**MINUTES OF WOODLAND PTO MEETING**

**THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2021**

Prior to the regular PTO Meeting, there was New Parent Orientation, which was called to order at 7 PM.

**MR. HEANEY**

* Welcomed everyone and presented a slideshow about Woodland School.
* Introduced Mrs. Rzasa as our teacher liaison who was there to answer any classroom or teacher specific questions.
* Introduced Mr. Gamage as a new 4th grade teacher.
* Introduced the school counselor, Ms. Pranzo and encouraged parents to reach out to her if they had any questions about their child’s social and emotional well-being as they transition back to school or back to Woodland.
* Introduced the PTO President Mrs. Dana Marucci. (Mrs. Marucci introduced the PTO Executive Board Members; Ashely Abines as Vice President, Sumitra Nicholson as Secretary, Melissa Frega as Treasurer, Paige Jasaitis, Lou Grace Cua, Brooke Ditta, Stephanie Lindy and Denise DeCorso as Officers and Tricia Patricco as Past President Advisor.)
* Shared a presentation about Woodland School and expressed the need for volunteers.
* Mentioned that you have joined a school that is a 2017 Blue Ribbon winner and explained the reason for the win has to do with how we performed on standardized tests but it also goes into the climate and the culture that we create at school.
* Touched on why Woodland School is a 5 on the Great Schools ranking which is not accurate and informed parents that it has to do with standardized tests. We did not have those tests in 2 years and they go back to the year after we won the Blue Ribbon. When we won that award our scores were the highest in the state. The next year, the scores went down slightly which affected the growth and that is one of the ways they rank the school which is not accurate. Informed everyone that he is working with Great Schools to fix this.
* Presented a video summarizing Woodland School.
* Informed parents that the two greatest influencers are parents and teachers. Working together is really important to help your children be successful.
* Shared the 3 rules of Woodland School are take care of yourself, take care of each other and take care of our school.
* Shared that there is recess everyday and teachers try to get kids outside so they can get a mask break. Informed parents to dress their kids appropriately.
* Expressed the need for volunteers to help with many PTO sponsored events like Field Day, Science Day and this year for Young Author’s Day and International Day. Also need volunteers to help with Food Days, Parent/Teacher Volleyball and Basketball games, Bingo Night and Trunk or Treat.
* Shared that when volunteering confidentiality is very important. Do not discipline a child but if you see something, please report it to the teacher or staff member. Also shared that we want kids to be independent and it’s not appropriate to sit with your child if you are volunteering to serve lunch. Informed parents not to give food to kids if they are volunteering due to food allergies.
* Shared information on HIB (Harassment Intimidation and Bullying); if you see a child not being treated nicely do not get involved but don’t say nothing. Report it to a teacher or myself.
* Shared information on FERPA (Educational Rights and Privacy) and informed parents not to take pictures of other kids while on school property and post on social media.
* Shared that if you see any bodily fluid, please do not clean it up and alert a teacher or staff member.
* Shared that there are drills twice a month and kids are prepared in advance.
* Introduced Mrs. Frank and Mrs. Francione as the heart of our building and encouraged parents to reach out to them if they had any questions.
* Provided time for parents to ask questions.

**MS. PRANZO**

* Introduced herself as our school counselor and stated that she is here for the kids and the parents whether it be for academic, social or emotional purposes, she is a phone call away and provided her contact information and asked everyone to reach out to her if they need any help. Shared that she does in classroom guidance lessons and informed parents that there is a district-wide initiative on mindfulness and providing students with breathing techniques. She also shared that specifically at Woodland there are growth mindset lessons that teaches kids that it’s ok to make mistakes and learn from them. She also shared that she does individual and small group counseling with parental consent. She touched briefly on lunch bunch which is another opportunity for students to socialize with one another.

**PTO AGENDA ITEMS**

The PTO meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM by Dana Marucci.

* Introduced herself, Mr. Heaney as our Principal, Ms. Pranzo as our Guidance Counselor and Mrs. Rzasa as our Teacher Liaison. Also re-introduced the PTO Executive Board Members.
* Asked Paige Jasaitis to briefly talk about SEPAG (Special Education Parent Advisory Group). Encouraged parents to reach out to her if they had any questions about special education services.
* Shared information on what the PTO does and expressed the need for funds and encouraged everyone to join the PTO. Mentioned to parents to be on the look out for PTO related emails about events and to signup for e-blasts.
* Expressed the need for volunteers and shared that we use sign up genius to solicit volunteers for various events. Asked for a chair for International Day for this year.
* Back to School Night will be on 9/23.
* Bingo Night in Oct.
* Trunk or Treat will be on 10/29.
* Reminded parents to check out the Woodland PTO website and recommended opting into the e-blasts on the PTO website, Woodland School website and the Warren Township Board of Education website.
* Encouraged parents to label their children’s items.
* Please send in your box tops or download the app where you can scan your receipts within 10 days.
* Amazon Smile-choose Woodland as your charity of choice and money comes back to us.
* Reminded parents to be mindful of people in the parking lots during drop off and pick up and please drive safe.

**FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA—ASHLEY ABINES**

* Ciros Pizza Mondays
* Mums Fundraiser (new this year)
* Driven Coffee Fundraiser
* Photography Session Fundraiser (new this year)
* Label Fundraiser

**AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES—JEN CARR**

* On the Court Basketball held on Tuesdays
* STEM Program (new this year) held on Mondays
* Soccer Program (new this year)

**SPIRITWEAR—TRICIA PATRICCO**

* Shared that school spirit is a big thing at Woodland.
* Every Friday is spirit day and kids are invited to wear our school colors and the easiest way to do that is to buy a shirt.
* We have recently migrated our school spirit wear store from our website onto the Cheddar Up platform which makes things easier to run for us. You can shop there anytime; place an order and I will fulfill it.
* Looking into getting some new products for the fall.

**SCHOLASTIC—SUMITRA NICHOLSON AND MELISSA FREGA**

* Shared information about the Book Fair taking place in 2 weeks and coincides with BTSN. Kids will come to the gym on preview day (Tues.) with their wish lists and will have the opportunity to write down what they want and bring it home. They will come back to purchase on Wed. & Thurs. Parents will have the chance to shop at BTSN on the 23rd. There is an online website where you can go and purchase books as well. We also have teacher bins where teachers select books that they would like and parents will have the opportunity to purchase those to help build their classroom libraries.

**THANK YOUS—**To Paige Jasaitis, Stephanie Lindy, Melissa Frega and Anna Mohallim for the Back-to-School Luncheon for the teachers.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

* The minutes from the June 10, 2021 PTO meeting were submitted for approval by Sumitra Nicholson, approved by Melissa Frega and seconded by Paige Jasaitis.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.