

## **Belle Aire PTA Meeting via Google Meets**

**September 21, 2021 at 7:00pm**

### **I. Welcome/Call to order 7:03 pm Erin Doty**

a. Executive team introductions

### **II. Principal's Report Brent Borchelt**

a. Thank you and welcome to PTA involvement and new families

b. Assessment emphasis at the beginning of the year to see how students are doing academically after the 2020-2021 school year. AIMS and MAP data is complete with data meetings among grade levels that should be completed by Friday.

c. Illinois Assessment of Readiness testing update – supposed to take place in the spring of last year and was postponed. For example, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade is now taking the 5<sup>th</sup> grade test. As a result, the third-grade students are not taking the test this year until this upcoming spring.

d. Addressed request for outside clubs involvement at B.A.. Safety patrol and student government (run by current District 58 teachers) will be up and running soon. Any outside clubs will have to follow safety protocols and guidelines. Currently we will be seeing how many students will be involved in student gradebooks.

e. BAM theater group is of interest; since there is a high student involvement that is a consideration but will take planning to determine 3-foot apart safety concerns.

f. Any outside visitors (such as library volunteers) must be fully vaccinated or agree to be weekly tested.

g. Floor open to any direct questions; Carrie Blonigan asked about in-person assemblies. This will need to be done with multiple groupings, such as grade-specific assemblies with smaller groups. This will be finessed overtime as the year progresses.

h. Amelia Hyde inquired about outdoor camping trip at Camp Edwards for 6<sup>th</sup> graders, which is now on hold.

### **III. Superintendent's Report – Dr Keven Russell**

a. Thank you and welcome. Also introduced Jessica Stewart Assistant Superintendent for Student Services and Justin Sisul, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

#### **Mr. Sisul Presentation:**

a. Presented Slideshow overview of Title 1 Status. The mission is designed to improve education for at-risk or low-income families. This is required from the State of IL and the Department of Education. This is identified in the Spring. Currently 6 schools in District 58 qualify – Belle Aire, El Sierra, Henry Puffer, Indian Trail, Kingsley, and O'Neill (O'Neill is eligible but funds are not sent there so the elementary schools can be more supported financially.) Highland has qualified in the past. Currently 16.5% of Belle Aire students qualify as low-income, compared to 23 out of 271, or 8.49% in 2020.

b. Title I eligibility is determined if 40% of the school population or more is low-income, or if a school is targeted with academically at-risk students. District 58 receives \$214,902 in funding this year, meant for certified staff salaries and benefits, classified staff salaries and benefits, McKinney-Vento eligible support (materials, fees, transportation, family education) and Instructional materials and supplies (Dreambox Application in 2021-2022.) For this school year, Belle Aire has one additional full-time certified teacher in this role (an interventionist) funded by Title 1 grant dollars.

c. Students are eligible for services if they are Tier 2 (under 40<sup>th</sup> percentile) or Tier 3 (under 15<sup>th</sup> percentile) based on MAP or AimsWeb Data. This also includes if students demonstrate at-risk classroom performance in reading or math, and if they are identified between reading specialists/interventionists, classroom teacher, and principal.

d. Overview of requirements for schools and how funds are spent.

e. Questions – Krystin. McGuire asked a question if any Title 1 Funds or additional grants could help qualify us for playground funds. Mr. Sisul recommended private funds or grants. Dr. Russell mentioned the DCEO grant used by El Sierra that was as a result of Title 1 funding. If grants become available, Title 1 schools are prioritized. Dr. Russell also noted that every single school district in the country has Title 1 schools, regardless of socioeconomic status.

f. Tim Schneider – asked if Title 1 funds can be used for building improvement, such as making Belle Aire an enclosed classroom building. Dr. Russell explained that a district taskforce is not currently considering enclosing Belle Aire or El Sierra, however, interventions are delivered regardless of building status since most interventions are done within the classroom. There is no evidence to suggest that an open-concept building is related to low-income buildings. An additional component is that if B.A. is enclosed, the HVAC would have to be completely redone, which would be a significant undertaking that is not correlated with academic achievement.

g. Dr. Russell also explained that qualifying as a Title 1 school is often beneficial because there are more resources to help any student who identifies as at-risk.

h. Erin Doty asked if class sizes would increase as a result. Dr. Russell explained that positive changes such as mixed grade levels (such as a teacher teaching first and second) is no longer being implemented. Dr. Russell also explained that if there is an influx in class sizes, there is the option to do inter-district transfers to other schools to address overcrowding, such as transferring students to nearby schools like Puffer or Highland.

i. Beth Green asked if there is an opportunity to teach students to type because there isn't any current software or opportunities. Mr. Sisul explained there used to be past curriculums in the district but that would take away from other areas, however something the district is considering. I also suggested assigning typing as homework. Mr. Sisul recommended typingclub.com as a resource.

**Dr. Kevin Russell also addressed the following questions:**

j. Citizen Task Force - \$244 million worth of projects were identified in the district for building maintenance. This is because Downers Grove has one of the lowest tax rates, meaning that most of the money is spent on education and not as much on capital, however, currently more funds are being directed to capital. Interest rates were negotiated to under 1% for Pierce Downer additions, for example, as well as the selling of Longfellow Center. While Longfellow is historic, it costs more money to maintain

and cannot be used as a school again. (Bids are due for that property on Monday.) The Village and the district are also combining offices to save costs. A referendum was about to be proposed last year before Covid hit, so it was delayed until November of 2022. Major priorities are updating ventilation and secured entrances, especially at Herrick. Roofs, mechanical also needs to be redone. Belle Aire and El Sierra are the youngest buildings, while Whitter is almost 93-years-old.

k. Mr. Schneider asked about District 99's referendum and if that would compromise District 58's referendum. Dr. Russell explained that the timing couldn't be avoided, but since tax impacts were minimal for District 99, hopefully that will help voters be more in favor. Dr. Russell explained that he hopes to have a 20-year or 40-year mark debt cycle plan, exclusively used for construction bonds. (The funds cannot be used for academic costs.)

l. Kelli Janczewski asked if Longfellow being labeled as a historical building would impact the sale, however, it is not possible to maintain. Dr Russell also explained that it is a 6-7 step process to qualify as a National Historic Registry, however, no formal application has been submitted, which is a six-month process at least. (Currently it is only in the inquiry phase.) However, this makes no impact on the sale of the building. There is a statement on the website under "transparency" that explains more.

m. Lindsay Richardson asked if students would be able to attend school during construction under the new referendum. Dr. Russell answered that construction would be done over the summer or during off-hours and would not impact students attending the buildings.

#### **IV. Secretary's Report Lindsay Richardson**

a. Minutes are posted on the PTA website and google drive.

Erin Doty motions to approve, Shannon Villanueva seconds, 0 Nos. Minutes approved with date change.

#### **V. VP Membership, Amelia Hyde**

a. 85 memberships are involved in the PTA this year (56 families/staff.) Last year there were 132 total memberships and 92 total families/staff.

#### **VI. Treasurer's Report Abbey Homeyer**

a. Shared summary of funds page: Expected checking balance at year end is \$13,067.25 and expected saving balance is \$31,052.25. We are deleting calendars, paper directories, and Spirit gifting (face masks) due to lack of interest. Filters for the fountain costs are also eliminated because the district is paying for it. Kelli Janczewski asked how other schools are budgeting for playgrounds. Beth Green asked to hold those questions. The deleted items were motion to approve by Kelli Janczewski and seconded by Beth Green, zero nos.

c. Budget decreases: Teacher appreciation budget is going back to the 2019-2020 budget to remove a "Welcome to the school year budget. Kelli Janczewski and Beth Green motioned to approve and second this, zero nos.

d. Budget increases: Member kick-off event increased to \$650. Money applied to dunk tank (\$350) DJ (\$50), Ice cream truck (\$175) and photo signs (\$75), however most of those items were donated. Dunk tank made \$1,145 in revenue. Carrie Blonigan and Kelli Janczewski asked if this was necessary and was

concerned that this shouldn't be something where kids are excluded. There was a discussion that any student will be able to participate in the future regardless of having money.

e. Also scholarship increase since there was an issue last year on the student not getting the communications. Motion to approve by Beth Green and seconded by Erin Doty, zero nos.

e. Author fest – change to run for grade 1, 3, and 5 to be a half budget every year, paid at the end of the fiscal year. Symphony field trip dependent on Covid and is on hold. Motion to approve by Beth Green and seconded by Carrie Blonigan, zero nos.

f. Questions – Activities for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Kelli Janczewski asked that the PTA cover the costs for 6<sup>th</sup> grade send-off rather than asking for parents for \$15. Beth Green seconded \$30 per student as a line item moving forward instead. Kelli also asked how other schools are fundraising. Carrie Blonigan replied that other schools are starting their own 501c3's and explained how this has been done in the past.

g. Krystin McGuire on the playground committee stated that they are also meeting with other schools for advice on fundraising. Carrie Blonigan asked if money was still being allocated for the playground that was approved last year. Nicole Smith stated that a \$5,000 donation was moved specifically for the playground but hoped it would be \$10,000, which will be determined if other spending takes place.

h. Carrie Blonigan stated that it's "PTA 101" to not have more than \$10,000 in a checking account and some of that money should be applied to playground. Beth Green stated that passing this budget will be able to go back in and have the discussions and make corrections.

i. Kelli Janczewski asked about yearbooks and if the \$30 fee would include it.

j. Nicole Schulz asked if the Fun Run could be possible because other schools have done it. Permits were denied in the spring due to Covid so that could perhaps be something to ask. Beth Green asked to approve transferring \$10,000 out of checking to savings and increase fundraising. Beth Green motioned to approve and Kelli Janczewski seconded, zero nos.

## **VII. VP Committees Melinda Therriault**

a. Boxtops-only 6 families contributing over the summer. Big push required. Coca-Cola has a gift program but won't give that money to the PTA unless we have a school email. Asked Brent if that was possible to have a school email. Brent will ask district office.

b. When hot lunch is ready, she has volunteers ready. For reflections, she has spoken with Maggie and is waiting on a timeline. Breakfast with books – can we do that? Probably not due to Covid.

c. Holiday tea probably not happening because parents would have to show proof of vaccination. Volunteers needed for staff appreciation, by-laws, or variety show. Therese Prena asked if that money could be spent on a gift for the teachers instead. There is \$150 in the budget for it and Therese volunteered to make that happen.

d. Andria Curtis asked if Art Awareness can happen since the library has volunteers. The reason because the program is being revamped.

e. Vesna Young asked about the audit for the budget.

b. BA Student Council is up this year for Charleston Wrap.

### **VIII. VP Fundraising Lauren Evans & Shannon Villanueva**

a. Lauren Evans-Golf outing was inexpensive last year but pulled in a lot of money if prices raised slightly. Chipotle made \$600 for restaurant nights. The Fun Run is a possibility but needs time for logistics and would probably have to be in the spring or fall in 2022.

b. Shannon Villanueva – Trivia night in person on Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup>. Kelli Janczewski said that there probably wasn't time and would require a ton of volunteers and \$3,000 in expenses and cautioned against it.

c. Kelli Janczewski asked about Amazon Smile and if the money was deposited in PTA accounts. Abbey will check.

d. Krystin McGuire gave update on applying for grants and fundraising. She would like to present a formal update. She addressed safety concerns on the existing structure but the focus is currently on a new structure. Beth Green offered to share contact info as well as Abbey Homeyer for Puffer, Andria Curtis for Fairmount, and Lindsay Richardson for Lester.

### **IX. President's Report Erin Doty**

a. Asked for any questions or new business to discuss. Nicole Schulz asked if fundraisers will specify playground fundraising vs. regular fundraising. Krystin McGuire stated that 20% is fundraising/private donors and 80% is grants, which they are pursuing more. Nicole also asked if any money was coming from a state representative but that fell through, which was explained by Carrie Blonigan.

b. Next meeting is 11/9/21. Brent also thanked parents for participation.

j. Erin Doty asks for motions to adjourn. Many people second, zero nos. Meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m