

North Star PTA Meeting

Date/Time: September 10, 2011 at 7:00pm
Location: North Star Elementary/Multi-Purpose Room
Attendance: Attendance Sheet in PTA Office File: PTA Meeting 9/19/11
Note: A quorum was present for the meeting.

AGENDA

Introduction and Welcome
Pledge of Allegiance/North Star Pledge
Introduction of Board Members
Board Presentations
Principal/Vice Principal's Message
Annual Budget Review and Vote
Closing/Meeting Adjourned

Visual: Power Point Presentation in PTA Office File: PTA Meeting 9/19/11

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Patti Westergard - Called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND NORTH STAR PLEDGE

Patti Westergard led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and recited the NS Pledge.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BOARD MEMBERS

Patti Westergard introduced the PTA Board members.

PRESIDENT

Patti Westergard

This is Patti's second year as PTA President (this should be a 1-year commitment). It's a good time for a volunteer to step up as Vice President, so you have a year of training from Patti. We need to fill several committee and board positions. You'll note as we review the budget later in the meeting that many of the expenses are paid by PTA fund raising activities, which rely on volunteers to be successful.

DIRECTOR OF FUNDRAISING

Michelle Leone

Michelle described the PTA's three main fund raising events: Spirit Walk, Original Works Art Program (new this year) and the Spring Festival. Michelle also manages the Spirit Wear sales.

Spirit Walk Chairperson Julia Montgomery described the event, which was designed to be a fund raiser which encourages physical activity and fun. The Spirit Walk is on Friday Sep. 23. Wear spirit wear or blue/green (contact Michelle Leone to find out what is in stock now, and what items you can order). A DJ entertains the kids as they walk around the parking lot. Parents are welcome to come out in their blue/green, and cheer on their kids (times are posted on website). The students display their school spirit all day, and one class wins a prize for most school spirit. Pledges are due at the end of October.

We have a new fund raising event this year, called the Original Works of Art Program, introduced to the PTA by art teacher Mrs. Slesinski. Students will create a work of art, which can be reproduced on a variety of gift items.

The Basket Auction is our spring fundraiser. Parents from each class contribute money towards a gift basket, each classroom is assigned a theme, and students and parents purchase raffle tickets to win the baskets. Last year we included a Family Night, which was very successful. We are considering eliminating the beef and beer night, and expanding this family night instead this year.

The combined results of these fundraising events enable the PTA to pay for our projected expenses (including school programs such as assemblies), and extra income has been used for technology purchases.

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL SUPPORT AND STUDENT SERVICES

Maureen Donnelly

Maureen is managing two board positions this year (so needs lots of help!). School support and student services includes: Staff and School Support such as Interior Beautification, Library, Parent Programs, Staff Appreciation, Star Light Committee, Landscaping, and Health Services Coordinator. Family Activities, Post Office, Reflections, Directory, Student of the Week, Yearbook, and Physical Education Support.

We are currently working on encouraging PTA membership among parents, and preparing for the Fall Festival at Ramsey Farm on October 13. You can pay at the door at Ramsey Farm. Bring your own s'more fixins (and sticks for toasting marshmallows), and flashlights.

SECRETARY

Jen Wootten

Jen takes meeting minutes, maintains PTA documents, manages the website, and committee volunteers help with the family directory and emails.

TREASURER

Julie Lowe

Julie previously served as board secretary. Julie will be presenting the budget later in the meeting.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Jen Thomas

Thanks to the PTA and parents for the Staff Appreciation lunch.

Teachers are preparing for International Peace Day on Wednesday September 21. Students should wear their peace garb. They'll plant "pinwheels for peace" on the North Star lawn.

All teachers have been talking to students about "Filling their buckets" – a metaphor for kind gestures. Mrs. Alexander, on the Health and Wellness Committee, is looking into creating a learning garden. All grades would be involved.

There will NOT be a vocabulary parade this year. Look for news about a new event related to Thanksgiving.

Students have already been working on MAP testing and DCAS testing. This quick start to testing enables teachers to provide more targeted instruction.

Red Clay School District is looking for parent volunteers to serve on a Parent Council, to provide input to the school superintendent.

VICE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT-

Ann Wilson

Thanks to the teachers that attended this meeting.

Ann said that while the PTA's fundraising activities and contributions towards technology are significant, the school is also dependent on PTA funding for several key programs, such as Ashland Nature visits, assemblies, and the Adolescent Resource Center (ARC).

Ann praised the new Bucket Filler initiative, and said she is proud of North Star's program, which goes beyond the required anti-bully curriculum and teaches students how to cope with many difficult situations.

2011-2012 BUDGET

Julie presented the 2011-2012 Operating Budget (attached)

Motion: By Patti Westergard ; Seconded: By Jill McCormick

To approve the 2011-2012 Operating Budget

Vote: Majority Approved (34 count)

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION

Bill Doolittle, who services as Vice President on the Red Clay School Board, said that North Star is a model for other Red Clay schools. He encouraged parents to get involved on the district level. He noted that some of the schools that are more challenged are also feeder schools to H.B. DuPont, so ultimately he is helping the students that are future peers of his children. There are a number of committees that need parents engaged.

Thanks to a number of committee volunteers, and others that are always helping behind the scenes: Julia, Cindy, Candy, Pam L. and Pam. W., to name a few.

Julie is going to make a note about the notations inside the blue folders. The default wording is confusing, and she'll be sure to get them customized next time.

There is a form on the PTA website for teachers to submit receipts for reimbursement by the PTA (up to \$125 each teacher for classroom expenses).

Thanks from Margo Miller for adding a few enrichment programs to the PTA budget.

The PTA budget also includes a new line item for parents to request financial assistance for field trips. Please contact Jen Thomas, who will pass the request along to the PTA.

There was a brief discussion about the possibility of purchasing a marquee type sign for the school. This came up a few years ago, but PTA members discussed and decided technology was a higher priority. It may be time to reconsider. The PTA generally discusses ideas about how to spend extra fundraiser earnings towards the end of the school year (at the May meeting). Michelle Leone offered to do some research on a sign (Linden Hill got one this summer). It was noted that the budget line item "Technology" is

deliberately vague, and PTA members can discuss ideas for how to spend this money once we have a better idea of how much we have to spend. Another idea is for an improved sound system.

Any parents willing to volunteer their time and expertise on grant writing might be able to pursue funding for a sign.

A parent requested that we drop the candy-themed basket at the basket auction, to stick with a new emphasis on healthy eating.

Deb Harbaugh mentioned that the Yearbook Committee needs pictures taken throughout the year. You can find a link at www.nsptanews.com to upload photos directly, or ask Deb for help. Deb is also looking for volunteers to help design the yearbook.

Meeting Adjourned: Time 8:09pm

Submitted by: Jen Wootten, North Star Elementary PTA Secretary 09/20/11