**Willis Elementary PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday November 9, 2017**

Starting Time: 8:45 am

Board Members Present:   Mr. Stenger, Bianca Lawrence, Sky Galliano, Tara Merino, Cathy Magda

Other Members Present: Listed separately

Minutes submitted by Cathy Magda

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Thank you Message
2. Holiday Shoppe Update
3. Financial Update
4. Walk-A-Thon Prizes
5. Mr. Stenger Remarks
6. Speaker Session
7. Q&A

**PTO Welcome Message / Open Positions**

1. Bianca welcomed and thanked the attendees for taking time to get involved. She thanked Agusta Perkins for chairing the WAT prizes and mentioned the awesome job she did with the ice cream party by adding a lot of her own personal touches to make it a fun event for the 274 children who participated. Sky added to the same saying the event was a big success and a fun time for all. Bianca reiterated the need for chairpersons and volunteers because there’s no better way to support our school and our children.

**Holiday Shoppe Update**

1. Deb Sharpe, the chairperson for the Holiday Shoppe spoke about the upcoming event. Holiday Shoppe is December 4 -8 in the Media Center. It is a fun time for the children to purchase small gifts for their family members. There will be a signup genius going out asking for volunteers to help. Again, these events are only successful because of parent volunteers and their support.

**Financial Update**

1. Tara reported on current financials. The WAT number is $91,877 and again, stated the success of the WAT is because of the phenomenal support of our parents, friends and families.
2. Tara discussed that we will continue to make investments in our children. We have already purchase science supplies for Mrs. Schneider that the children are utilizing.
3. Tara mentioned that the PTO is also working with the school administration to purchase the second part of the Making Meaning libraries for each classroom, Writing Program and STEAM items and hopes to get those into the classrooms in the next couple of months.

**Walk-A-Thon Prizes:**

1. We are working hard to spread out the WAT prizes throughout the year. The first event was the ice cream party with Mrs. Fintel. Thanks again to Agusta and her team, the event was a success.
2. Next month (date not finalized), we will have our Field Trip to MacAllisters with Principal Stenger. Tara has finalized the menu with Tina Bliss who has been absolutely amazing and so generous.
3. Every student will be receiving a WAT shirt this year. The board will work with Agusta and her team to sort and distribute when received.
4. Other prizes such as Jumpin Fun and Ninja Warrior Training dates are being finalized.
5. A date has yet to be determined for when Mr. Stenger and Mrs. Fintel will be on the wall. Due to Irma manage changes are being made to the testing schedule, so they are waiting for those to be finalized.

**Mr. Stenger Remarks**

1. Mr. Stenger and Mrs. Fintel are so thankful for the amazing support from our parents. They are going to be working with the PTO board to make some meaningful investments in the curriculum.
2. Mr. Stenger mentioned they are looking at purchasing Being a Writer which is a program that is created by the same company that makes Making Meaning.
3. Last week the Kindergarten and 5th grade teachers had their 1st round of Making Meaning training. Instructors went into the classroom and presented a lesson.
4. Teachers were able to see the program in a classroom setting, work out issues, and ask questions.
5. 2nd, 3rd, 1st and 4th grade teachers will have training in a couple of weeks. Follow up will be in the Spring. Teachers will be able to model a lesson.
6. Mr. Stenger mentioned the need for 2 substitute Aides at the school (3 days per week). Anyone interested should register with the District

**Speaker Session**

1. Bianca introduced Carla Johanns, Clinical Supervisor of the Child and Family Therapy Services at Forty Carrots.
2. Carla oversees a group of therapists and supporting the expansion of mental health services throughout the Sarasota/Manatee community.
3. Carla discussed how to engage with children about sensitive issues.
4. How to discuss current headlines, personal safety, peer conflicts, family dynamics changing and anxiety.
5. Carla focused on personal safety and security. When discussing any topics with your children, remember to answer age appropriately with simple words and be honest. Let them know what is ok and what is not.
6. Talk to your children about trust and who they can trust. Have them name 5 people they can trust and feel comfortable speaking to about any issues or concerns they may have.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.