



**PTO Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, January 7, 2016**

1. Welcome PTO Executive Board
  - a. Meeting called to order at 6:08
    - i. Seconded by Jessica Koehler
  - b. Target cards no longer contributing to schools.
    - i. You will still get the 5%, but nothing to the school.
    - ii. We would encourage use of King Soopers card.
  - c. We will be working on a dine out.
    - i. Not going to do Chipotle at this time.
    - ii. Will be doing one at Culvers Feb. or March.
    - iii. Will send out a flyer with information when it's scheduled.
  - d. Skate City coming up in March
    - i. Info will come out for that.
  - e. Will have the principal for Northglenn in Feb. or March to talk about going to high school there.
    - i. They have a lot to offer.
    - ii. Will be great for middle school parents.
    - iii. The school will publicize it as well.
    - iv. Especially good for parents of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders.
2. Updates from PTO President Sonja Brown
  - a. Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> we will be doing our Teacher Appreciation luncheon.
    - i. A sign up genius will go out.
  - b. We have someone from NJHS here to talk about a grant.
    - i. We are trying to have an opportunity to volunteer and have a fundraiser.
    - ii. We're asking for money for an induction ceremony and two service projects, also for our closing ceremony.
    - iii. The kids have researched and called.
    - iv. There are 20 kids involved.
    - v. We're building these kids as leaders.
    - vi. It's based on being leaders for the school and helping out in the community.
    - vii. We will be doing fundraising. They would like to do a service project every other month.
    - viii. All in favor for approving the funds.
    - ix. Vote passed unanimously for \$900.
  - c. Shawna Lincicome also has a grant.

- i. I'm looking for funds for a battle of the books for elementary because there was a demand for it.
  - ii. We also have a long list of books requested by students and the staff that comes to about \$400.
  - iii. Also need glue and book covers.
  - iv. I have about \$175 left.
  - v. Will be using money for the book fare to buy more books as well.
  - vi. As a STEM school I'm trying to buy books both electronic and hardback.
  - vii. I'm asking for a total of \$620.
  - viii. A lot of books the kids are asking for are really popular books.
  - ix. Some teachers have asked for books to help with PBLs.
  - x. Vote taken and passed unanimously.
- d. There are 2 more grants.
  - i. Marti Page isn't here to go over these.
  - ii. Mr. McCarthy can talk about the drone building.
  - iii. We got asked to form a team that's a national competition ages 11 and up to build an unmanned vehicle and perform a search and rescue.
  - iv. We are in the process of choosing members of the team.
  - v. Cory and Rachel Calus are sponsoring.
  - vi. The amount is for \$1,995. That covers fees and materials to build the drone.
  - vii. We have a pretty intense application process for kids to be considered.
  - viii. Kids are pretty excited.
  - ix. The industry partner is willing to provide travel.
  - x. They have to work as a team to build it. They don't have to engineer it.
  - xi. Q: Will the kids do any fundraising for this?
  - xii. A: This was given to us pretty short notice and we don't even know who the kids on the team yet, so it would be pretty hard to have asked them to fundraise.
  - xiii. We saw it as a good opportunity for the kids to watch with a business partner and work together on a project.
  - xiv. Vote taken and approved unanimously.
- e. The last one is for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade team.
  - i. For 75 kids.
  - ii. For a Magnet Design Sprint.
  - iii. They need supplies for glue and magnets.
  - iv. They have some materials but need a lot more.
  - v. It's on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - vi. This does fit with their science standard for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, so it does fit into their curriculum.
  - vii. This is for \$300.

- viii. Vote taken and approved unanimously.
- 3. Updates from Asst. Principal Martin McCarthy
  - a. Conferences coming up in Feb.
  - b. Assessment day is the 15<sup>th</sup> of Jan.
  - c. Getting back into the swing of things from break.
  - d. Got a large donation from one of our families to fund the book room.
    - i. That was a great way to come back from break.
    - ii. The room is completely funded now.
    - iii. It's great to work in a community that families are able to donate that kind of money and is diverse and we value that.
- 4. PARCC and UIP Updates Martin McCarthy
  - a. I'm going to explain some changes from last year.
    - i. Last year there is just a spring test.
    - ii. Last year there was a spring and end of the year test.
    - iii. You're looking at about 8 hours of testing per student.
    - iv. There will be about 7 days of testing.
    - v. They'll take a 90-120 minute test in a day.
    - vi. WE don't want them overwhelmed and testing all day.
    - vii. There are a couple of grade levels taking a pilot test.
    - viii. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
    - ix. We didn't get students data from last year until right before break.
    - x. You can't compare to TCAAP
    - xi. We look at percentage of kids at grade level or above.
    - xii. We look at the growth our students have made.
    - xiii. The data used to rank and judge schools isn't available this year.
    - xiv. Schools weren't give a performance rating this year because they had no data in PAARC to compare it to.
    - xv. The UIP addresses areas of need based on scores.
    - xvi. We created a UIP based on MAPS data.
    - xvii. The good news is we are only required to address areas of significant need, so we didn't have any goals for 3-5 which is really exciting. It means our work is paying off.
    - xviii. There are highlights in our middle school data as well.
    - xix. We still have work to do in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.
    - xx. Our data for 8<sup>th</sup> grade ranks right with the district which historically has not been the case.
    - xxi. Shows we're moving in the right direction.
    - xxii. Hulstrom and Stargate only accept GT kids, so their scores are good.
    - xxiii. We beat the district in 8<sup>th</sup> grade for Language.
    - xxiv. Looking at elementary math-3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
    - xxv. Our 4<sup>th</sup> grade did amazing. Some of the best in the state.
    - xxvi. Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade was right with the state.

- xxvii. We have the highest rate of free and reduced lunch in the district but we also have the highest scores in the district.
  - xxviii. Elementary language arts-4<sup>th</sup> grade did phenomenal.
  - xxix. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade we have some work to do.
  - xxx. We have a large number of kids in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade that we need to catch up with.
- b. The UIP we wrote we picked 3 major strategies.
    - i. The first one is planning.
    - ii. I believe planning is the key to success in educating.
    - iii. That's what our first improvement strategy is around.
    - iv. The second is around our model.
    - v. We believe our model works.
    - vi. We're seeing our kids achieve the way we think they should achieve.
    - vii. We want to have a strategic focus on literacy within our PBL units.
    - viii. The last one is around social and emotional learning.
    - ix. We need to foster a collaborative cultural and mutual respect in our building.
- c. The goals we set last year using MAPS as our coalition.
    - i. We knew we wouldn't have PAARC data to judge how we did.
    - ii. On reading in MAPs when we looked at performance we met every one of our targets except 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
    - iii. Setting these targets are somewhat arbitrary.
    - iv. You do your best with what you think will happen.
    - v. In math we didn't meet our targets as well in middle school, but made every one in elementary.
    - vi. Our Academic Growth-all of our groups grew more than their peer group across the board in reading in math according to MAPs, which is really exciting news.
- d. Why is middle school a Title I but elementary isn't?
    - i. Our middle school is 80% free and reduced lunch, but our elementary is only 65%. The district does look at our elementary separate from middle even though we are a K-8. We've been trying to get that changed because it would help us with funds, but as of yet that hasn't changed. There are a lot more elementary schools in the district that have a higher percentage than us.
- e. If your student does have some trouble taking tests, your teacher can put in a request for certain things that can help them with that.
    - i. All students do have a test carrol and headphones.
    - ii. It used to be easier for teachers to request accommodations for kids, but with the PAARC assessment they've eliminated a lot of that because it's not a pencil and paper test.
    - iii. We will fill out an application for accommodations, and send it in and then they decide.

- iv. In general with this test there are less accommodations needed. They have built in extra time for the test.
- v. You can go to the PAARC website to see sample tests.
- vi. Every kid has a typing membership here so they can practice at home.

## 5. The Thinking Project

Linda Dellett and  
Rachel Pickett

- a. We help support the social and emotional development of kids.
- b. We want to explain what The Work is and our partnership with STEM.
- c. We also want to talk about our objectives and goals, our whole school approach.
- d. We have a video to show from the Dalai Lama institute.
- e. The big picture objective is to help students question closed-minded thinking and build open-minded learning environments by using The Work.
  - i. Our goals for kids and schools is to identify and question thoughts that cause stress and anger.
- f. What's The Work?
  - i. We're going to be showing a video that was part of a Ted talk. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJLqOclPqis>
  - ii. The Work is a way to short circuit ladders.
  - iii. You take a thought that you're thinking and you identify the thought and ask yourself "is it true?"
    - 1. You look at how you react with and without that thought – in the same situation.
    - 2. You find the turnarounds of that thought: 1) to the opposite, 2) to myself and 3) to the other.
    - 3. By answering the questions and finding examples for the turnarounds it opens your mind, shows you ways the opposite and turnaround thoughts could be equally or more true, and helps to lessen or eliminate the stress associated with the thought you did The Work on.
    - 4. It's not the situation, it's the thinking about the situation that impacting me and causes my stress.
    - 5. By finding those examples that thought lets go of you. It lessens the stress.
  - iv. What we do at our camps are different activities to help the kids identify what they're feeling in a moment.
    - 1. Kids from lower social economic backgrounds are less able to identify a broader range of feelings and so that's one area we work on with them.
  - v. Whole school approach
    - 1. We do camps, community building, teacher training.
    - 2. Over the past 12 months we've done Camps for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders so about 300 students, staff camps for about 20 kids, a Fall Camp for about 20 middle school and 15

high school kids, and a training camp for about 50 teachers. We also had people who are certified in The Work fly in from California, Utah, Canada and the Netherlands to help staff the camps. Plus a good number of local facilitators have helped staff the camps.

3. We just completed the fall camp for the 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - vi. One of the volunteers made a video and gifted it to us so we would like to show it to you.
  - vii. The camps and classrooms are to introduce kids to The Work in order to support healthy thinking and resilience.
  - viii. We talk to the kids about what hurts us: Is it what someone says to us? Or is it what we believe and internalize about what they're saying that hurts?
    1. We do an activity called Blue Antenna's to illustrate this point with the kids.
  - ix. As we learn to question our thoughts and not just believe our thoughts, those comments hurt less and less.
- g. One way that The Thinking Project is piloting at Rachel's school is with a Green Thinking Binder.
  - i. If a student disrupts a class or gets into trouble instead of sending them to the office, we send them to another teacher in our core and then they use the forms in the Green Thinking Binder.
  - ii. It contains stressful thoughts about teachers and school, and lets kids do The Work on their stressful thought. This helps get to the root thoughts behind the behavior so the kids can gain new perspectives and better stay on track to achieve their goals.
- h. We're measuring the effectiveness at camps and in Rachel's classroom.
  - i. In Rachel's classes, we've seen a 12% improvement in academics from where they were last year.
  - ii. We can't point to exact causes, but we think this is contributing.
- i. At STEM Launch, we're working with the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, and we're working closely with Kellie. Kellie and the teachers have requested the Green Thinking Binders to bring in for middle school.
  - i. We're also wanting to develop one for the younger kids as well.
  - ii. Any age can do it, but we think the biggest need here has been for the middle school so we started there.
- j. This is a grassroots effort. We're still developing out.
  - i. The adult version is at www.thework.com
  - ii. Our dream is to become a non profit working with all schools and all kids.

- iii. It's really beautiful to see these kids [discover new perspectives and gain more peace in their lives](#).
- iv. We see [our work here](#) as a symbiotic relationship with STEM.

6. Q&A

7. Adjourn

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:02