



## **Bishop School PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Date: March 8, 2017**

**Location: Bishop School Library**

**7 – 9 p.m.**

### **Minutes**

- **Welcome and Introductions:**

Heather Breslau opened the meeting with a brief outline of the agenda. At the start of the meeting the following Bishop Community members were present: Heather Breslau, Meredith Dimola, Principal Mark McAneny, Jenn Badua, Jeannine Ranaghan, Deborah Kokinos, Shannon Knuth, Rosemary Foster, Anna Pisania, Mark Davila, Sarah Eastman, Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch

- February 2017 meeting minutes were announced as on the website and a motion to approve the minutes as written was presented by Heather Breslau, seconded by Jenn Badua.

- **Principal's Update (Mark McAneny):**

Mr. McAneny started by saying that March is a great month because there are six uninterrupted weeks for learning before April break. The students have been able to get outside more because of this mild winter which has been great. Mr. McAneny said that Science Night was a huge success and thanked Rosemary Foster for all the work she did coordinating the event. He also thanked Shannon Knuth for encouraging the high schoolers to come and volunteer at the event.

MCAS prep is underway. This year testing will be done online with the exception of the science and technology test for the 5<sup>th</sup> graders which will be paper based. The teachers are in the process of getting training on the online test and troubleshooting tips from the District's IT group. One grade per day will take the test because the students are sharing the Chrome Books. Question from Shannon Knuth: Will the MCAS be timed? Response from Mr. McAneny: The test will not be timed. Question from Rosemary Foster: Is the schedule for MCAS still on website. Response from Mr. McAneny: The schedule was posted in a previous newsletter. It may not be on the website. The link to the schedule is

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/12QRuIU3GxcQD7TF3p0h8tI1eZ9pxfPHEijJ3xw4z2\\_k/](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12QRuIU3GxcQD7TF3p0h8tI1eZ9pxfPHEijJ3xw4z2_k/)

Question from Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch: Do the kids get their MCAS grades at the end?

Response from Mr. McAneny: A report will be sent home after the test. Question from Sarah Eastman: Do the MCAS scores get factored into the kids overall grades? Response from Mr.

McAneny: No, the MCAS scores do not get factored into overall grades.

It's time for the Bishop Play! Mr. McAneny said he is feeling the positive energy at school. Everyone is very happy with the new director and also the parent volunteers are all doing a fantastic job. Question from Rosemary Foster: When will the play tickets going on sale?

Response from Heather Breslau: Tickets will go on sale at the end of this week or next week.

Mr. McAneny said he is already thinking about next year. He expects enrollment to remain pretty steady with each grade level continuing to have 3 classes. Kindergarten registration is coming up. Mr. McAneny is focusing on special education for next year and being able to better support students with special needs. Currently these students are spread throughout each class within the grades and often the Teaching Assistants are scheduled to be working with students in different classes at the same time. This has been very challenging to schedule and Bishop is borderline non-compliant. Mr. McAneny feels that clustering students with similar profiles and needs would allow the Teaching Assistants to work with a group of students more efficiently. Other schools in the district have already adopted this model and are successful. This would be a culture change at Bishop and would require additional professional development for the staff. Question from Sarah Eastman: Is there a replacement for Ms. Schuette when she goes on maternity leave? Response from Mr. McAneny response: I have some ideas for replacements, but nothing is certain yet.

Ms. Aftuck was not able to attend the meeting tonight so Mr. McAneny continued with the Teacher Update. The Teachers are very busy with report cards. The use of PowerSchool takes a lot of time and has its challenges. Question from Shannon Knuth: When will report cards be sent home? Response from Mr. McAneny: Report cards will be sent home on 3/17.

- Co-President's Report (Heather Breslau/Meredith Dimola):

Heather Breslau thanked Rosemary Foster for all the work she did planning Science Night. Recognizing the kids with the certificates and pins was a great idea and the kids were so excited and proud. Rosemary Foster said she really enjoyed talking to the kids and hearing about their experiments. We will be looking for some new demonstrations next year because some of the demonstrators have kids that are graduating from Bishop. Heather Breslau reminded everyone that PTO grants are still available and asked Mr. McAneny to remind the teachers. Parents can also request grants for items that will benefit the Bishop community. The snow shoes which many of the students were able to use this year were purchased by a grant from the PTO.

The Bear Fair is coming up. There are still some lead volunteers needed. A list will be included in the newsletter this week and also shared through the room parents. As in the past all Bishop Families are asked to volunteer in some way. Each class will be assigned events and time slots to volunteer. Question from Mark Davila: Do we have someone to do the graphics for the Bear Fair posters? Response from Heather Breslau: Yes, Renata Thomas has volunteered to do the graphics again this year. Question from Rosemary Foster: Will there be a food truck at the Bear Fair? Response from Heather Breslau: We are looking at food trucks options and also looking into asking La Victoria to cater the event. Question from Mark Davila: Last year there was polling done to determine favorite games or new ideas. Will this be done again this year? Response from Heather Breslau: We are not doing, but it can be done.

Meredith Dimola continued with an update about Bishop Cleanup Day on April 8<sup>th</sup>. A sign up genius has been circulated with volunteer slots. Shannon Knuth is coordinating cleaning up the grounds. A Bishop parent has volunteered to design the seating area around the garden. The seating area will be made from granite supplied by the Town. We are looking for someone in the Bishop community that has equipment we can use to move and place the granite once it is delivered by the Town. If necessary we can hire someone but it would be great to find someone to donate their time and equipment. Throughout the day we will also be painting four square lines, renovating the science kiosk, installing tether balls, and installing a buddy bench. Also, the town will be planting 4 new street trees but this will not occur on Cleanup Day. Question from Mark Davila: Where will the trees be placed? Response from Meredith Dimola: We are not sure yet. Question from Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch: Where can I find the sign up genius for cleanup day? Response from Meredith Dimola: The link will be in the newsletter this week and was posted on the PTO Facebook page. Additionally, third grade room parents will be sending out a request for volunteers soon as this is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade event. Question from Debbie Kokinos: Will the tether balls be cemented into the ground? Response from Mr. McAneny: Yes, they will be.

Room Parent Coordinator, Anna Pisania, gave an update on Teacher Appreciation Week. Teacher Appreciation Week will be from April 10 – 13<sup>th</sup>. Anna will be sharing planning information with the room parents in the next few weeks. Teacher Appreciation Week events planned by the PTO include providing breakfast, chair massages, gift card raffles, and extended lunch with parent volunteers.

Meredith Dimola gave an update on Bishop Pride Week. This is scheduled for March 27-31. The theme of the week is Regard, Responsibility, and Respect. Similar to last year we will ask students to write something about respect, regard and responsibility. We also plan to do a change drive and donate the proceeds to a local charity. Question from Rosemary Foster: Will the things the students write be used as decorations for the Play? Response from Heather Breslau: Yes, we plan to do that again and are thinking about ways to decorate.

- Budget Update (Deborah Kokinos):

Deborah Kokinos circulated the YTD budget as of February 28, 2017. She said that most of the budget activity since our last meeting has been for the play. The Annual Fund is currently at \$9,032 which is about 75% of the \$12,000 budgeted for the year.

- Fundraising Update (Shannon Knuth)

Shannon Knuth spoke about fundraising. She said that someone in the Bishop Community received a 10,000 box top certificate which gives \$1,000 to the PTO. The budget for box tops was \$400 so we will be well over for the year. The Stop and Shop reward program is ongoing through the end of March. Our account is currently at \$678.

Bishop Tuesdays at NYAJ is this month. Question from Mark Davila: Where do I get box tops? Response from Shannon Knuth: They are on many grocery items such as tissues, zip lock bags, etc.

- Public Comment/Questions:

1. Question from Rosemary Foster: Can the donations I receive for the Cause and Event Race be donated to the PTO?

Response from Heather Breslau: Yes, the PTO has decided to donate all proceeds raised by our team to Arlington Eats.

2. Question from Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch: My daughter is registering for the Cause and Event Race through the Fit Girls. Should I also register through them or should I register as part of the Bishop PTO team?

Response from Heather Breslau: You can register as part of the Bishop PTO team.

3. Question from Sarah Eastman: Does Bishop participate in the Reflections program which is a national cultural art competition (dance, photography, art)?

Response from Heather Breslau: We are not aware of that program but can look into it.

4. Question from Rosemary Foster: Will there be a used goods drop off at Cleanup Day this year?

Response from Meredith Dimola: Yes. We will be looking for more volunteers for the used good drop off as well.

- Meeting Adjourned. The next Meeting will be April 12, 2017.