

Okte PTA Meeting – February 7, 2024

Number of members present: 16

Board members present: Erin Marshall, Whitney Pagano, Allison Faul, Kerri Kennedy, Laura Zasada, Lindsey Weinberg

A quorum was met.

Call to order at 6:38pm (A.Faul/ A. Dane)

Secretary's Report – Laura Zasada

- See January 9, 2023 minutes
- The report was approved (Allison F/Melissa R)

Board of Education (BOE) Report –Gusta Miller

- Meeting last night re: budget development underway - mid year forecast by Dr. Robinson.
- more money in transportation - transfinder app for parents to keep a location on their child's bus.
- Festival of the Arts on April 26, 2024
- Feb 5-9 National School Counselors week, shout out to all our counselors.

Q/A:

Q: The calendar days for the school year is 186, why does it seem like the school years are getting longer and longer every year?

→ The days are based on contractual days with minimal days following the BOCES calendar to get most of the school days. Also regents exams are effecting the school calendar.

Q: With changes in foundation aid, will this effect Shen?

→ Don't know how that will effect Shen yet.

Principal's Report – Kathleen Strangis

- Today there was a lockout. It did not disrupt instruction but no one was able to come in or out of the building at that time. SIS message did go out to families. Start to finish it was about 20-25 minutes. (It was brought to the attention by parents that there are still some kinks with the SIS communication in a timely manner. Mrs. Strangis will look into why we do not get text messages this school year.)
- Staffing update:
 - ISD Aid replacement/ ISD teacher replacement
 - Cafeteria/Recess person started today
 - Posting position for: 1. Tech aide, 2. 3.5 ADK teachers aide, 3. Counselor Aide, 4. Cleaner
 - Takes about a month to replace positions from posting to hire
- Just finished STAR testing, diagnostic testing and those results can be found in your child's backpack on the parent portal. Any concerns and thoughts reach out to teachers.
- This week 2nd grade is going to Arongen for the an author visit “Bad Kitty”
- Thank you to the PTA, as PECS system has been purchased for 2 books a month.
- Partnership committee had a meeting talking about parenting (The current book club came out of this meeting) and they are trying to work on a partnership with parents, shared decision making. Partner up with PTA meeting to use some time to make more

connections. Every school building has a partnership committee and feel maybe not informing enough but it is a good outcome. They have 6 meeting a year with some email communication in between.

- A lot has been going on with the curriculum and could be more to come.
- Thank you to Mrs. Walton for being here tonight, 3rd grade representative, as we continue to have teachers on rotation in order for the PTA members to get more exposure to the teachers of Okte.

Q/A:

Q: Free lunches, do we have to wait to see if we get that again next year?

→ Okte will have this for the next 4 years.

Q: The money in students' lunch accounts, what happens with that now that they have free lunch?

→ They can use that for snacks and it will continue to follow them through the years.

Faculty Report – Mrs. Walton (3rd grade teacher)

- Thank you to the PTA for all you do to support us, especially with the hot cocoa bar and holiday lunch.
- The 3rd grade went to Via aquarium in January and this was connected to 1st module in Wit & Wisdom, on the sea. It was great and we want to thank you for all our field trips.
- Founders Day dinner coming up, we look forward to supporting Mr D and Mrs L and thank you to all who recommended them as recipients.

Treasurer Report – Lindsey Weinberg

- Not too much going on in January
- 4-5 donation matches but not sure where they are coming from, but we think it is from the Fun Run and we will verify.
- Paid for a few field trips
- Lindsey Weinberg reviewed the expenses and income during the last month (The report was approved, Jaime/ Tammy C)

PTA Council Report

- Last meeting has updated bi-laws, information and scholarship award discussion, along with Founder Day dinner

Committee Reports

- After School Enrichment → seemed to go pretty well and will be ending soon. This was the first time using the company handling to back work of the program. They created the schedule and connected with the groups who provided the classes. They did a good job of scouting out organizations and getting parent volunteers is critical. Moving forward space would be an issue and having it 5 days in a row is a lot. Some feedback, maybe a better check out system as for safety concerns.
- Lego League → Finished 2 weeks ago. Great representation of Okte at the final festival with 27 teams total. This was an all day affair, starting with opening ceremonies, judging and displays. This did not feel like a competition, judges were called listeners to the kids. It was a lot to get the kids involved and understand. Patrick did an amazing job with organizing and communicating throughout the course of the program. Thank you!

Co-Presidents Report – Erin Marshall & Whitney Pagano

- Talked about upcoming events:
 - Craft Night was held on 2/6 and want to thank Home Depot who donated to this event. 70 families in attendance. This was an idea that came from Lindsey, thank you for coordinating a new fun event. The kids were so focused on what they were doing, making it a very productive night.
 - Valentines day cards for seniors, drop off needs to be in by Friday 2/9. Try to have students write their names on them to make it more personable. We are currently 200 short for the 5 homes we distribute to.
 - Honorary Life Award 2024 recipients are Mr. D and Mrs. Laiacona. The dinner will be held on 2/12 with 32 currently planning to attend from Okte.
 - Ice Skating event to be held over the February break (2/21) need to register by 2/13 for the \$5 ticket, including skating and rentals. This is the 1st time doing this event for those families who will be around. It is a 2 hours of skating, can invite others outside school and flyers have gone out to register. free breakfast/lunches and how setting up breakfast to go carts upstairs to help get this meal to the upper levels.
 - Pick a Reading Partner (PARP) will start next month. Child will pick a partner to read with them. “Leap into reading” to start this fun event on 2/29. Flyers will be going home soon. This even does run with Ronald McDonald House reading program.
 - Roller Skating Night at Guptill’s, the date has been moved to March 15th. Look for flyer to register for this event coming home in the near future. Huge thank you to Rogin who coordinated this event.
- 30 Ukuleles are being added to the music room within the month.
- Possible upcoming events being worked on:
 - Bingo Night (March)
 - Movie Night/ Afternoon (April) → based on school and tech availability
 - Talent Show (April) → there will separate meeting on this topic
 - Science Fair (May)
- Shen Backpack Program → Pantry levels are low, we will have a drive in April but they will take donations since they are very low with donations currently.
- There are a few open seats on the board and we will review this at our next meeting. Great turn out in our meetings so wanted to put that out there to think about if you may be interested in a position.

Motion to adjourn (Lindsey, Erin)

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 6:30 pm at Okte Library

Okte PTA Board

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Treasurer Lindsey Weinberg lweinberg1018@gmail.com

Co-President Whitney Pagano

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Members Present:

Laura Zasada
Robyn Zimmerman
Lindsey Weinberg
Amanda Dane
Jamie Zamari
Melissa Russom
Kathleen Strangis
Whitney Pagano

Erin Marshall
Jennifer Jerome
Kerri Kennedy
Carolyn Walton
Stephanie Wood
Allison Faul
Gusta Miller
Tammy Creagan