

PTO Meeting Minutes November 11, 2022

The meeting started at 8:35am at the Mayasa and Co building beside Peace and Cake. There were 11 people in attendance.

1.) PTO Charter:

- Michael indicated that the 1st draft is complete.
- Noted not everything in a traditional PTO charter will apply for us (here in SJDS).
- School Admin and Board can decide what is/isn't pertinent.
- Next milestone-get the draft to the school admin prior to next months' PTO meeting for their review, so we can finalize and publish by 2nd semester. .

2.) November Calendar:

- Michael noted that there are 3 major dates this month:
 - o **November 17th**: The "Dining out with the Day School" event at Sun King restaurant. Sun King is giving a generous 30% donation to the PTO. "This dining out has a lot of potential with a 30% kickback, so come out and support the school on the 17th."
 - o **November 21st**: "Teacher Appreciation Evening" this event will take place at Nacho restaurant and is funded by the PTO.
 - o **November 24th-27th**: US Thanksgiving long weekend. The school will be closed for this U.S observed holiday.

3.) Communications:

- Michael is working to improve PTO communications in Spanish and English to ensure we are broadening our audience capacity as much as possible. Also, reaching out to the Spanish community to see if they would like a Spanish meeting (like a Spanish PTO) – to merge communication with the Spanish community. Ashley Suazo offered to assist in this effort, as well.
- PTO would like to work with the Student Leadership Council on possible fundraisers and events they would like to have and support their efforts as needed.

4.) Fundraising:

- Treasury report: \$852 going into this month - after the Halloween Extravaganza (after all expenses) we made \$798. Right now the current balance is \$1650.
- Laptop Update: As of right now we have 7 laptops that the PTO has acquired. Sarah's employer donated 3 laptops. We also purchased from the PTO funds 4 more laptops. We have 3 now with 4 more inbound.
 - o It was noted that, as we are temporarily shorthanded at the school, that we wait on this technology list right now until we have a few more hands on deck.
 - o Also the question was asked as to whether or not we can potentially fix broken computers? Dennis Ison is going to look at some of the older donated laptops to potentially see if they can be fixed.
 - o There was discussion about different ways to address fixing and/or protecting the older laptops.

- Christina sent out an email this morning about the teacher grants. Potentially if a teacher indicates in their grant application that they need a laptop they could get one now.
- We will be working to get a system in place for distribution of the laptops and grant money.
- Casino Night: Cindi: We have such good momentum right now – which makes it even more exciting about Casino Night coming up.
- Items at the event: Poker, Black Jack, etc – the event is at the new upper level yoga and pool deck area at Tree Casa.
 - Cindi indicated that we have a band, 6 VIP booths (waiter bottle service), and there is a fundraising campaign with the parents and teachers wherein whoever does the most advertising will get a free room.
 - Cindi discussed that we have nearly 100 tickets sold already. Teachers and staff get a free ticket. We have lofty goals for this – last year we made \$8,000, and the goal for this year is \$20,000. She indicated that we’ve secured a \$2000 sponsorship already.
 - Things Cindi needs from all of us: Please participate in advertising, share the marketing material, hype it up, buy your own tickets, lots of sharing.
 - Ashley asked: “How can we bring in native Nicaraguan influence/items/etc for the event?” Melissa Klassen suggested bringing in local Nicaraguan dancers for the event. There are several excellent local options - Cindi is going to bring this back to her Casino committee to discuss and come up with options.

5.) Admin Notes:

- With Ana still being absent, Julie has taken over the Upper and Middle school administration role in the short term. Teacher Donna has taken over the Primary grades administration for now. If you have classroom questions go to your teacher first and admin officials, respectively. Room parents can facilitate communication for all other things.
- A note from Teacher Shaun and Teacher Matt are starting a lunch time Tinkering Makers Club. They will be playing with electronics. If anyone has any old electronics they could donate to please bring them in for Tinkering Makers Club. This could be: old printers, old broken things with mechanics, little motors, animatronic toys – electrical mechanical devices etc.

6.) Open Discussion:

- **Question: Are there any long-term plans for putting up a cafeteria in the school?** A place where kids could have some freshly made food.
 - Thinking: farming, sustainable school – this would be a great opportunity, to be a “green school” – but on a smaller scale. There are other schools that are doing this well.
 - School Board Member Robyn: Noted that it is on the radar of the board and that we are on a farm and it is important to the school. Maybe it’s a long-term project?
 - It was noted that we are just rolling out the committees and we need someone to lead these things, there is energy that is behind this.

- There are initiatives in this area already happening at the school; teachers teaching with medicinal plants, gardening etc.
- It was noted that this would be a matter of identifying priority. There is talk about a green community, and this would be a great place to put this idea.
- It was noted that the farm has dedicated 10 acres for a reforestation project. We didn't have a structure in place before where we are able to channel all of these ideas and energy, and we are soon going to be in a place where we can really start taking on exciting new items like this.
- Robyn and School Board member Kyle discussed the **6 new committees** which are:
 - **Organizational/Resource Development & Sustainability:** Advances the entire organization forward as a uniform body with appropriate resources.
 - **The PTO:** Supports the Schools goals and vision. Facilitates communication between parents, teachers, and the school.
 - **The Scholarships Committee:** Provides financial and familial support for students receiving financial aid.
 - **The Health & Safety Committee:** Guiding decisions related to student safety and well-being (physically, emotionally, socially)
 - **The Campus/Green School Development:** Develops the physical space the school occupies, as well as leading the organization towards Green School practices and programs
 - **Culture, Equity and Inclusion:** Ensuring cultural awareness, sensitivity, connections, activities, policies, events, etc. to include everyone in the school community in the mission and common vision for the school
- It was noted that following up from last months' meeting that we are now getting water from Aqua Roca.
- It was noted that following up from last months' meeting that there is a survey coming out to get data collected for the bus route coming from La Talanguera to see where everyone is and to put together a better plan.
- It was noted that there are initiatives inside The Campus/Green School Development to build a new shelter (adjacent to the soccer field). This would be a multi-use court with bleachers etc. Agatha Cisnados volunteered to be a member of the The Campus/Green School Committee.
- ***Michael noted: A parent at last months' PTO meeting brought up the drinking water as an issue/concern. The PTO brought it up to school officials and an ad hoc committee of subject matter experts was put together to come up with a viable and feasible solution in the short term and working toward a long term solution, as well. Both Michael and Kyle encouraged any parents' who are passionate about any of the above committees to get with that committee lead and let's continue to make a difference together.*
- It was asked: Is the Christmas backpack initiative going to be happening again this December? It was noted that we need to start talking about this in November so that we are ready in time for the next meeting, and it was suggested that we connect with the Jean Berger Foundation to see if they needed any help/assistance with any already existing initiatives.

The meeting ended at 9:50am.

The next meeting will Be December 7th at 8:45am