



## FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY PTO

### GENERAL MEETING

Friday, October 8th, 2021, 9:00am, Faculty Lounge

### MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Franklin PTO Executive Board members, Principal Janice Tierney, Franklin parents

#### 1) PTO President's Report - Casey Cohen

- PTO General meetings are a touchpoint, forum to field concerns, place to ask questions and hear suggestions, and a way to keep open communication between families and the school
- The goal is to support the school, children, and staff, and do as much as we can to enrich the Franklin experience
- The PTO has two goals this year: community building and Fundraising (mostly through PTO dues and Franklin Fair)
- PTO Treasurers Kristin Pustynnik and Erika Ascher shared PTO income sources and uses
  - Sources of income are membership dues, Franklin Fair, and other smaller fundraisers
  - Money is spent on community-building activities, staff appreciation, special programs, and operational expenses
- PTO hopes to collect membership dues from every family early in the year, so we can avoid sending additional requests to help fund programs throughout the year
- Upcoming PTO Events
  - Bike Safety 101 Community event
    - October 23<sup>rd</sup> bike safety awareness event for families that will include general tips, hand signals, helmet and bike checks
    - Will include presentations from the Union County Traffic Safety Education Team and the Maplewood Bike Shed
  - Assemblies
    - Sk8 For Life was the most recent assembly, took place outdoors, and was well-received by students and staff
    - Winter and spring assemblies are in the planning stages
    - 1-2 two author visits are in the works
  - Artist in Residence
    - This year, the PTO is fully-funding the Artist in Residence program in partnership with Wharton School of the Performing Arts
    - Wharton will come to Franklin to do an assembly and a six-week school-wide program including instruction in performance and production
    - Franklin hopes to partner with Wharton for a future performing arts production if the program is successful/well-received



- PTO Communications
  - PTO Blast goes out every Sunday night at 7:00pm via email and covers Franklin news, signups, and reminders
  - Reach out to Jessica Shin if you have any community news that you would like to be considered for inclusion in the PTO Blast (should be approved by the Board of Education)
  - PTO is conscious of how much information is being sent by email, so the PTO Blast is your one-stop resource for information, upcoming events, etc.
- 2) Principal's Report - Mrs. Tierney
  - Absence Reporting
    - When reporting an absence, you must also provide a reason for your absence
    - Please inform the school of your destination if/when you are traveling
  - Assessments
    - Students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades just finished two weeks of iReady assessments
    - There are two reasons for the assessments
      - Provides data about where the students are now so we know what they need to learn next
      - Helps students develop stamina, test taking skills, and resilience
  - Traffic
    - Reckless driving continues to be an issue outside of school
    - If necessary, photos of cars will be published to help curb the poor behavior
  - Halloween
    - Halloween parade will take place outdoors on Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:45pm, parents are welcome to attend the parade
    - Like in previous years, students will have the option to leave at 12:30pm to have lunch and get into costume
    - Children may also opt to remain at school for lunch and put their costumes on at school
    - Students will return to school at 1:30pm
    - Outdoor Halloween parade will begin promptly at 1:45pm, weather permitting
    - This is a sunshine only event; weather-related changes will be communicated that morning
    - Children will return to their classrooms for a Halloween celebration after the parade
    - No parents or volunteers will be allowed in the building at this time
- 3) Questions or Concerns - Mrs. Tierney
  - How is technology used in the classroom to support learning and is all of the technology used in the classroom for educational purposes?
    - Because of Covid, all children (including our 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders who normally would not have Chromebooks yet) need equitable access to technology, hence the distribution of Chromebooks to all students



- Chromebooks are used in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades to build knowledge of technology, so that the students are prepared if we ever need to return to remote learning
- As we return to 'normal life,' Chromebooks in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades will not be employed as often, and pen and paper activities will return
- Will we go back to the District reporting Covid cases by school through email, or will it continue to be reported on the district's Covid Dashboard?
  - Covid cases by school will continue to be reported on the District's Covid Dashboard
  - This was a result of the community's response to the frequent emails; the District heard from the community that the emails were too stressful/too frequent
- What is the school doing to help 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students be prepared for Middle School?
  - The transition to middle school is a big leap
  - Franklin students are academically prepared but the transition to multiple teachers and classes, greater need for organizational skills, test taking skills, and time management skills are new to most students
  - In the past, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes were able to switch teachers for different subjects, which helped them transition to Middle School, however, this hasn't been possible because of Covid cohort guidelines
  - Mrs. Tierney will bring this feedback to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade team and the Principal/teachers at the Middle School about the request to further prepare students for the transition