

El Sierra PTA Meeting Minutes  
August 23, 2016  
Submitted by Maria Wootton

Members in attendance: Rose La-Rue Slater, Beth McIntosh, Jason Lynde, Brienne Harris, Beth Szopko, Dara Tuscano, Laura Kamedulski, Jeanine Helfrich, Dione Swierczynski, Jodi Dalton, Leslie Opila, Sara Deacy, Amy Carlson, Sylva Coyne, Cinda Lester, Maria Wootton

Rose called the meeting to order at 6:21pm

1. Principal's report by Mr. Lynde: Teachers come back Thursday and Friday. The teachers are ready. There were no rentals all summer. Playground (replacement of pea gravel with mulch by district) will be tended to next year. Took out tetherball poles, and now there is more green space. Soccer fields will be painted/ the park district will be updating soccer fields; they will be using them as well. All basketball hoops are in working order. Kindergarten Connection coming up Thursday, August 25th from 5-630pm. Kindergarten numbers around 30. PTA representatives will be there, and Brienne Harris will speak to the group for a few minutes to welcome people to the PTA, and give some brief information about upcoming volunteer opportunities like art appreciation. Class lists will be out Thursday at 4pm. Difference this year is that information given won't include all kids in the class, only the teacher's name. First and Second grades around 68 kids. Teacher assignments will be: Mrs. Bennet in 1st grade, Mrs. O'Conner will have a 1st/2nd grade split class, with a teacher's aide. There was a question posed to Mr. Lynde about how are kids chosen to be in a split classroom. He stated that they look at kids and relationships - only about 2 kids remained in same class with last year's classroom teacher. Mrs. Cronquist will have all 2nd grade. 3rd grade will be the same with Mrs. Claver - 28 kids, with teacher assistant. 4th grade with Mrs. Iaquinto and Mrs. Wyatt will be on maternity leave until Oct. 5th, Mrs. Howell will be the substitute. 6th grade will have Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Incrocci. El Sierra has 270 kids total this year. This number is down from last few years. Four schools in district have lower numbers this year. These split classes would separate for art and special classes. For art appreciation, it's recommended to keep records so that there is less possibility of repeating lessons. Mr Lynde is excited about split classes because of the high caliber teachers he was able to hire and the better opportunities this enables. 6th graders will be recess leaders for K-2 graders and they will run games. They will do this on a rotation basis and on a volunteer basis during their own recess. About 30 of the 6th graders met with Mr. Lynde last Friday. They had great ideas. Mr. Lynde believes this gives them great opportunity to develop leadership skills. New recess balls have been bought. PTA freezer - Mr. Lynde posed question to the group about the status of this freezer. Will it be used? Or would the PTA be considering reselling it? Old PTA digital camera is in the safe. Mr. Lynde wanted to know what the PTA would like to do with the camera. Blessings in a Backpack program - donations come in all year long during the school year...Mr. Lynde needs people to pack backpacks every Thursday. There are

about 38 families that are receiving donations. Donations are just for the student. Program is confidential. It only takes ½ hour of time. Weekly commitment. Pack backpacks on Thursday after school. Sara Deacy will add this to the volunteer form. Watch Dogs (dads of great schools.) This is a program that Mr. Lynde would like to get off the ground for next year. The program tries to get more male positive role models in the schools. Dads of schools. Dads come during the entire school day or a half day. They work directly with students on school work, etc. to feel connected to the school. There would be a kick off event in the fall to invite dads to come for pizza or something to get them to volunteer. Start small and work towards more involvement as the year progresses. \$500 start up fee. Mr. Lynde would apply for a grant, but would like PTA support for the program. Need a “top dog” to head it up. Someone with a few kids at the school that could stick with it for a few years. Mr. Lynde has some ideas of who to ask. Not meant to be a PTA program, but PTA supported. Rose will send link out of a video with more info.

2. Open Committees - Author Fest put together by PTA council. Expensive. 2-4K. There are a few meetings during the year. Held in April. Need coordinator. Mary Loversky does most of the coordinating. Half of the district schools participate each year. Held during the school day. El Sierra will be participating this year. Beth and Beth will be helping Rose. Art Appreciation will be passed to Dione.
3. Ice Cream Social. September 1st from 530-730. Cost (to the PTA) same as last year, \$1.25 per person. Set up at 5pm. Need a list of families. Need two tables (membership, manna and tickets?) plus tables for Cub Scout regatta and after school programs. Let Mr. Lynde know how many tables the PTA needs. No rain date. We will just move inside if it rains. Budgeted \$450 from amount spent last year.
4. Curriculum Night. Sept. 6th from 6-730pm. PTA membership table will be in hallway.
5. After School Programs. Lego, chess, Young Rembrandts, Weird Science- all the same as last year. Questions came up about language programs and intramural sports... There is no PE teacher in the afternoon and there are issues with funding and scheduling for busing for intramural programs. Intramural program a possibility for a watch dog dad? Would need a late bus. Language programs more a district question. HW issues? Common Threads program brought up by Sara Deacy - Lester doing it and the Park District. Girls on the Run idea also brought up by Beth McIntosh..
6. Game Night. Donations can be made/taken now - there are letters available to hand out. But if anyone sees anything that would make a good raffle prize, or on a website, we can start gathering prizes now. Need to coordinate with the group so as to not double up on prizes.
7. Calendar. Regular PTA meetings for the 2016/2017 school year will be in the LRC at school on Mondays, Sept 26, March 13, and May 8 and Tuesdays, Nov 15 and Jan 10.
8. Exec board meetings - tbd
9. Fun Run. September 30th. Theme this year will be the Olympics . There will be a little event at each station. No spray paint. Combo with Caine’s Arcade. Spending questions. Less money on prizes, more on things like like pie in the face of Mr. Lynde. Poll the kids. Ask the teachers. Experiences with Mr. Lynde seem to be very popular. Dunk tank?!

Email ideas for prizes to Dara Tuscano or Marie Jackson. A spin the wheel? Maybe we can borrow one from another school? Need to finalize prizes by the second week of school.

10. Fall event. Freaky Friday. Friday, Oct 28th. (Halloween parties at school on Monday, Oct 31.) Spent about \$800 on this event. Made about \$200. Will classrooms make something to raffle off? Like a scarecrow or wreath?
11. Breakfast with Santa. Dec 10th. Will probably use Chuck's for the food again this year. Spent \$1100 last year. Not expecting to get free food every year. Income \$470.
12. Penguin Patch. Dec 12-16. Christmas shopping during lunch so kids can buy gifts for their parents or family. Discussion of the possibility of an evening shopping event. Should have something for parents to do or a place for the parents to go while they wait for their kids if evening event occurs. This is not a fundraiser. There are free items given by the company so kids with "no" money can purchase items, or use pennies.
13. Field Day. June 6th. Rain date June 7th.
14. Fun Lunch. Dara Tuscano. Will be on school calendar/website. Oct 14, Nov 18, Dec 9, Jan 20, Feb 17, March 17, April 21, May 19. Not using Neutral Zone this year (closed). Will still have a chicken item, still working on vendor though.
15. Caine's Arcade. With Fun Run. Cinda Needs a Shadow this year.
16. Teacher Appreciation Week May 1-5. Teacher Appreciation Day is Tuesday, May 2nd. More grab and go items perhaps for the teachers recommended. Maybe a group/school gift instead of individual teacher gifts?! Maybe just do a full lunch on Tuesday instead of every day - might be too much food. Budget is set at \$1000, but hoping to scale it down.
17. Valentine's Day. Roller skating? Needs to book a year in advance. Usually about 150-200 people. Average is about 220 people? Around Valentine's Day - Thursday or Saturday...Parent Teacher conferences are the 8th and 9th.
18. Game Night. Discussion - Not a lot of participation. Hillcrest has had great success with it due to buying a table. Need lots of game action and less "free" time. Not at Neutral Zone due to it closing down. Suggestions to Melissa and Kim.
19. Membership. Packets will be in teacher mailboxes on Friday for distribution next week. Everyone on PTA needs to join PTA each year. Sara Deacy putting together volunteer list.
20. Directory. Will need help with formatting and catching errors in printing of directory. Maybe one person per grade level. Need Directory Review volunteers. By the end of September. Will do art contest for front cover.
21. Box Tops. Leslie Oplia. Try to spread the word to get more box tops/more volume. Due twice a year. Goal is \$1000.
22. Room Reps. Cinda Lester. Question about information being emailed at beginning of school so paper copies can be due at Curriculum Night. Good idea!
23. Treasurer Report. Campbell's labels extended until December? Didn't seem to be any knowledge of Campbell's labels still around the school. Market Day Pies? Field Trips \$500 per grade level. Report was that there is some inequality in spending with funds between grade levels, but consensus seemed to be that was okay since there are

different needs at different grade levels and the kids would all benefit during their tenure at El Sierra.

24. Landscaping. Earth Savers Club does not cover the amount of work needed to be done. Discussed a company to donate work? Daisies? Confirmation kids? Some flowers attract bees by the entrance. Changes to be made this year to process. Waiting on number of volunteers that sign up and then will revisit discussion.
25. Spirit wear. Seems to be a good fundraiser. Have a table at Curriculum Night and Fun Run for orders. Add shorts? Yes. Baseball hats? Yes.
26. Meeting adjourned at 9:08pm