



Increase Miller Elementary School PTO General Board Meeting & Principal's Coffee - Minutes

Co-President, Kathy Martin
Co-President, Inna Rabinowitz
Co-Vice President, Jim Danalewich
Co-Vice President, Cassie Hollander
Secretary, Danielle Palermo
Treasurer, Seth Christian
Member at Large, Kari Wagner

Date: Friday, January 29, 2021 – 10:00 AM
Location: Zoom Meeting
Attendees: Principal Kerry Ford
Board Members: Kathy Martin, Inna Rabinowitz, Jim Danalewich, Cassie Hollander and Danielle Palermo
Parents: Karen Byrne, Michelle Zalkin

Meeting called to order by Kathy Martin at 10:02 AM.

Inna Rabinowitz welcomed all attendees and went over the meeting's agenda.

Board Members that were present at the meeting reintroduced themselves to everyone.

PTO Updates

- Events that the IMES PTO is planning
 - Valentine's Day Dance – February 10th – Inna gave description and asked those interested to RSVP
 - Build-An-Eagle with Eddie the Eagle – March 3rd – Inna and Danielle explained what the event will look like. Flyers will be sent home via backpack mail.
 - Square 1 Art – Kathy let parents know that this year they can order current artwork, as well as artwork from previous years. The PTO typically raises \$4,000-5,000 through Square 1 purchases.
 - S.T.R.E.A.M. Convention – Planning for late March/Early April. Will be virtual this year via Flipgrid which allows for participants to post their projects and have evaluators and peers post comments on them. Considering the possibility of the class with the most participants earning a prize. In years past, the most participants came from 2nd and 3rd grade, while 5th grade had the lowest.
 - Pictures for Yearbook – Asked to spread the word that pictures are needed for the yearbook, especially of winter fun and remote learning, and that we are still missing photos from approximately 60 students who hadn't had their photos taken by Lifetouch.
 - Food Trucks for teachers and staff
 - Wandering Dave's lunch on 2/3 (late Feb if it snows)
 - Bubble & Brew coffee truck on 2/10
 - Donation of Buddy Bench by IMES Class of 2020 – Homemade colorful bench was donated by last year's 5th Grade class. It is on the playground. Will provide a one-page document to the monitors on how the bench works so they can teach the kids.



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Kerry Ford Updates

- Health & Safety
 - Latest Department of Health notice dated 1/3/21 which reduces quarantine length and makes changes to proximate contact guidelines is easier to follow in MS and HS due to Elem children eating in the classrooms. The Transportation Dept. reinforced the importance of adhering to assigned seating chart and keeping distance.

- Teaching
 - No major differences were noticed when benchmarking this year versus last year from a data perspective
 - Juggling Zoom between in-person and at-home students is still a challenge
 - Remote teachers aren't able to see their students work up close, walk around the room to see over shoulders while working, etc. It has been tough at a distance
 - The curriculum has been slowed down a bit, specifically in ELA's units of study. In Fall they did 2 units each of reading and writing, when normally 3 units would be done. Teachers College normally recommends 7 units of study for both reading and writing, but also recommended to slow it down this year, meaning go deeper into the units taught versus just going over more units. Our teachers appreciated this since it allowed them to spend more time on a unit since they don't see the children as often, especially in grades 3-5.
 - Kids are doing better than expected due to strong parents and teachers
 - Increased Synchronous Learning on Wednesdays consisting of Morning Meetings and workshops or small group instruction between 9:30-11:00, any Special Services will be done via Zoom from 11:00-12:00, and Specials from 12:00-1:30
 - Teachers College videos were purchased to provide temporary support to teachers this year. They are encouraged to use it as a tool and make it their own by pausing and adding their personal narrative to the video's lesson.

- Band and Orchestra
 - There is no space in the Elementary schools to do it. Staffing is also an issue

- 4-day Model
 - Students with IEPs that receive Special Services and ENL students were offered to transition to the 4-day model on 1/4/21. Almost all that were invited came back



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- 2021-2022 School Year
 - No guidelines have been given yet by Governor Cuomo. The plan is to try and get as many children back for in-person learning as possible. Will plan out different scenarios and options

- Closures
 - Most have been due to staff quarantines

- Recess Bags/Movement Breaks
 - Asking teachers to make individual recess bags for students
 - Monitors have been creative with ways to keep the children busy when they can't go outside due to weather
 - Monitors have gotten to know the children better and have developed relationships with them all since they're now in the classrooms versus the cafeteria
 - Some monitors are on leave and bus drivers have stepped in to help monitor the classes when needed

Meeting was adjourned at 10:58 AM.