

Thomas Fitzwater Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization Meeting Minutes

November 30, 2011

1. IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Alston, Michael Pladus, Kathy O'Connell, Co-President; Missy Wardle, Co-President; Lisa Paul, Co-Vice President; Michelle Sirota, Co-Vice President; Heather Moss, Co-Treasurer; Susan Johnson, Co-Secretary; TFES parents. Guests: Patricia Dell'Aringa from Upper Dublin Food Services and Irene Miller, cafeteria manager at TFES. Some school board members were also present to hear about the school's new Weatherbug equipment. Absent with notification were Phil Caldwell and Debbie Dall.

2. Mr. Alston's Report:

- Thanked everyone for a great Barnes and Noble night. It was a record breaking night!
- Informed everyone that the school will have enough microphones for every classroom to have 4, with some leftover for use at the computer lab.
- District is currently looking into WIFI for the entire district. Doing this search building specific is pushed back for now.
- Plan for the school is to have RTII in place for K-5 by January, 2012.

3. News from Officers:

- Apparel sales should be a net of over \$1000.
- 5th grade activities coming are the 5th grade pasta dinner. There are meetings upcoming to discuss more details for this event.
- After school class's registration is due back the 16th. Volunteers are needed for hall monitoring and dismissal.
- Reminded about cash back programs. Visit **BTFE.com** and **escrip.com** BEFORE going directly to a website to help continue to raise money for the school.
- Cheetah Chat was put on the website yesterday. Our art contest got recognition and artwork is posted in the Cheetah Chat. January info for Chat is needed by Dec. 20th. Website to send to if you are not receiving the Cheetah Chat via email Speedycheetah@ymail.com.
- Race for education meeting will be next week and more information will be known after the meeting. This event is a during the day fundraiser. Kids will send letters to anyone they know to get pledges to walk. The kids will do laps on tracks that will be set up. This is the PTO's primary fundraiser for this school year.
- Weatherbugs are now online.
- Currently working on a new basketball pole/hoop for the Kindergarten playground.

4. Special Guests Patricia Dell'Aringa and Irene Miller discussed food services.
 - Many changes were made this year. A Wiki space was created. This will have everything parents would want to know about the food services. There are menus, nutrition info for the menus, and a parent comment section.
 - Back to a food component system. This was a nationwide change so that everyone is on the same standard. MyPlate concept is trying to recreate what the plate looks like with daily dietary guidelines. MyPlate is a nutritional program. Everything is color coded in the cafeteria to mimic the MyPlate brand. Green dots-veggies, blue-calcium, red- fruits, orange-whole grains, and purple represents protein. Phys ed is also tying into these codes.
 - Active question and answer session between parents and the special guests. There was a large amount of parental concern about the rules about buying lunch. Kids seemed confused. Parents offered many suggestions on how to better the entire lunch experience. These were well received.
 - Some discussion about middle school and how their lunch period is longer, mostly due to the fact that their time is more about social and not so much the food. Reviewed what their snack choices are.
 - Dr. Pladus commented on the parental feedback. He took to the parent idea of holding an assembly to reintroduce the new lunch set up to the kids.

5. Special Guest: Mrs. Jennifer Toth, TFES 1st grade teacher, presented an overview on Weatherbugs technology.
 - Home page was shown. Live data is given about temperature. Icons are available to click on to get additional info such as wind speed, etc. Our page will soon have a live picture from the roof of TFES. Directions on how to log on at home are on the PTO website. You can pick cameras from around the world to compare weather. Storm central was explained and demo'd. You can see the storm path of storms through the years. Great data for upper grades for science and math. Trying to get cross involvement with high school broadcasting station etc. Channel 3 uses data from Weatherbug (from different school locations using weatherbug).
 - Art Levinowitz, Upper Dublin School District School Board member who is also President of the UDEF (Upper Dublin Education Foundation), explained in more detail how UDEF provided funds to help TFES purchase and install the Weatherbug program. Donations to UDEF, and Habitat for Humanity, can be made through RecycleBank. Go to your personal RecycleBank account, then go to Redeem, and Search for Upper Dublin Education Foundation or Habitat for Humanity, then donate your points.

6. Next PTO Meeting is Jan. 18th, 2012, 9:30 am, TFES Cafeteria.

Respectfully submitted by Susan M. Johnson. TFES PTO Co-Secretary.