Indian Ridge Middle School

PTO General Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2019

1. Welcome, Introductions
   1. Meeting start at 6:06 p.m.
   2. Lots of new faces! Sign up tonight and will get information over the summer.
   3. Have agenda in front of you. Did not meet in March because of spring break. Have budget and treasurer’s report. Sign-in sheets being passed around.
2. Ms. Ortiz, do you want incoming people to fill out survey? No. If already a parent, please fill it out. Wherever you are coming from has a similar survey. <https://eprovesurveys.advanc-ed.org/surveys/#/action/100874/p568>
3. Upcoming Events
   1. Teacher Appreciation Week
      1. May 6 – 10
      2. PTO is collaborating with administration (Ms. Ortiz and 2 clubs). (Ms. Ortiz is the 8th grade administrator and will be again next year.) Will do something each day. Breakfast Monday. Lunch Friday. Half day Thursday. Massage on Wednesday. Barbie Secular is chair person. Not here right now but sends regards.
      3. One attendee gives t-shirts at her school. Posts list in staff room for sizes or chases them down. Has school name and year. Fun Friday shirt. She has budget of $1,500 for whole week. Danielle, who has incoming 6th grader. Another attendee, her son is too embarrassed to carry things to teachers. They can bring it to the office. Danielle does raffles where students bring in certain theme each day.
      4. Here, for hospitality for teachers and staff, we do a breakfast and a lunch the week before school starts. We have also done a goody bag with supplies from wish list. Then do a December, end-of-second-quarter fancy lunch with tons of raffles. Almost half of the teachers end up winning. Partner with Planet T for that, which is where we get the uniforms. Coffee and fancy pastries for Valentine’s. And then we do this week for Teacher Appreciation. Sharon Wishner added that Barbie will be staying, as she has a child coming in. But Sharon is leaving and won’t be helping next year. Need one or two people to help her. It’s not a big thing. Try to keep it intimate for the teachers.
   2. Community Involvement Awards
      1. Thursday, May 9
      2. County-level thing. So far, bought 10 tickets. Gave one to Kristen Shea, as she is our volunteer coordinator.
      3. Recognizes people with consecutive years of 200 hours or more of service. We have 2 people recognized for past 5 years: Sharon Wishner and Kirsten Kustin. Starts at 9 a.m. with parking and eating. Inspirational with performances, recognitions.
   3. How does PTO communicate?
      1. We have corresponding secretary, Helen Lacayo-Aleman.
      2. Primary way is e-mail database.
      3. Also have a Facebook page. Michelle Rubin posts daily announcements. She’s an employee here but was PTO mastermind for a long time. Represents us well.
      4. And then we have meetings.
      5. Daily announcements are key source of info, but Mr. Murray is starting up the announcements on TV. They have it at Country Isles and Silver Ridge. That will improve communication. Just in classroom during 2nd period, but will still post on Facebook.
      6. Holly added that our website has the volunteer opportunities and web calendar. Irmspto.my-pto.org
      7. If your child is in band, there’s a second Facebook page for that. Michelle Burstein started it.
      8. If you need administrators, they don’t answer on Facebook. Call the office.
      9. Sharon Wishner added that they send out robo-calls.
      10. Sometimes things get missed. Kids don’t always write and remember, but we’re letting the kids grow and remember. For first week paperwork, we’re doing more online. Mr. Greenfield and Ms. Mezza will track you down in 6th grade.
      11. Melissa Foreman from Silver Ridge PTO and volunteer coordinator here to help out. What is the role of PTO here? (Following is a list of all the FYI we covered for the new parents.)
          1. We have spring and fall book fairs. Maria (Mariangel Scheflin) is our goddess of that.
          2. We have dances. Four of them are after school, 4 – 6 p.m. Welcome to the Ridge for 6th grade. Was actually 3 this year. Winter all grades. In the past, have done St. Patrick’s Day. 8th grade end of May or June. Formal on Saturday, 7 – 10 p.m. Each dance is $5. 8th grade is $15. No spaghetti strap dress code. Uniform at the others.
          3. Jag Jog. Holly has been chair of that for the last 2 years. Similar to booster run but we don’t give money away at all. We run it all ourselves. Lots of work. 2-week event. Money collections, prizes. Do need lots of volunteers. Jog at end of event. 3 grades go out at separate times in morning. Afternoon has 2 dances. 5th and 6th periods. Held in cafetorium. Jog peak raised is $55,000 - $56,000. Last day of collections, pull in probably $14,000 cash. Need lots of people the last day of participation. 4 events if you participate. T-shirt, raffle, dance, DJ at lunch. Pretty much only fundraiser. Jog is same age as school, 21 years.
          4. Some things already have chair but need co-chairs and volunteers. There’s an ice breaker in the fall for volunteers to get to know each other. Even if can’t do all of the days, still catch the spirit of everything. Still do box tops. Still do PTO membership drives.
          5. Do Straight-A Cabaret. People are accustomed to AB Honor Roll. Core of volunteers usually don’t have kid there. Pizza and soda and juice and a cookie.
          6. For book fairs, they come in and shop at specific time of day, usually during language arts with teacher.
          7. For 6th grade lunch, are they separated? Yes. Do teachers take them? They report to class. They eat last. It may change. Take backpacks to class and attendance, then dismissed to cafeteria. First semester, teachers walk them and walk them back. Second semester, teachers take them but can leave. 35 minutes long. They sit with class they came with. Administrators, 3 people in cafeteria at all times. No grades bring book bags. Half and half bring and buy lunch.
          8. We have Harvest Drive that goes to Western. Looking to couple that with the food recover program, the brain child of Sharon Wishner. Have lots of people at Pioneer. Not launched yet but it’s an idea worked out. Beachside and Hollywood Hills have started it.
          9. Back to outstanding students: Also have Mid-Year Strive in January. Each teacher nominates male and female students for attitude, effort, and progress towards goals. Mid-Year is PTO, but we imitate what school does at end of year.
          10. We do banners on fence. Bring sponsors from your school! Need someone to help get them up and down. We have 2 smilers and dialers to find sponsors. Benet and Rachel have agreed to continue. Just need someone to help put them up (or take down during hurricane). Need your sponsors!
          11. T-shirts. We sell for Friday.
          12. Also have web store.
          13. We aren’t in classrooms but there are certain field trips. (At Country Isles, 5th graders when to DC!)
          14. Andrea Tower joined us at 6:43 p.m. She works in the front office and does Dream Catchers. It’s like the angel tree. Pick kids from our school. Give them a list to fill out of what they want and need. This year, we pretty much gave them everything on their lists. No trips, live things, cell phones (requiring bill after we give it). Start it at Thanksgiving, and have the gifts ready for Hanukah or Christmas. These are all our kids. Some ask for food and underwear. Privacy stays, and families are anonymous. Only Andrea knows kids. She makes sure nobody bumps into each other at pick-up. Can donate online or can bring things in. Can pull together money to get computer or PS4 or something.
          15. Before Ms. Ortiz leaves, the kids are all lovely, and we appreciate you giving them all to us. Be aware of social media. We trust our children, but they do have friends. Our 6th grade is almost 700 kids. We make it like a family, but there are students where they don’t have the face on social media. Check their phones. Get in trouble on Snapchat, Instagram. Listen to your child. They share, and we may have to disconnect with parents. What is the cell phone policy? School board policy is they can have it out at any time. Have it on silent. In classroom, the teachers don’t allow it. There is wi-fi. They use them in the restrooms.
          16. ID badges are the big thing, as Andrea reminded us. The students go home with it, and they wear it all day. Going through yearbook company. When pics come back, that’s when they get it. Security thing is evolving. Hadn’t really had a chance to evaluate the best process for 6th grade. Last year, think they gave a temp with no pic? 7th and 8th got one with old pic.
          17. Friday before school, 6th Grade Pow Wow. 9 – 11 a.m. Get schedule and walk around. Rumor that kids aren’t allowed to go the bathroom. No! Shut down that rumor. If teacher not allowing, then call and speak to grade-level office.
          18. Parents are watching their kids here. Life 360 tracks where they are but not the apps. Bark will watch the apps for $10 a month. They watch the apps. Also have an SRO. Abby Evans. She was a student here. Just got married. Very approachable. Asked a question about dance security, and she signed it Officer Abby, not Officer Evans.
          19. Forgot to mention Hispanic Fair, during Hispanic Heritage Month. Helen Lacayo-Aleman does it. We have it on a Saturday in October. Grew from 50 to 150 to 500 people coming. Another day for kids to hang out. Showcase kids. Activities. Fun day. Welcome vendors, who donate raffles. Raffles at end. Had a food truck this year. Only one, because hard to be a vendor.
          20. Grandparents’ Day is right before Thanksgiving. In morning, 9 – 11 a.m. Same day as Book Fair. Bands also play. And there’s a talent show and pictures. $5 for pics, in a frame. They show ID at front. There’s an RSVP or guest list.
          21. Also do lunch with a vet, coffee with a cop.
          22. Parent drop off and pick up is gate across from Fox Trail. At BK, school can’t tell them not to drop off and pick up. Those kids are walkers.
   4. Back to Upcoming Events. If you are a current volunteer, these are events coming up. These are also open positions.
      1. Yearbook – Help with distribution and signing day with Ms. Didier.
      2. Just had a 6th-grade open house. Thank you to everyone who participated. Brought in a lot of money that night. Almost $7,000 between apparel, memberships. Can pay $5 membership online. Have parties in home rooms for most sign ups.
      3. To volunteer, go online in summer and put IRMS as your first school. That way you get your badge here. Have to apply every summer. Can use the badge at every school. Don’t apply too early. We’ve been a golden school for 21 years in a row. Helps us if you sign in at things, using the star system.
      4. Need a treasurer. Get to know all committees through that role. Provide deposit slip. Our treasurer works full-time and then comes at her scheduled time with another officer to get the deposits at her leisure. At the jog, it’s an exception. Will know more in July. Please spread the word. Different from elementary. Easier than you may think.
      5. Required to have 5 meetings. Have almost monthly except March. December a fun team building thing. June is for chairpersons, both outgoing and incoming. Next meeting tentatively on 5/21. That’s where nominating committee will present slate.
      6. Chairperson dinner is June 3 at Primetime in Weston.
      7. When we have a security issue or at first meeting, the media center is full. Usually, though, it’s about this number in attendance. Just show up to events! Just want help and friends. For dances, maybe 10 are posted, but as many can come as wanted.
      8. How does parking work for events? Come early! For big ones, a police detail will direct you. Can’t park in the back now for security reasons. If dance starts at 4, volunteers come at 3:30. 6th grade open house is probably the most populated event for the entire year.
      9. In the past, the presidents have come from Jag Jog chairing or treasurer. Kirsten will not be here and will need a replacement. Julie and Tracy have agreed to take over the dances, but Sharon Wishner will still come to help.
      10. Big openings: Straight-A Cabaret and Mid-Year Strive. Harvest Drive and Food Recovery. Hospitality support. Recording Secretary. Corresponding Secretary. Treasurer. Membership, coupled with Box Tops. Not official, but Lori Glassman shadowing current volunteer coordinator (Kristen Shea). And Jag Jog needs co-chair.
      11. Need 3 chairs to volunteer to be nominating committee.
4. Principal’s Update
   1. Testing same week as Teacher Appreciation. Provide coffee every day.
   2. Mr. Murray apologizes for not being here. He’s been here for every single meeting. Ms. Ortiz stayed for this one. He feels privilege for being principal here.
   3. Great team, with similar backgrounds. Been in system 15 – 20 years. Close to 100 years of service? Every day is different. Great kids. Great staff.
   4. Majority of staff been here more than 10 years. Last year, had one teacher added for core subjects because of growth. Retain teachers. Adding more next year for growth. The teachers who do move, usually go to high school. Probably follow child, or move out of the area. It’s a family. Take a lot of pride. Curriculum is rich. Kids are great. Silly and crazy in halls, but don’t really have any classroom management issues. Level and rigor are there. Kids really excel.
   5. Have support facilitators for ESE, per grade level. 500 ESE students: 200 gifted, 300 ESE. Many of them getting 504’s, needing extended time. Those ESE teachers are very creative and will come ask PTO for anything.
   6. Last year, added speech in 6th grade. Half of year, speech. Half of year, computer (multimedia). Ms. Ortiz is 8th grade admin and does everyone’s schedules. OVER ESE and social studies departments. Each admin has major chore. Mr. Greenfield has facilities. Ms. Burke does transportation. Can ask Mr. Greenfield about changes for schedules or overrides.
   7. There’s always homework, especially in math and language arts.
   8. Regular, advanced, GEM, EMF (online class, high school in 6th grade). Maybe 13 kids in 6th grade doing EMF. Overall, maybe 30 kids.
5. Treasurer’s Report
   1. See spreadsheet.
   2. Main event was 6th grade open house.
   3. In summer, meeting about budget. Nobody really goes over the budget amounts. Can vote to go up on things if needed. If something new, like us approving a community fair (approved but didn’t follow through), get approved on budget and do it.
6. Nominating Committee - Will put together nominating committee.
7. Gifts to School Committee and Meeting
   1. Security Committee: Escrowed the take from last year. Gifted what teachers asked. Big chunk escrowed instead of spending on cameras, and district ended up putting everyone with buzzers. And have new cameras in portables. (Most kids over there are 7th grade.) No plans at this time to get rid of portables and build a building. Expensive to get rid of them. Only challenging when it rains. 6th graders are mostly in one area.
   2. May have a new robotics teacher. Will be 7th and 8th. There’s a STEM club after school. There’s a debate class, not a club. Just need a school sponsor to start club back up. Debate and chess club sponsor retired. Still have chess club.
8. SAF – Maritza put out a packet. She’s the conduit to voice at county level, and she brings county info. Here. Don’t know if she’s doing it next year? Believe so?
9. Next meeting tentatively 5/21.
   1. Same day as one of the trips, and other trip next day.
   2. Look at all of the events coming up.
   3. Incoming parents welcome to come! See what we do.
10. Log in hours by end of May. If 200+, get it in there! School in charge of 5-star initiative. It’s a lot of work.
11. Will have fun night with vested parents, PTO. 5/10 or 5/11. Welcome to whoever would like to come. Not sure when.
12. Adjourn at 7:51 p.m.