to city sewer, to replace its current septic system. The sewer line connection is currently under construction.
- b. The County Council funded a feasibility study for improvement of AES, which is underway. The architect is working with a committee of the AES Principal, parents, community members, the PTA President, and others to evaluate everything about the school to determine what action should take place – minimal renovation, major renovation, or complete rebuilding. The committee wants to put its recommendation before the School Board in February so the feasibility study is expected to be completed sometime in January. After the February School Board meeting we will know if the result of the study is to recommend renovation or rebuilding. Public support from AES families is not needed until the proposal goes to the City Council.

7. Committee Reports:

- a. Membership: PTA currently has 224 paid members, representing 123 families and 15 teachers/staff members.
- b. Walkathon: The walkathon went well and raised over \$8,000 to fund PTA Capital Projects. Some last minute corporate sponsorships were received, but next year the PTA plans to solicit these sponsorships earlier. Although planned for spring, the Walkathon was moved back to the fall to allow 5<sup>th</sup> grade families to benefit from their donations and to ensure PTA's funds are able to support activities throughout the year, rather than needing to wait until spring for the largest cash flow. It was agreed the November timeframe worked well, rather than the early fall of previous years when so much is happening at the start of the school year.
- c. Wellness: A new wellness committee has been formed that will be looking at ways to bring more health and fitness opportunities to the students. The committee is currently exploring options with the Nutrition Initiative at Annapolis Pediatrics to introduce nutrition instruction into the school.
- d. Holiday Secret Shop & Breakfast with Santa: This event is coming together, but the event is low on volunteers. The Secret Shop Chair is using a Sign-up Genius online program for volunteers and is looking at ways to make the process more seamless. A link to the sign-up site is going to be included on the PTA website and a tiny url created to put on a flier.
- e. Cultural Arts: The Chair has booked assemblies so far through February. The Artist in Residence has been paid and we are now waiting to hear on grants from the State and County to support the assemblies and Artist in Residence program.
- f. Yearbook: The committee is just getting started and will have a meeting November 21 to assign pages. A Shutterfly share site has been set up for uploading pictures of school events. Instructions for how to join the share site will be going out to parents.

- g. Snowflake Dance: The date of the dance is February 7, with a backup date of February 21 in case of snow. The first planning meeting is set for December.
- h. Fall Festival: The fall festival went very well and made a small profit.
- i. Giant & Safeway: No update.
- j. Spirit Wear: The Treasurer noted that there is quite a bit of fall inventory left, so it was suggested Spiritwear should definitely be available during the Holiday Breakfast / Secret Shop in December and maybe also for Kindergarten registration in the spring to catch families enthusiastic about starting a new school.

8. Old Business: None

9. New Business:

- a. Now that funds have been raised, the PTA needs to decide what it wants to do with the money, which totals about \$9,000 for the year. Ideas discussed include:
  - i. Investing in a video recorder and tripod to tape school events then provide it to parents on DVD. This will eliminate the problem with staff using inadequate equipment, and will help address the problem of parents all trying to capture the performance on their phones/tablets. The equipment could also be used to record morning announcements and play them back on the classroom smart boards.
  - ii. Purchasing six iPads and six GPS units for use in the STEAM lab. Mr. Kovacs has requested a grant for these items, but if the grant doesn't come through, PTA could help out.
  - iii. Purchasing a smart board for the STEAM lab. There is no smart board in the STEAM lab, which is the last classroom in the school without one.
  - iv. Purchasing laptop computers for classroom use. Classrooms currently have two desktops each, plus the computer lab, but it would be nice to have laptops for group work.
  - v. Sponsor a Talent Show in the spring to build confidence and expose students to the arts. The President is going to talk to someone at Broadneck Elementary, which holds a talent show, about what this might entail.
  - vi. Support for the Nature Play Space discussed in the President's report.
  - vii. Additional ideas should be submitted to the PTA President.
- b. The use of funds will be determined within the next several months.

10. Announcements:

- a. Wellness Warrior awards were presented to four PTA members: Susan Noble for Hero Boys, Lori Coogan for Hero Boys, Tiffany Dean for Girls on the Run, and Dawn Pattarini for Fit Kids.
- b. Next Meetings:
  - i. January 14, 2014 at 6:30 pm
  - ii. March 25, 2014 at 6:30 pm
  - iii. May 13, 2013 at 6:30 pm

11. Meeting Adjourned