

## **SMPTO Meeting Minutes**

**September 12, 2012**

**Iron Forge Educational Center-Library**

**Meeting time from approximately 7:00 p.m. until 8:20 p.m.**

### **I. Call to order/Welcome by Susan Ritter, President**

**Sixteen parents were present, both principals, Mrs. Trostle and Ms. Kuhn, W.G. Rice Teacher Representatives and Miss Strawley and Mrs. Sunday, Iron Forge Teacher Representatives. The board, with the exception of Elizabeth Meikrantz, Co Vice-President Rice, were present.**

**a. Susan mentioned to the attendees the SMPTO was distributing free packets, containing food, coupons and information from PTO Today.**

### **II. Parent Survey**

**a. Susan explained that SMPTO board is always seeking input and feedback regarding the programs/activities/fundraisers sponsored throughout the year. The two-page survey was distributed prior to the meeting. Parents were asked to complete the survey and return at the close of the evening.**

### **III. Principal Reports**

#### **Mr. Boley**

**a. Opened by joking with the parents that no child was lost the first week of school.**

**b. Thanked the SMPTO for the purchase of a popcorn machine at Rice. Iron Forge already has a popcorn machine, typically used for Groovy Movie events. However, the purchase of the popcorn machine at Rice allows additional opportunities for staff/students to use throughout the school year, including May Fair.**

**c. In addition, to it being the first weeks of school and new bus routes, parents were reminded that construction at the intersection of Route 34 and 174 is causing buses to be delayed. However, “pretty soon” the bus times should fall back on schedule.**

**d. Rice students partake in the “Every Bubbler CARES” program . Compassion-Assertion-Responsibility-Empathy-Self-Control –those are**

the components of CARES. Students are recognized and rewarded with a sticker and hearing their name on the morning announcements for modeling their behavior in that fashion. Parents were told the students enjoy the program and take great pride in receiving the recognition for their hard work in upholding the program's values. More information regarding the program can be found on the Rice homepage.

e. During the week of September 17<sup>th</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup>, teachers/administrators will be conducting the Easy CBM (Curriculum Based Monitoring) on all the students. A school-wide screening, conducted in one-minute probes, three times each year, the CBM allows teachers/administrators to gauge students' academic growth.

f. Rice holds four to six Pre-K events each year for students entering Rice the next school year. Further information regarding those events is available on the Rice webpage and by calling the school.

#### Mrs. Adams

a. Explained that South Middleton School District, unlike other local school districts, only has one elementary school. However, the elementary grades are separated in two buildings. Rice instructs students in grades K-3 and Iron Forge instructs students in grades 4-5.

b. Iron Forge takes great effort to prepare the students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for the transition to Iron Forge. Also, teachers/administrators work with students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade to prepare for their eventual move to middle school. The school counselors are actively involved with preparing/screening and guiding the students through these transitional periods.

c. Walking Club began today, September 11, 2012. Volunteers are needed and grandparents or retired individuals always make great volunteers for this program. The Walking Club is open to students in both 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade during their recess period. Parents help by passing out popsicle sticks and recording the number of laps students walk each lunch period. At the end of the school year, students are recognized for the number of laps walked .

d. Groovy Movie is an event open to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, held approximately three or four times each year. Students vote on the movie they would like to watch. The movie is viewed after school on a Friday in the school cafeteria. Parent volunteers are needed to help chaperone and pass out drinks and snacks to students attending. Students are reminded to bring

a beach towel or blanket if needed to sit on the floor during the movie. The movies typically end around 5:15 p.m. and parents are responsible for arranging for their child's pick-up.

e. The Iron Forge Halloween Party will be held this year on Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Students arrive in costume. Parent volunteers/chaperones also come in costume. The Iron Forge Halloween Party "is probably known throughout the county as the best Halloween party". The party is age appropriate. The students can dance along to the DJ, enter the pumpkin carving contest, win a prize for best costume, sample wonderful treats and visit the Haunted Hallway as often as they like. Volunteers are needed so sign up on SMPTO's webpage.

f. The Iron Forge teachers, unlike at Rice, work on three teams in each grade comprising of either two or three teachers. Parents are encouraged to contact Mrs. Adams should they ever have any questions.

#### IV. Open Floor

a. A parent inquired as to the policy for parents in the military to receive a security clearance to volunteer/chaperone trips/etc... The issue is the lack of physical addresses for military personnel previously stationed overseas. The military addresses typically consist of a P.O. Box. However, prior physical addresses are needed to complete the form. Mr. Boley noted the security clearance is needed for parents that will encounter one-on-one involvement with a student, such as the case of a field trip. Both Mr. Boley and Mrs. Adams stated once a parent completes a security clearance the clearance is honored during the student's tenure in both schools. Mr. Boley told the parent he has never previously encountered an issue with military parents obtaining security clearances and he will look into the matter.

b. A parent, after viewing the questions on the Parent Survey, stated they felt guilty for having the SMPTO use monies to subsidize the lower cost of the yearbooks and the student field trips. Currently, the SMPTO provides \$10.00 for each child in Rice and Iron Forge to offset the cost of their field trip. In addition, monies are given to both schools to offset and lower the cost of student yearbooks. The board suggested that if the parent felt compelled they could always make a donation to the SMPTO in the amount of the field trip or yearbook. Jen Varner has tax donation forms.

c. Mr. Boley confirmed for one of the parents that the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students will sing and have recorded the National Anthem, which will be played each morning during announcements. Mrs. Adams noted the 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Iron Forge do the same thing.

d. Mr. Boley confirmed the 1<sup>st</sup> graders this year will partake in the Christmas Concert and next year 3<sup>rd</sup> graders will participate.

**V. Correspondence-Kerrie Truax**

a. The SMPTO received several thank you notes from teachers for both the \$50.00 given to each teacher to use for classroom supplies and for the back-to-school student luncheon.

**VI Treasurer's Report –Jen Varner**

a. The SMPTO worked during the 2011/2012 school year to obtain tax exempt status. The paperwork verifying our status was recently received.

b. In prior years, the SMPTO has not had a budget that included projecting for savings. Presently, the SMPTO budget for the 2012/2013 school year is \$37,250 with \$37,225 projected to be spent on activities/programs for the students /teachers and school. The SMPTO budget is based on prior year's earnings and deductions. The fundraiser held in the fall has historically risen between \$22,000 and \$25,000. The success of the fall fundraiser and all fundraisers held throughout the school year support all of the programs/activities to be funded. The spring fundraiser in 2012 raised approximately \$10,000. The SMPTO opened a savings account and was able to place approximately \$15,000 in the account. This money is set aside in the event fundraisers during this school year would falter and programs could continue to be funded.

c. The SMPTO checking account balance is presently \$15,577.26 and the savings account is \$15,000.

d. Jen explained SMPTO helps to offset the costs of field trips and student yearbooks, purchases Spirit Gear for students to buy, funds the Secret Santa Workshop, Breakfast with Santa, the Iron Forge Halloween Party, Groovy Movies and teacher grants.

e. SMPTO received money this month from purchases made through our website at Amazon and the sale of Spirit Gear items. SMPTO had expenses this month for SMPTO liability insurance, the SMPTO domain

name on the web, the start-up of the Spirit Gear inventory, teacher gifts, and teacher appreciation luncheon.

f. A virtual suggestion box is now active on the SMPTO webpage under Forms.

## VII. Committee Reports

### Spirit Gear

a. Jes Hughes is the chairperson responsible for selling Spirit Gear. Spirit Gear is sold in the half-hour prior to the start of the Rice Halloween parade and at various school events, including the Pre-K events and the November Book Fair held at Rice during parent-teacher conferences. Parents may also visit the SMPTO website and obtain Jes' contact information to place orders. Samples of the Spirit Gear products are available for viewing in the lobby of each school.

### Box Tops

a. Meryl O'Brien is the chairperson of Box Tops. Last year, Rice and Iron Forge received \$9,300 in money from Box Tops due to the collection of 93,000 box tops!!!!!! Since school started, Meryl reported she has received approximately \$800 in box tops. Contest information for both schools will go home in the next week or two, in advance of the first collection date to the company on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Keep collecting those box tops and encourage family members and friends/neighbors to join in. Maybe this year we will top \$10,000!!! Meryl is always looking for contest ideas!

c. SMPTO continues to use "Time To Sign-Up", an online database found on the SMPTO website that allows parents to sign-on and volunteer for different activities/events held throughout the school year.

d. SMPTO is in need of chairs for:

#### Groovy Movies

Secret Santa Workshop (one than one chair is always welcome as this is a huge-but completely gratifying event)

Coralita Wilson, Vice-President, Iron Forge, is in need of committee persons for Food, the Haunted Hallway and Contests/Games.

e. SMPTO always needs volunteers for the following events:

Gertrude Hawk Candy Counting on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

Book Fair at Rice (after school/evening in November)

Walking Club

Secret Santa Workshop

Breakfast with Santa (December 15, 2012)

## **VIII New Business**

### **Gertrude Hawk Candy Sale**

a. The Gertrude Hawk Candy Sale will run from September 28, 2012 through October 19, 2012. Again, approximately 10 or 12 volunteers are needed from 9:00 a.m. until approximately 1:00 p.m. to help count the candy orders. Gertrude Hawk provides lunch for the volunteers.

b. This year the prizes for Gertrude Hawk top sellers will be different. Gertrude Hawk is no longer selecting the prizes given. Instead, a portion of SMPTO's net earnings through this event will award one lucky top seller a \$250 Visa gift card. There will also be (5) \$50 Visa gift card winners. Each \$50 increment in sales or donations is an entry into the contest.

### **Girls On The Run**

a. This program is open to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls. If spots are available, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade girls may also participate. This program is led by two parent volunteers that meet with the girls each Monday/Wednesday after school. The girls are taught to work on character and self-esteem, while at the same time training and preparing for a 5K run in December that will conclude the program.

## **IX Open Floor**

a. A parent suggested the use of Christmas gift survey for the teachers. The parent had a copy of the form they saw previously used and agreed to forward it to the SMPTO. The survey asks teachers questions about favorite color, scent, restaurant etc... thus allowing interested parents some direction in purchasing a gift for their child's teacher.

b. A parent suggested that SMPTO look into a "Race for Education" fundraiser instead of selling chocolate. Susan noted SMPTO has reviewed this option over the past few years but has not participated due to the time

and parent volunteers needed to successfully run the event. However, SMPTO is still trying to see if this fundraiser could work in both schools.

c. A parent suggested SMPTO outsource for volunteers (high school/college students). Susan explained SMPTO already uses high school students, the Interact Club, to help with babysitting during the meetings and several other high school groups for Mayfair.

d. A parent brought flyer information for a company that SMPTO could use to purchase the items used for the Secret Santa Workshop. The SMPTO will review the information to see if that is an option.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m. The next SMPTO meeting will be held October, 11, 2012, in the Library at Iron Forge. Babysitting will be provided by the Interact Club.

**Kerrie Truax**  
**Secretary, SMPTO**  
**September 24, 2012**

**PENDING APPROVAL AT 10/11/12 MEETING**