

# Grace Abbott Elementary PTO Meeting      Tuesday February 7th, 2016

**Board Members:** Jaime Diamond, President; Josh Kitchen, Treasurer; Christy Kleffman, Secretary; Alyssa Mason, President Elect

- **Welcome/ Introduction** of Board Members and meeting attendees. Josh Kitchen motioned the meeting to order, and Joy Campbell seconded. The meeting began at 6:34 PM.
- **Review January Meeting Minutes** Jessi Mann motioned to approve. Suzy Hartman seconded. The January meeting minutes were approved with no changes.
- **Principal Report** No new info to report. Dr. Chaussee asked if there were questions, and no questions were asked by the PTO members present.
- **Treasurer Report:** The income statement was available for PTO members to view. We are still waiting on a couple of pieces of information; yearbook expenses are not yet complete, and this year's Carnival information is not yet available.
- **Walk-A-Thon Fund Discussion**
  - Update on previously approved items: **Water Fountain/Water Bottle Filling Station:** The order has been placed. Only one water fountain was ordered due to plumbing requirements that were insufficient in most areas around the school. It will be placed by the gym. The work order is in place. There are no details available yet on when it will be installed. **Little Library:** Mrs. Sweetman investigated different vendors to get the best prices available. Dr. Chaussee presented the plan to the district, and we are waiting for approval before starting the project. The library may be placed between the two blue benches in the front of the school. This location is on camera. Mrs. Sweetman has volunteered to be a curator of the project, and will monitor the donated material to ensure it is appropriate. **Pencil Sharpeners:** The staff was surveyed to determine which sharpener would best fit their needs. Two sharpeners were purchased for each classroom, for a total of 40. **Popcorn Machine:** The machine has been purchased and will be used for the first time this Friday at movie night.
  - **Cement Track:**
    - Initial estimates from several years ago were around \$25K-\$30K.
    - Updated estimates put costs between \$30K-\$55K.
    - After discussion of the track, an alternate proposal was made for a nature based playground to be installed instead of the cement track. This might include different areas of logs placed for climbing, tools for digging, and exploring various nature items and areas. The cost would vary by what elements are chosen. Dr. Chaussee reported that the Natural Resource district awards grant money for outdoor classrooms. However, the process can be a little overwhelming to go through due to the grant application process. A parent asked about a sex offender who lives close to the school, and was concerned that additional outdoor activities might be placed closer to his home. Dr. C stated that there have been no concerns regarding the man, and that children already play in the general vicinity during recess activities. It was also noted that due to ADA requirements, a concrete path would need to be placed leading up to each activity in a potential nature playground. This could greatly increase the total cost of the project. More information is available at the Children and Nature network website online. As this idea has not yet had a chance for more research, and the staff hasn't been surveyed about this, more discussion will take place at a later date..
  - **Additional Circuit Training Equipment:** Due to the ADA requirements, a cement path would need to be added leading to approximately 50% of the activities to make it compliant. Additional circuit training pieces could be ordered in addition to the four activities already on order.
    - Cost update: \$3,800 is the amount the PTO has already budgeted and committed to. This will cover the 4 pieces of equipment, but not the additional cost of the concrete.
  - **New School Desks/Chairs:**
    - Cost update from Dr. Chaussee: A new desk and chair of the type that the district currently buys are roughly \$200. Dr. Chaussee looked at a new type of desk that can be used to connect with other desks

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and makes group work in the classroom easier. The district is currently completing a study on these desks that should be complete in the next 6 months. 430 students currently attend Abbott. About \$90,000 would be the projected cost to buy new desks for this number of students. One grade level would cost approximately \$14,000.

- If this item is chosen, the PTO would probably buy new desks for one grade level at a time starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- **Rubber Mat instead of Wood Chips for Playground:**
  - Abbott has 18K sq. feet of wood chips.
  - The cost of materials is between \$6-\$30/sq. ft. for a total is \$108K - \$540K
  - Assuming we would need at least a mid-grade quality materials is approx. \$350K + installation; Total costs would be over \$500K
  - **Walk-A-Thon Funding:** \$37,000 is available to spend on a larger project this year. Members were asked to vote on one of the items listed above, or to write in to do none of the above. Choosing to do none of the previously suggested and researched projects won the vote with 13 votes. Next month the PTO can decide on looking into hiring a landscape architect to create a master plan, getting more information on nature based play, or to wait until the next school year to make a larger purchase.
- **Committee Updates:**
  - **Movie Nights (Maureen Kitchen)** The next movie night will be held on Friday Feb. 10th. The movie show will be The Secret Life of Pets.
  - **Social/Welcome Committee (Jessi Mann/Amy Skolaut)** This committee will need a new chair for next year. The Snowflake Breakfast went very well. About 386 people attended this year's event.
  - **Fifth Grade Farewell (Candace Casper/Jennifer Cukendall/Shelly Anzalone)** The date has been finalized and information has been sent out to parents.
  - **Yearbook (Suzie Hartman)** Pictures are still needed from school events and parties, scouting, sports, and service projects. A form is available for submitting pictures in the Gator Tales. Yearbooks are still available for purchase in the office.
  - **Hospitality (Becky Eichmann)** Conferences are coming up next week. There are still some open slots for volunteers to help with dinner for staff during conferences. Teacher Appreciation week is coming up in March.
  - **Cash Rewards/Incentive Programs (Candice Casper/Robin Matthes)** No update
  - **School Carnival (Kristy Gotschall)** The next meeting will be held after PTO meeting tonight.
  - **Bricks (Erin Barry)** No update
  - **Fun Nights (Cara Robbins)** Fun nights are done for the year. There was record attendance for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade events this year.
  - **Youth Frontiers (Julie Shaner)** No update
  - **Educational Grant Programs/Scholarships (Carri Dyer)** The PTO received 6 applications for the Abbott scholarship this year. This is about half as many applications as in past years.
  - **Buzz Book (Laura Hensley)** No update
  - **Classroom Party Volunteer Coordinator (Carri Dyer)** The room chair can go back to the classroom at 1:45 to set up, and other parent volunteers need to wait until 2:00.
  - **Walk-A-Thon (Julie Shaner)** No update

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- **Original Art Works Fundraiser (Debbie Smith)** No update
- **New Business** No new business to report
- **Questions** None
  
- **Adjournment** Maureen Kitchen motioned to adjourn, and Kristy Gotschall seconded. The meeting ended at 8:01 PM.