West Middle School PTO Meeting - Draft: To Be Approved 10/13

Meeting started at 7:03

The attendees introduced themselves (35 participants dialed in) and their children at West Middle.

**Voting of Positions**

* Lisa Tarter - President
* Liza Lampi – VP Communications
* Pamela Hermann & Jeanna Gossett – Co-VP Fundraising Chairs

Motion made by Michael Bertz, Kim Henneke seconded. Vote held by show of hands. Motion passed.

* Meeting recorded and participants have the option to turn off the video
* Looking for someone to shadow the treasurers and take over for next year.
* We are looking for a secretary if anyone is interested.

Many ways to stay connected: Membership Toolkit, Parkway Website, Facebook and Longhorn Way.

* Parkwaywestmiddle.membershiptoolkit.com – can register 6th graders or new students. Or if a returning student, then should already be enrolled.
* If in Infinite Campus, can download the app to your phone.

Intro on Changes to PTO Events/Fundraisers:

* Working hard to change some of our events to a virtual

Liza Lampi - VP of Communications – Report on Virtual Campaign

* Event planner by career and has pivoted to virtual quickly
* PTO Board is brainstorming ideas and trying to be strategic with approach
* Mission statement: “Create opportunities to meet people, create a sense of belonging and have fun while utilizing an online platform.”
* Three focus areas: 1) kids 2) school teacher and administration, 3) parents
* Would appreciate any volunteers with experience with virtual tools

Anne Branch – Community Report

* Not going to try to make a mixer over zoom. (In the past, would have a hang out session/party on a Friday – one for 6th grade and one for 7th/8th.)
* Would like to create an opportunity this fall for kids to have a virtual event they can tune into and maybe participate directly in or observe
* Create an online event “Middle School is Tricky” where students submit videos: 1) making a trick shot 2) bottle flips 3) and pet tricks. Seeking a volunteer to edit the videos together and will hire a comedian to emcee. Then will have a live showing with voting and fun categories and delivered prizes.
* For teachers, we are planning appreciation ideas like online cards that students can sign. Looking for ideas from teachers that they might need funding for in the form of one of our grants. **Seeking a Teacher Appreciation Chairperson.**
* For parents, we’re looking to have seasoned parents that will reach out to parents of new students and incoming 6th graders.

Fundraising Report – Jeanna Gossett/Pamela Hermann

* Will need to change some of the fundraising and reinvent them in this environment.
* Planning on direct giving and spiritwear.
* Other ideas (these could be fundraisers or not): a virtual 5K, a reading or other athletic competition. Yard signs like the high school is doing. Trivia night and/or auction could be virtual. Community nights at local restaurants with takeout. Family Feud style game.
* Welcome any ideas for other fundraising ideas
* Suggestion from Nisha Rajagopal: “What’s Cooking?” It was a cultural and food tasting event.
* Dr. Annie Miller: there will be some events that PTO hosts and ones that the school will put on. The staff is working on some ideas such as a Talent Show or Culture Night. Focused on letting teachers get the virtual learning rolling before taking that on. Web leaders who held event with new 6th graders will have another event to get new students familiar with the school. When we do come back to school, there will likely be limitations on assemblies, field trips, etc. There is a group of students forming a film crew such that band, choir, orchestra could be filmed
* Direct Giving Campaign has kicked off and can donate through the Membership Toolkit.
* Spiritwear – looking at options for online ordering and direct shipping.

Treasurer’s Report – Michael and Gretchen Bertz

* Fiscal Year runs July 1 – June 30.
* All closed and will be filing year end statements soon.
* Strong year last year with great fundraising and forced underspending due to many events cancelled that normally occurred after spring break. There were quite a bit of reserves coming into the new year.
* Should focus on investing in the activities that build community and engage the students.
* $64K in bank account, including funding for canopy (bid at $10K)
* 2020-2021 – not a roadmap set in stone but a flexible budget and conservative reflection of direct giving, spirit ware and online trivia night. Still leaves room for grants and other expenses.

Discussion on Canopy

* In the upper field, there is an outdoor classroom space with some benches but underutilized due to lack of shade. So there was a need for a canopy which is especially helpful for social distancing when we return to school. The canopy provides a shaded space. Also looks nice and colorful and will last a long time.
* $9,950 was the last bid and was included in the 2019-2020 school budget.
* Kim Henneke moved that we approve $10K for a shaded canopy. Michael Bertz seconded. Voted and motion passed.

Dr. Annie Miller – Principals’ Report

* Remember to reach out to your Principal or grade level administrator with questions. Grades are starting to appear, and parents should encourage the children to contact their teachers if they have questions.
* Teachers are concerned about if students are engaged because cameras aren’t on. Cameras are not required because students may not be comfortable or may limit bandwidth. Encourage parents to talk to children about being engaged
* Trying to keep the community intact and provide a really strong curriculum.
* Around September 17th, the district will re-survey for the preferences on virtual vs. in-school. The submissions will be due September 24th and default to prior decision if there is no selection submitted.
* Some questions raised as Rockwood as potentially transitioning K-1 back to the classroom. In Parkway, planning to stay with virtual plan through October 24th
* Some of the open items such as school pictures will be determined after October.
* Children can still check out books. Secretary and administrator are there every day and school is open. Will figure out a way do spirit wear even if pickup process is needed.
* Doing health checks and contact tracing for anyone in the building.
* As mentioned in Longhorn Way, mean stuff on social media regarding secrets being shared. Encourage the parents to talk to students about managing the social media world.
* Meeting routinely with admin and teachers to review what children are learning and what they need to know. Also meeting with counseling team. Challenge to meet only virtual for long days of meetings. Team is holding up well. Great group of teachers.
* Will try to get after school activities underway but initially focused on tutoring and intervention. Also trying to get groups to meet that need assistance from social workers and counselors.
* Parent teacher conferences will be the week of Sept 28th and Oct 5th? There will be limited spots and need to try to focus those meetings for those parents who are struggling getting kids online. Unsure about Spring conferences which are usually student-led.
* Thank you for the attendance and please continue to come back to future PTO Meetings. Great to see new and returning faces.

Open Topics

* Motion to nominate Nisha to the position of Secretary by Pamela Hermann, seconded by Kim Henneke. Voted and motion passed.
* Request for Academy to be added to Membership Toolkit. They will exist as their own team.
* Fundraising idea from Kim Henneke: front door decorating (similar to locker), could be part of Spirit ware
* How can best share contact information? It was recommended we could add in chat.
* Dr. Miller will post a video of the PTO Meeting in Longhorn Way.

Thank you for coming. Next PTO Meeting is Tuesday, October 13th.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm