



PTO Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 7, 2013

1. Welcome

PTO Executive Board

- a. Meeting was brought to order at 6:09 p.m. by Michelle Sosa. Meeting attendees include PTO Executive Board Members Michelle Sosa, Linda Dellett, STEM Launch Administration: Kellie Lauth, Jim Palmer and ESL Teaching Staff: Martha Page, Delilah Nowick and Kim Hundley.

2. Student ESL Presentation

4th & 5th Grade PBL Presentation

- a. Two groups from 4th & 5th grade presented their PBL - "What does the community know about ESL?" - to PTO staff and parents. The students tackled important questions including "What is ESL?", "What does it mean to be proficient?", "Why is the power of language important?", and "How do we communicate to the community what ESL is?"
- b. Students interviewed each other, researched, listened to guest speakers, discussed poetry representing different cultures, and found that there were differing results on what ESL is, but also determined that the power of language can increase future job opportunities, help people and that it is vital to communicate that ESL can be a beneficial and important part of their education.

3. Updates from the Principal

Kellie Lauth

- a. Ms. Lauth thanked PTO and parents for the recent Staff Appreciation Lunch. Teachers and staff really enjoyed.
- b. Considered Trunk-or-Treat to be a "tremendous" success.
- c. Spoke of a recent large partnership grant with the City of Thornton providing more educational opportunities for STEM Launch students and community. More info to follow in upcoming Principal newsletter, but some dates include:
 - i. November 13 – Student Film Festival presented at the Cultural Center. Films submitted by students.
 - ii. November 16 – Theatre Extreme Workshop in collaboration with DaVinci Theatre of Denver.
 - iii. November 20 – "Blues in the School" for both STEM Launch and STEM Lab.
 - iv. December 10 – "Tour of Code". STEM Launch will be taking the lead in collaboration with Code.org enabling over 720 students to learn more about problem solving, coding and working with coding software technologies.
 - v. December 16 – Winter Festival at the Westin Hotel (out of uniform day) for all STEM Launch students.
- d. Recent after school activities and clubs are very successful with almost all spots filled by students.
 - i. Question was asked about funding after school activities, and a combination of the Principal's budget for co-curricular funds and working with partners is funding these opportunities. More will be mentioned in next Principal Newsletter.

- ii. New club activities including Fencing (Jan 2014) and Rocketry (Feb 2014) is coming in the new year. Nearly every staff member is involved in some way to make these opportunities successful.
- iii. In 2014, Launch Plus+ is a new opportunity after school from 6:30-8:30 pm that will offer STEM Launch students access to the computer lab, homework helpers and tutoring.
- e. December 11 will be the STEM Launch “Celebration of Light” winter school festival of music, choir and dance.
- f. Winter is coming, and hoodies and sweatshirts are available for \$25 in the main office.
- g. The STEM Launch selection of a school mascot will be revisited. The STEM Launch “Innovators” need a mascot and, like last year, students will soon be able to submit their ideas and drawings for a new mascot to represent the school.
- h. A \$50,000 foundation technology grant was given to STEM Launch. More information regarding this grant will be coming at the next PTO meeting in December.

4. Updates from the PTO President

Michelle Sosa

- a. October has been the PTO’s biggest month so far in activities. The PTO Board is documenting all events as well as compiling comments and suggestions for improvement to ensure board members will not have to “start from scratch”.
- b. Trunk-or-Treat was very successful. Tina Bode reported that about 250 students along with their families attended. The time change to ensure daylight was a good choice for safety. Twenty-four trunks were decorated. Concessions needed to be cancelled due to lack of parent volunteers. When fees are involved (i.e. candy, \$, etc.), the PTO will work with any family with many students to ensure they can attend a function. Please direct any other comments or suggestions to Tina Bode at tinambode@gmail.com.
- c. Sonja Brown reported that the BoxTops for Education collection had a great turnout. The middle school class that collected the most was Ms. Bastian’s. The elementary class that collected the most was Ms. Calus’. Sonja also reported that the Skate City event on November 4th had low attendance. Some feedback at the meeting included that some parents didn’t receive the flyer and that low attendance was possibly due to buses not being provided this time. December 17 is the next Skate City night for the Middle School. Please direct any other feedback or suggestions to Sonja Brown at sonja_lee_brown@hotmail.com.
- d. The Culver’s and Noodles dine-outs were successful.
 - i. The next upcoming Dine-Out is November 12 – Frank’s Place Pizza (Thornton Pkwy. & Washington). Flyers are required and should be distributed to students the week of 11/4-11/8. Look for it in their backpacks!
 - ii. Dine-Out – November 21 – Chick-Fil-A
 - iii. Dine-Out – December 3 – Big City Burrito (101st & Grant).
- e. Comment was made to request opening more dine-out opportunities for Hispanic families at restaurants more in their comfort zone. Feedback included approaching Mexican restaurants in the area to request participation in a school fundraising opportunity as well as approaching contacts that currently prepare tamales, etc. for sale to STEM Staff as well as catering an event in the STEM cafeteria. The PTO is open to further comments and suggestions. Please contact Sonja Brown at sonja_lee_brown@hotmail.com.

- f. The By-Laws (approved guidelines) are coming to the STEMLaunchPTO.org website.
- g. The recent ABC Fundraiser was very successful. The STEM Launch goal was to sell \$20K in items. Total school sales results were actually over goal at approximately \$22K. More than \$10K will be added to the PTO account. Several students won the PTO incentive to take a limo ride to lunch with Principal Lauth. Forty-one students will be participating in the ABC "Pig Race". Several classes had over 50% participation, and one student sold 100 items winning the digital tablet.
- h. Treasurer Linda Dellett reported that a current budget summary will be coming to the STEMLaunchPTO.org website soon.
 - i. Linda also reported that at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, the STEM Launch PTO balance was approximately \$745. After the recent ABC Fundraiser as well as Dine-Out opportunities and free-fundraiser opportunities (i.e. King Soopers, Target, etc.), minus expenses, the current balance is approximately \$12,000 in cash.
 - ii. A grant process is being developed to offer teachers the ability to request PTO funds for approved purposes. The money will be invested back into the school.

5. Question & Answer Period:

- a. Ms. Lauth will continue a discussion in December on our Choice School status and "What makes our school different than anyone else?" STEM will become a 100% "choice-in" school starting the 2014-15 school year.
- b. Ms. Meier reported that the TSA is having a canned food drive on Nov. 18th to collect non-perishable items for our local STEM community. Many families rely on school breakfast and lunches for students. During the winter break, these programs will not be available and families may require help.
- c. Donations for healthy snacks for students during the school day are welcome to be dropped off at the main office.
- d. The Community Room is in need of warm winter clothing donations (especially winter coats for boys). Please drop off any clothing/coat donations to the main office. Uniform donations are also welcome. The Uniform Exchange will continue to be developed.

6. Adjourn

- a. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michelle Sosa and seconded by Linda Dellett at 7:28pm. The next PTO meeting will be held on December 5 from 6:00-7:30pm.