

EEPTO General Meeting

February 14, 2013

Call-to-Order -- Dinah Street

Dinah Street called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes – Chris Overend

The minutes from the January 17 General Meeting were presented and approved. Chris will post these to the website.

IEC Update -- Julia Webber

Wellness Program for teachers staff

- Teachers are very grateful and have taken full advantage of opportunity
- Parents have expressed concern
- In the future, the PTO will make every effort to post a vote for an IEC Special Request such as this one ahead of time so that parents who feel strongly on an issue, can attend.

Items approved in January

- Rug for Ms. Wold's kindergarten class costing \$469
- Mounts so that iPads or text books can be in a position where they can be read without needing to be held. 19 class sets were purchased for a total cost of \$2360
- iLib software package that allows Evelyn McAllister to create research pages for each class based on what they are studying costing \$615

A request for bulletin boards to display artwork has been placed on hold while the IEC considers all of the locations on campus that could be used. The IEC will also research the option of glass display cases to better protect artwork from the elements as well as allow the possibility of displaying 3-D artwork. These options will be researched and discussed again at the next IEC meeting.

The IEC has a budget of approximately 20K for the 2012/2013 school year, of which approximately 12K has already been spent. There have not been any new IEC requests for February but the IEC is expecting more requests to come in March and April.

Guest Speaker – Kathleen Sullivan, Principal of HCMS

Adolescence is a time of great change for kids:

- ❖ Physically-- Growth spurts, hormone surges
- ❖ Emotionally-- Kids become extremely self-conscious and there is often a need to conform
- ❖ Intellectually-- Shorter attention span, respond well to choices, fluctuations in interest levels. They need to make relevant associations and use their senses.
- ❖ Socially-- Need for independence, extreme sensitivity to peer pressure, reclusive behavior, need for acceptance by peers, increase in usage of social media.

HCMS loves this stage of development! They understand the kids are going through these changes and they provide structure.

- ❖ Teachers gradually step back to ease kids into their independence. They coordinate homework and testing so that kids are not overwhelmed all at once.
- ❖ Music and other electives encourage kids to try it all and see what interests them.
- ❖ An advisory class period lets counselors work with kids regularly to develop their social skills.
- ❖ 6th graders are kept together in one wing and change classes on a different time table than the 7th and 8th graders.

Parents can support their kids best during this time by

- ❖ Talking with your kids. Find the time of day they are most talkative. Use teacher web pages to find out what they are studying in school and ask about it.
- ❖ Listen to what they say to others. Check their texts and where they are going online.
- ❖ They will most likely need help with time management.
- ❖ Keep in contact with their teachers, volunteer, watch their extra-curricular activities.

- ❖ Sign up for the HC list serv

Question/Answer

- Anything requiring immediate attention can be directed to counselors or vice principals
- 6th graders will get 1:1 iPads next year and there will be a parent meeting to address this
- A typical 6th grade schedule includes:
 - Language Arts-- there is an advanced class option, students are recommended by 5th grade teachers
 - Math -- there is an advanced class option, students are recommended by 5th grade teachers
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Band/Choir/Orchestra-- choose one
 - PE/Theater/Art/Computer Tech-- rotate
 - Lunch
 - Advisory
- In 7th/8th grades, students can also elect to take a second language: Spanish, Chinese, Latin
- After school activities are limited for 6th graders because they are usually exhausted by the end of the school day
- The buses in the morning carry just middle-schoolers but the afternoon buses carry middle and high schoolers together.
- There is a 6 hour course held during the summer called "Secrets of 6th Grade Success". Kids have an opportunity to tour the school, learn how to use a combination lock, how to change classes, etc.

Update from the Principal -- Jodie Villemaire

Jodie hosted a group of educators from Quebec and another group from Houston as well as the principals in her visioning program all on the same day and their feedback regarding our campus was absolutely glowing. They were blown away by our students, our teachers and staff, our technology and our campus atmosphere. It was very gratifying for Jodie to remember that while we are always striving to improve, what we have at EE is already very special and very successful.

STAAR Testing Results

- Will be coming home in the Thursday folders for 4th and 5th graders
- These are last year's test results
- The future for the STAAR test is currently being discussed in the legislature. The proposal that the results be 15% of the final grade for high schoolers has been abolished. The proposal that 15 tests be required for high school graduation is also coming under attack. TAMZA is the organization leading the fight against these proposals in the legislature.

Treasurer's Report -- Laura Clark

There is currently approximately 110K in the PTO checking account and 30K in the Money Market account.

To date, the PTO has raised approximately 231K in revenue and paid out 139K in expenditures.

VP Reports:

Fundraising – Meg Propes

PNO is coming up on April 6th. It will be held at the Rattle Inn and have a western theme. There will be food provided by Ranch 616, casino tables, a live auction and music but there is currently no dancing planned. The suggestion was made to consider integrating some two-stepping but the music would need to be kept separate from the talking areas so that it doesn't get too loud.

We still need packages for the live auction. This is a great opportunity for small businesses to advertise. A huge thank you to Mary Anne McMahon for her dedication to the live auction.

Student Enrichment – Stephanie Beard

Science Day is Feb 22 and needs volunteers. All exhibits will focus on a central theme to help kids get more from the day. This year the theme will be Life Sciences.

Art.Eat Play will be held April 18th and we need volunteers!

Upcoming Events –

February 18 -- President's Day- No School
February 19 -- Austin Pizza Spirit Night
February 21 -- Half Day Seminar The Biggest Job You Will Ever Have by Pam Hardy
February 22 -- Science Day
February 28 -- Froyoyo Spirit Night - 3rd Grade
February 28 -- Late Start - School Begins at 9:35
March 9-17 -- Spring Break
April 6 -- Parents Night Out

Adjournment

There is a workshop hosted by EISD on February 21st and all are welcome and encouraged to attend. The speaker for the next General PTO meeting on March 7th will be Johnny Johnson, a former football star turned life coach. Please encourage all parents to attend.