FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY PTO

GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, January 27th, 2022

7:00pm via Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

1) PTO President's Report - Casey Cohen
- Please let Elizabeth Somerlot know if you are interested in volunteering with the PTO or joining the PTO Executive Board
- Thank you to Mrs. Tierney and staff for making this year as normal as possible for our students
- Thank you to everyone who has paid their PTO dues; we have been able to fund many programs as a result
- Summary of PTO dollars at work
    - Outdoor Learning Center
    - Grace Lin author visit
    - Indoor recess materials
    - Jenkinson's Aquarium assembly
    - Sk8 For Life assembly
    - Art in the Classroom
    - Artist in Residence
    - Back to School Party
    - Bike Safety Event
    - Teacher Appreciation events
    - Teacher Mini-Grants
    - Holiday Shop
- Franklin FUNdraiser
    - The Franklin FUNdraiser (formally the Franklin Fair) is our biggest fundraising event of the year
    - The focus this year is on making the Franklin FUNdraiser fun and exciting for the kids and available for all families
    - The Franklin FUNdraiser will be held on Friday, April 29th from 4:30-7:30pm so that it doesn't interfere with weekend sports, and will require minimal volunteer hours, a departure from past Franklin Fairs
    - Events and Attractions
        - All night DJ dance party
        - Food trucks
        - BMX Bike Stunt Show
        - Dunk Tank featuring surprise guests
        - Children's Raffle
        - Silent Auction
        - 50/50 Raffle

- Reminders and Upcoming Events
  - Questions, comments and suggestions are always welcome and help the PTO tailor what we are doing to reflect our community's wants and needs
  - Book Fair (February 15 & February 16)
    - Children will shop the Book Fair during school hours
    - Families are invited to the Book Fair from 5:30-7:30pm on February 16 for evening shopping hours and Read to the Dogs Literacy Night community event

2) **Principal's Report – Q&A with Mrs. Tierney**
   - Question: Can you let us know how the Valentine's Day celebration will be this year and will kids exchange Valentine cards?
     - Classroom teachers or class parents will communicate information about Valentine's Day to classes next week
     - Celebrations will be hosted in the classroom with students only, no volunteers
     - Class parents can send in a craft or game
     - Valentine cards will be exchanged, however, no food or small toys
     - Valentine's Day will tie into the 'Franklin Has Heart' tradition
     - Reminder that Valentine's Day is a single-session day this year
   - Question: Can indoor recess be more interactive for the kids? Can kids wear masks and play together in small groups?
     - At this time, students are still required to remain 3 feet apart
     - PTO has provided bins of indoor recess resources so that kids can still socialize and play interactive games such as Legos, coloring pages, Yahtzee, etc. at a 3 foot distance
   - Question: Will Art in the Classroom return?
     - Yes, it is returning the week of February 9th
   - Will parents be notified of scores children received from testing in the Fall?
     - New Jersey Start Strong
       - Standardized testing last year was cancelled due to Covid
       - Due to concern about learning loss and how Covid affected learning, New Jersey created an assessment called New Jersey Start Strong for 4th and 5th grade students this past fall
       - Results have recently been mailed to families
     - iReady
       - District has started to employ a measure called iReady
       - iReady is a computer program that is used daily in math
       - iReady assesses students and creates a unique set of math problems based on what each child demonstrates as their level of proficiency

- iReady aligns with the Summit curriculum and New Jersey state standards
  - iReady benchmark assessments were done in September
  - This week students are completing a mid-year benchmark assessment
  - iReady is not a high-pressure or high-stakes assessment
  - iReady measures students' growth over time and informs how to individualize each child's learning to meet their needs
  - iReady also identifies areas where students need extra support, enrichment, or if they are right where they should be
- Drop-off/Pick-up Guidelines
  - Drop-off has been better since families were reminded that doors open at 8:15am and children aren't marked late until after 8:25am
  - The issue of pick-up and drop-off on Warwick Road has been addressed with families that consistently don't follow the rules and continue to double-park and allow children to run between cars
  - Unfortunately, the next step is to contact the Summit Police Department to ticket these individuals
- Supporting the PTO
  - Families should continue to support the PTO and the Franklin FUNdraiser because the money goes directly back to the children
  - The funds raised allow our school to go a little bit above and beyond and provide for our students
  - One example is the outdoor learning center

3) **Summit Educational Foundation Report (SEF) - Leah Enthoven, Rana Barclay, Jill Olman**
- SEF has been around for 35 years and strives to enhance curriculum and school environment through grants created by teachers and adminstrators
- 95% of grants are approved after review by the SEF Board
- The SEF has strict guidelines about what they will fund with grants and asks teachers and administrators to be creative with the grants that they write
- Grants are submitted and approved in two cycles: Fall and Spring
- Visit SEFnj.org to see grants awarded in years past
- This year, SEF has already awarded over $100,000 in Covid-specific grants such as microphones for teachers and cameras for remote learning
- SEF is able to fund grants because of community donations
- Spring for Excellence is the SEF's only fundraiser
  - It has been revamped this year so that representatives from all of the schools participate in planning the event, rather than rotating the responsibility among schools
  - The Spring for Excellence event is tentatively being planned for the beginning of April, look for more information about the event soon