

Auburn Elementary PTO Minutes

September 12, 2016

Attendance

Stephen Sevener (Principal), Ashley Nowak, Amanda Vantol and Nicole Peters (PTO co-coordinators), Elizabeth Garchow (PTO co-coordinator and Secretary), ThresaAnne Klepser (Treasurer), Karen Rauschenberger (teacher) and 7 parents.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Nowak welcomed everyone to the first PTO meeting of the year and introductions were made by all attendees. Nowak provided a brief explanation of the PTO board roles.

Secretary's Report

Meeting minutes from May, 2016, the last PTO meeting of the 2015/2016 school year, were reviewed and approved. A motion was made by T. Klepser and was seconded by K. Rauschenberger. All approved.

Treasurer's Report

The budget was presented and based on carryover from the 15/16 school year every line item is fully funded. The final sets of lockers were paid for at the end of the year, leaving approximately \$10,000 left in the budget to start this school year. There was no activity or report to review. A motion was made by K. Retzloff and was seconded by K. Rauschenberger. All approved.

PTO Coordinators' Report

- The structure of the PTO board was explained more thoroughly. In previous years, the board has been headed by two co-coordinators. This school year, instead of 2 coordinators, there will be 4 co-coordinators, allowing duties and planning to be more evenly dispersed (daytime and evening coordinators). This will help make things more manageable, dividing responsibilities into during and after school hours. In addition, this will make your PTO coordinators easily accessible should there be questions or concerns that need to be addressed. The PTO co-coordinators are Ashley Nowak and Amanda Vantol handling after school items, and Elizabeth Garchow and Nicole Peters handling during school items. As always, please email any questions, concerns or suggestions to auburnpto@bcschools.net.
- Last year's fundraising focus was getting lockers for all of the classrooms. That goal was met, allowing us to find a new focus for the 16/17 school year. This year, our focus is on technology. The long-term goal at Auburn Elementary is to be a one to one environment where a Chromebook or mini iPad is available at school for every student to use. This is a cost of approximately \$9,750.00 per classroom. Just as we did with lockers, we have set a short-term goal to help us work up to the 1-to-1 Chromebook/mini iPad plan. We are starting with the goal of 5 Chromebooks/mini iPads per classroom this school year, in

every grade. Eventually, we will add a charging station per grade level. Current costs of chromebooks are approximately \$325 and iPad are around the same at approximately \$330. Kindergarten and 1st grade will be getting mini iPads, which are better suited to students in these grade levels, and 2nd-5th will get Chromebooks.

- Auburn Elementary currently has a BYOD (bring your own device) policy in place. This allows students to bring their own device to use with teacher/parent permission and if a device is available. 4th and 5th grades are currently making use of this policy in their classrooms.
- Subway cards are once again available to purchase. These cards are \$10 each and each card contains coupons for: 10 BOGO free footlong subs, 2 BOGO 50% off platters, 2 free soup with purchase of footlong sub and 2 free double meat on a footlong sub. They have no expiration date. These cards make wonderful teacher gifts, stocking stuffers, or just a great card to have in your wallet on your lunch break or on your way home for dinner. Please stop in the office at any time to purchase your cards or to pick up a flyer.
- Smart cards are available again this year. These coupon booklets offer deals all over the tri-cities, with savings of over \$3000. A new addition to the booklets this year is coupons to Snow Snake for skiing and zip-lining! Please stop in to the office to purchase your smart cards, or to place your order for multiple cards for friends and coworkers. These also make wonderful stocking stuffers, and are good until November of 2017! Flyers will be sent home in the next few weeks.
- Picture day is Friday, September 30. Come dressed to impress and show off those beautiful smiles!
 - This year, Auburn's own *Harbour Light Photography* will be taking pictures for picture day. They will be hosting the photo booth for our Harvest dancetoo. Thank you *Harbour Light Photography* for adding us to your busy schedule.
- Our annual Fall Fundraiser began last week. Packets came home with students containing this year's item brochures, a parent letter, order form and prize brochure. This fundraiser is our most important of the school year, as all of the funds go directly to our teachers to allow them to purchase supplies for their classrooms. In addition to the teachers' funds, the company also provides all of the games and prizes for our Fun Fair held later in the year, as well as the bounce houses we use for Fun Fair and Field Day. We are extremely grateful to Debbie Zanotti for coordinating this for us again this year.
 - Fall Fundraiser ends September 22. Please make sure all orders are turned in to the school by that date.
 - A new feature we've learned about this year is online ordering. Many parents asked about being able to place orders online for family and friends too far away to order in person. To register your child to accept orders online, please visit www.fundraisingcoofamerica.com and click the link to register as a parent. Fill out the information on the form. Our school ID is "auburn". Once you've registered, it will allow you to add your child/ren. You must register each individual child if you have more than one student in the school. You will then be given their personal seller ID. Simply give this ID to friends and family to use on the website listed before, and their orders will be added to your child's form by the fundraising

company at the end of the sale. If you have any problems registering, or have any other questions, please email auburnpto@bcschools.net.

- Popcorn sales continue this year. Sales will be the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month, beginning this Friday, September 16. Popcorn is still .50 a bag
 - Due to an outstanding number of requests from parents, we are introducing a new feature this year. This year you have the option to prepay for popcorn for the whole year. \$8.00 pays for a bag of popcorn every popcorn day through the end of the year. Simply fill out the flyer sent home with your student, and return it and the money to school. A receipt will be sent home letting you know we received the money and it has been recorded. **No refunds or carry-overs will be given for missed school days.** Whether illness, appointment or snow day. If this is a problem, please continue paying week-to-week.
 - The popcorn trophy will be returning this year! Help your child/ren's classroom win those honors!
- Every year, Auburn Elementary puts a float in the Western High School homecoming parade. This year's parade will be Friday, September 23. The theme is Pixar and our float committee has some awesome ideas in the works. Everyone is welcome to walk with the school float. We ask that you please fill out and sign the form that was sent home with your child and return to the school no later than Wednesday, September 21. Also, all students MUST have a parent/guardian walking with them. We are not responsible for any students dropped off without an adult, as it is just too chaotic for our float volunteers to try to keep an eye on everyone. We would love everyone to join us. Wear a costume, a Pixar movie shirt, or just come in what you wore to school!
- Every year we have Fun Fall Fridays through the month of October, where students are invited, and encouraged, to dress as a certain theme. This year, we have decided to try a "Spirit Week" leading up to Homecoming instead. This week will take place from Monday, September 19th to Friday, September 23rd. The themes for the week are:
 - Monday- pajama day (because who wants to dress on a Monday?)
 - Tuesday- athletic wear day (jerseys, hats, uniforms, etc.)
 - Wednesday- look alike day (be twins with your best friend, or dress the same as a group! How many teachers can you fool?)
 - Thursday- Superhero day (grab an old costume, or make your own. Heck, you can even make up your own superhero!)
 - Friday- Spirit day (wear your western wear, brown and gold, or Auburn Elementary shirts)
 - Anyone wanting to purchase Western wear can purchase merchandise online from the "Corner Store" by visiting <http://whscornershop.weebly.com/>
- We will have a bake sale at the Parent Teacher Conferences again this year. Conferences take place in October. As always, we need donations of any goodies you'd like to make or buy, as well as people to price and package goodies too. Watch for a flyer to come home with your student the beginning of October.

- This year's Harvest dance will take place Friday, October 28, from 6:30-8:30. As always, costumes are not only welcomed, but highly encouraged. We only ask that you leave all weapons at home, and that the costumes are school appropriate- not too gory or revealing.
- We have some more fun-filled family events/fundraisers planned this year. While changes may still happen, the preliminary schedule is:
 - September- homecoming parade
 - October- Harvest dance
 - November- Pam's Pantry fundraiser
 - December- Drop and Shop (more info to come)
 - January- Bowling
 - February- Swimming party
 - March- Fun Fair
 - April- Color run
 - May- Golf outing and possible Loons game (more info to come)
 - June- Field day
- Feedback from the 15/16 school year has been taken into consideration and we are considering all feedback when planning. Some items that were mentioned that we have addressed are:
 - Fall fundraiser opt-out/alternative
 - Popcorn prepay
 - Too many flyers coming home at once
 - If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please don't hesitate to let us know. We can't help if we don't know about it. You can email us at any time at auburnpto@bcschools.net

Principal's Report

- Thank you and welcome to all of our parent volunteers. There were a few new faces at the meeting, which is wonderful to see. Our parent volunteer involvement continues to grow, and the school benefits from this so much. We had set a goal 3 years ago to purchase lockers for every classroom, expecting this goal to be quite a lengthy one. With parent involvement, we were able to purchase all of the lockers, a cost of approximately \$56,000, in 3 years. That is incredible. A need arose, parents supported it and the goal was accomplished. Thank you.
- Enrollment continues to be an area of focus each school year at Auburn Elementar. This year we are at around 540 students enrolled. We have 17 students who are in our attendance area that are now attending McAlear-Sawden. With cooperation from their parents the district is providing transportation to McAlear-Sawden to help us manage enrollment at Auburn Elementary.
- If there are ever any questions you want answered or topics you'd like covered at a PTO meeting, please let us know by emailing auburnpto@bcschools.net. Tonight's topic is NWEA. Laurel Triebel; Curriculum and Instruction Coach:

- Our School Improvement parent survey provided feedback and two concerns parents had were understanding how students are being graded (Standards Based K-3) and how their child, specifically, is graded.
 - K-3rd is graded using a Standards Based system or a scale of 1-4.
 - 1 and 2- performing below grade level
 - 3- performing at grade level
 - 4- performing above grade level
 - 4th and 5th are graded on a normal letter grading scale.
- Our content coach, Laurel Triebel, joined us tonight to go over some information regarding NWEA, the test the students will all be taking the next few weeks to determine what performance levels they are at in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
 - The specific test is called MAP (Measure of Academic Progress). This test focuses on growth, not grade level. It's not about what they have already mastered, but what they are ready to learn next. This test helps us identify students' strengths and weaknesses, which in turn allows us to teach all students at the appropriate levels.
 - The test is adaptive, meaning it begins at grade level and increases or decreases according to student performance. If students successfully answer questions, the test will adjust and it will get harder. If they are struggling, the test will adjust questions to find the students level of mastery. The next testing session, in January, will begin at that the last level assessed and reevaluate from there.
 - This test is a reading and math assessment, but the reading portion encompasses both science and social studies in its content.
 - Results are individual and should not be compared to other students from a grade level perspective, but a parent report will be generated that shows an overall score and how it compares to fellow students locally and nationally. Student performance will be shared at Parent Teacher Conferences.
 - This test is not timed, but the test administrator can see on their end if a student seems to be rushing through the test, and will recommend the student take more time to make sure they comprehend the material correctly.
 - The test provides a calculator on screen for student use during portions of the math section.
 - Every question must be answered, and students cannot go back once they've passed by a question.
 - This test is all about doing the best they possibly can. It's ok not to get all the answers right. In fact, the point is to get to where they can't get them right. They need to try THEIR personal best.
 - Teachers get the tests results very quickly and then students enter the goal setting stage. This is their main focus. This allows students to understand the objectives, but encouraging them to set personal, reasonable, goals for themselves. This begins at the Kindergarten level and continues all the way through.
 - Goal setting addresses engagement as well as achievements, encouraging students to interact and engage in material and discussions to help them reach that personal goal they have set for themselves.

- NWEA is a new district assessment that replaces former benchmark assessments. It is a tool that quickly identifies student academic skills strengths and weaknesses and provides feedback to teachers who set goals with student participation then work to complete the identified goals. It's not an assessment focused on grade level but on growth.
- The Fountas & Pennell program was purchased last year by the PTO and is now included in the school learning lab. This program will all staff to work on targeted literacy skills. Generally, in 12-18 weeks, many of the students have strengthened identified skill and no longer need this type of support.
- Students are placed into groups of no more than three, and spend 30 minutes together, 5 days a week, working strictly on needed skill building.
- If you have additional questions about the NWEA, please email your child's homeroom teacher.

Old Business

- Adding a line item to the PTO budget for the Homecoming float was discussed last year and was never decided upon. A proposal was made to set aside \$100.00 to help pay for supplies to create the float and was approved by all in attendance. Any remainder of the \$100 will not carry over, but will be absorbed back into the balance. While discussing this, we decided the same will be done for decorations for the Harvest dance. An amount has not been decided at this time.

New Business

- We want to once again thank all of our new faces. The school truly does depend on our parent volunteers, but you can benefit from your involvement as well. Getting involved with your PTO helps develop new relationships and make new connections with other parents in your school. Many PTO members have gone on to become very close friends with fellow parents involved in the PTO, and these relationships often offer an added bonus of having someone who truly understands what is going on in your life and provides support for pressures we sometimes go through as parents. If you have parent friends in the school, please reach out and try to bring them with you to our next meeting. As you've seen tonight, these meetings give a behind-the-scenes view at your child's school and what goes into their education, which is rarely seen otherwise. We hope you continue to return.

The next PTO meeting is **November 7, 2016 at 6:30**. Child care will be provided by the Bay-Arenac ISD Early Childhood Development class.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm.