

WUES GENERAL PTO MEETING

Tuesday, September 21st 2021 at 8:00 pm Via Zoom Video Call

President Robyn Goldstein called the meeting to order.

Zoom meeting to order at – 8:03pm

[Handouts sent prior to meeting via email: General May PTO meeting minutes]

Motion to approve Meeting minutes from May – First Lisa. Second Emily Leitch. All in favor. Motion approved.

In attendance via Zoom video call: Robyn Goldstein, Amanda Duguid, Allison, Allyson Ackerman, Alyse Hawkins, Amanda Harmon Cooley, Ami Mehta, Amira, Ann, Ashley Muehlberger, Beeca Davison, Benjamin Oska, Brian Castle, Bruce. Fulin, Carlos Garduno, Caryn Barron, Ceyhan, Chad Steitle, Chenchy, Claire Horner, Crystal Hill, David Nachtigall, Devon Lewis, Diana, Diana Liang, Elise Madray, Elle Guerrini, Elly Jukes, Emily Leitch, Erika Wagner, Ethan, Farnaz Dini, Gilly Farshadi, GJ Diaz, Heather Conerly, Henry, Histesh Doshi, Erin Hubbard, Melissa, iPhone x3, J Krijgh, Jaime Titus, Janet, Joan H, Johnny, Kathryn McMurray, Katie Hill, Katrina, Kaura Webb, Kelly Butler, Kelly Hamic, Komal Kotwal, Kristi Lauren Foley, Laura Atha, Laura Hobika, Laura Nathan-Garner, Lauren Carlson, Lauren Hall, Leah Follette, Lilia Beddar, Lisa, Lulu, Maren Fuller, Maria Kim, Mary-Kathryn D'Agostino, Maryann Lio Grahmann, Melissa Turowsky, Mimi, Min Kim, MLW, Paola Aguiluz, Katherine Plumb, Rebecca Selzer, Rita Davis, Rohini Pandita, Samantha, Sarah Covington, Sarah Nelson, Scott Disch, Shannon Westin, Shreya Gulamali, Shreya Sen, Siddharth Ram Athreya, Siddhartha Sen, Sonal & Vivek Desphande, Sruba De, Staci Vetterling, Stephanie Magers, Tejal Patel, Thomas C, Vivek Arora, Ryan Butler, Marion Woerner

President's Report

- Thank you to everyone who has volunteered this year. If you have not done the VIPS training and approval, please do it asap.
- Class t-shirts have been ordered. We are working on figuring out the colors we will choose. Also, a lot of great gear coming in.
- Mr. Brian Castle who is on the meeting, is our new wrap-around specialist. He has set up the positive behavior committee. We have two volunteers who have worked with him to set up some positive behaviors for positivity on our campus.
- Brian Castle – 14 yrs experience education. He has taught 3rd grade, 5th grade & has been a school counselor. Now he is the wrap-around specialist. Historically this has been at title 1 schools for basic needs. He is trying to meet the needs of our community through Mental health services, anti-bullying campaigns & encouraging students to speak up. . There is a school assistance form for staff and teachers at the school. They can refer students and families to Mr. Castle to connect with services on or off campus. He will usually respond within one business day. He is trying to unveil a behavior initiative to recognize students for positive behaviors in the classroom and in the school as a whole.

He is putting together a referral system through google doc or a qr code to report positive behaviors. Students who would receive a referral like this will be shared with parents and have an incentive at the school. The incentive will perhaps be a spirit stick – can put on key chain to backpacks with phrases such as “I show kindness,” “I’m a good citizen,” etc... If this sounds like something you’re interested in, please reach out. He is trying to push more positive signage to be put around the school ie: Empathy, kindness, compassion etc.

- The meeting is being recorded. We hit capacity, so we will post the link.
- 2020-2021 yearbook came in yesterday. We are working hard for anyone who is at the school to receive it in the next few days. We will send out a communication for pick up/ mail for anyone not still at the school.
- Picture day is Friday.
- Red Apple Sale is open through the end of the month. Can order everything for PTO, dues, donations, bday book club, signs etc – all at once.
- Plug for 5th grade bday signs. They look more professional – encourage to go on and order.
- All of you have probably seen the new gaga pit and new Viking swing. This is from SPARK and PTO funds
- Front office renovation looks great. Yesely, thank you for all your hard work.
- Thank you for all those that attended room parent meeting & for supporting our teachers through the year.
- COVID – Mr. Disch will address this. The PTO did purchase additional air purifiers for the building and new filters. Hopefully all of you have seen the SDMC update that was sent out.
- Reminder to sign up for Mustang News. It is a good place for information.

- Shannon Westin Boo Bash 10am – 2pm on 10/16. We are trying to emphasize safety. Everyone must purchase their band ahead of time. Food trucks will be there. It is a cashless event. We are not advertising to the community this year. There will be confetti eggs & t shirts that can be bought there. We reduced the typical number of activities. We are going to encourage social distancing and masks on the bounce house/close contact rides. Sponsorship has been going well. If people sponsor by this Friday, you can still be on the banner. We are still selling t-shirts & are almost out. We will be selling on campus Thursday morning and afternoon. Spirit Day and Boo Bash competition are coming up. We need volunteers to help with the different activities. We are allowing siblings to attend. Wrist bands will come home by 10/11

- Kelly Butler – Book Fair – 10/19 - We are working with the librarian, at school during ancillary time. We will still have book mark competition. Dress up day 10/29. There will be volunteer opportunities on campus during this time. Make sure that you are VIPs approved. Can also shop online. More info in next few weeks.
- Leah Follette - 48% families have joined PTO. Doing pretty well. Trying to get to 75% membership. Please encourage anyone who hasn't yet joined to sign up. We will let you know how to pick up the swag, around the first week of October. Also, we are doing pretty well re: corporate donations. We do a good job with advertising in return for anyone who is interested in sponsoring..
- Sarah Nelson – Webmaster & social media guru for the next year. Submit news requests on the website. Can also email info@westupto.org. One big major move, we are going to use membership tool kit for directory purposes only. Other purchases will be on the website as the West U shop. Sarah is responding on IG. Leah and Sarah on FB. If you post and tag westupto, we will always ask permission if it's ok to share. Amanda is asking about lead time to get in to mustang news. Mustang news needs a week before. Monday folders just a few days before. There is a timeline on the website. Social Media will be distributed pretty fast. For the website we need two weeks lead time. We are trying to make this efficient and streamlined.

Principal's Disch's Report

- Thanks to PTO for disbursement money for our teachers.
- Thanks to PTO for the Viking Swing
- In regards to the Front office - big thank you to PTO and Yesely.
- We need SES and all the forms from Monday Folders. Last year they were electronic due to things being virtual. We didn't get the number of forms returned we needed that way
- Going are going to answer some questions from you guys and we will discuss COVID/SDMC
- COVID Related:
 - o We have already had more + cases than we had all of last year. Last year we had 18-22 total combined. This year we are at 32. The dashboard is about a day or two behind. We will get info about a positive case. Mr. Disch and Nurse Paula will work with the district to quarantine appropriate people or a whole class if necessary. We have had to do this already to help stop the spread
 - o There is a criteria in the HISD guidelines where a student in a quarantined class may not need to stay home. If they've had covid in last 3 months, they don't need to quarantine. In this case, they will go to another class temporarily. We don't

inform the new class that the student is coming. We are trying to tell parents as much information as we can while keeping medical information private. We are trying to find the balance there.

- When students are in quarantine or are missing for covid, they go on temporary online learning. Temporary online learning is four hours of virtual online instruction. This is not aligned with what is happening in class. The key piece for attendance purposes is that student need to log on between 930-10 am. Families will still get calls about absences because the teacher marks the absences, but Ms. Estrada will correct it that day. If a kid is absent for 3-4+ days, teachers are reaching out to families to set up work so they won't be behind.
- Board has approved a \$500 one-time stipend for proof of staff vaccination. Waiting TEA approval. Also, an additional 10 covid days added.
- SDMC – we reviewed the numbers on Friday. We discussed ways we could change things to slow the spread, so we don't put more stress on the local hospital system and so that we keep our kids safe. We are finding the balance of keeping kids healthy, but that our mitigation strategies are not hindering social development or engagement & learning.
 - 1. Entry/Dismissal – the district did put some information out that we're not required to do temperature checks anymore. We are not doing them. Last year & this year we haven't turned anyone away. Of course, knowing there is a temperature check coming is a gate at home. Please don't push kids to go to school with fever. We will not stop them from coming into the building without a mask, but they can't go in their classroom without mask. We could use assistance that because 4/5th grade have class until 3pm, we need families to stay outside the gates until then. The back playground isn't open for use until that time. We let younger kids out first to spread out the dismissal.
 - 2. Hallways – as kids are moving from class to class, or waiting to use bathrooms, they will social distance better ~3ft apart. We are laying sticky dots on the floor as a good visual reminder.
 - 3. Lunch – we haven't found that spread has happened at lunch – haven't had found that positive kids are giving it to kids at lunch. At lunch we are using all the space we have - the entire cafeteria & mpr. Kids are seated every other seat – all facing forward. We are encouraging kids to put their mask back on when they finish eating. We are try to keep noise level down & to enjoy each other's company.
 - 4. Recess – this will be a little different. Whole grade recess – for back playground – we have a group of students using the fields anyway. Playground is big enough that they can spread out on the equipment. For potential high density areas, teachers will help to keep kids spaced apart.

For the younger kids, when they weren't on the playground – they were in each other's face and on each other more when on field. When on the playground they seem to be more distanced.

- 5. Communication – After we contact trace and after we tell the quarantined students families, we will email the whole class that there was a case. We try to do this as quickly as possible. We ensure that the quarantined families hear from us first. For 4th and 5th grade, we have distribution lists for switch classes too. The goal is to give parents info to make informed decisions for outside of school and in. One thing with communication on parents end, we need Nurse Paula to know about any positive cases. Even if your kid is quarantined we need to know if they're positive
 - 6. Masks – expectation is that they are worn in the building. They are encouraged but not required outside. Ancillary teams showed a video of how to wear a mask.
 - 7. Classrooms – This was where our biggest discussion was. There is a balance between safety and not hindering education. What we've decided is that not every room or class size is the same. We are limited with how much furniture we have. Teachers spend time creating a classroom structure with what they're doing for instructional learning. Admin is going to determine where there are some areas where we can space out a bit more, shift how kids are facing or spread them out a bit. We are still going to do small groups and floor time for small kids
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- No Virtual Open House this year. But we are going to have virtual parent conferences. Share academic info and get to know the teacher. Our hope is that by middle of October is that maybe they can be in person.
 - Robyn and Mr. Disch are discussing how to reconnect the community with the school. Ways to get parents into the school.
 - The best way to contact Nurse Paula is via email.
 - Mask mandate – is there a covid threshold to remove mandate? –The Superintendent is awaiting information from health and medical field. There will be adjustments based on community transmission
 - Switch classes – any discussion to do it like last year & keep kids “more podded” – is this increasing exposure worth it for the educational experience? Homerooms are mixed students. When they switch, there are on level and gt. At this point we do think the switch is worth it. Per Robyn, what we've heard is that it's nice to switch, pre teen hormones, mean girls – developmentally/socially it is good to have these switch classes. Per Mr. Disch, after spring break the kids started to become on each other's nerves, it is good to mix it up.

- If there is a teacher that is positive, is that close contact to whole class? or is it a case in the class? Because close contact is defined within 6ft for 15 mins or longer it is case by case. But, we have had to quarantine two classes due to this.
- Are you adjusting education re: mask wearing, pronunciation lip reading etc?– we've had those conversations with our teachers to make sure they're doing something intentional teaching for key sounds they need to hear. K-2 are working on safest ways to do that. We

can connect with interventionist if this is an issue

Miscellaneous

- Apologies to anyone who didn't get in. We did hit capacity at 100. Last year we didn't hit 100. We will send the recording link to mustang news and online.
 - Huge thank you to Mr. D. He is incredibly responsive. Responds to all requests and reads all emails. We are lucky to have someone with such leadership.
 - Caryn Barron says please don't stress out. We can fix absences & can help you.
- Motion to Adjourn Amanda Duguid. Second Rita Davis. Adjourn at 9:07 pm.*