

Ames School PTA Meeting

February 7, 2014

Meeting called to order at 8:48am.

Administrative Report –

Todd Gierman, Principal

- Mr. Gierman apologized for not making the PTA meeting in December, he had some other meetings at the same time.
- He thanked Mrs. Lauritsen for the amazing Holiday program.
- Thanks to PTA for the Family Dance
- First Ames Spelling Bee, Scripts National Spelling Bee – Dr Sharma Lewis was the announcer for the spelling bee. The spelling bee was recorded in case there were any questions about the spelling of words. A suggestion by a parent, perhaps next year each individual class does their spelling bee in the gym on stage first, to get used to it, prior to the spell off.
- Science Fair is coming up, March 20th. Science in a bag is underway and going well. Ms. Allen is having science fair workshops.
- Donuts with Dads is also in March, March 13 at 7:45am. Starting in the Multi-Purpose and Art Room, they will have Donuts & Coffee there first, then at 8:05 family moves to tour and then to classrooms. Families will stick together on tour & in classrooms.
- Mr. Gierman brought up the idea of having a Mom's Day in April or May – has asked the PTA to get some Dads who will volunteer to put together a committee.
- Teachers are preparing for 100th day activities for Feb 11th.
- ISATs are the first week of March – preparing now. Thanks to the PTA for the pencils and mints.
- Math Computation club will be starting soon – teachers run it.
- Mrs Prodanich wanted to get paperback books to fund a summer reading program for at risk students, for about 60-70 students. Mr. Gierman is also interested in starting about a book swap – may work with Brownies to do it. Kids bring in gently used books, they get a coupon and then there will be temporary racks of books where kids can use their coupon and choose a book.
- Facebook and Twitter is up and running – encouraging parents to “Like” Ames.
- The District Board is looking at a Late start program for Thursdays next year. They are going to send around a survey to parents to assess the child care needs associated.
- Welcome newest member to Ames, Brittany Evan, our new 1st grade teacher to temporarily fill in for Mrs. Kinkin. She is having an open house end of this month for parents.
- A lot of Common Core Committees have started. Mr. Gierman is very proud of the teachers from Ames that are stepping up. Here are the various committees:

ESC (ELL Study Committee)

- Joan Karrison
- Melanie Lanni
- Christina Duve

21T3 (21st Century Think Tank Team)

- Heather Klaus
- Elizabeth Whaley

CCAT (English Language Arts Team)

- Natalie Giger
- Mary Orłowski
- Paula Stephens
- Amy Wright
- Katie Samuels
- Patty Prodanich
- Maria Bereckis

CCAT (Mathematics Team)

- Jen Ohlman
- Sara Hickey
- Angela Bursich
- Lauren Allen
- Amanda Huelsman
- Christina Duve
- Clare Orr

- There was a District board meeting Tuesday – they have been working on a number of drafts for the school year calendar for 2014-2015. Lisa will talk a little more about the changes to the calendar that are important to mention.

Teacher Report -

Mrs. Lauritsen, Music Teacher

- Mrs. Lauritsen said the teachers wanted her to thank the PTA for our participation and for everything we do.

- The teachers also have a wish list they asked her to share with the PTA – Cubbies for lockers (belongings), outdoor recess equipment (chalk, jump ropes, kickball, basketballs, skip its, etc), k-cups for coffee, Water cooler and/or pop machine for teachers lounge.
- Few things to mention: Having music around the world in 5th grade; Spring program is in May (13th & 14th); Clap out is June 11th (as long as there are no more snow days).

Officer Reports –

PTA Co-President, Lisa Swicionis

- A motion was made to approve the December meeting minutes, seconded and approved.
- The District speaker has been moved to the evening on 3/31. He has also offered to continue the next morning – location and time TBD.
- Proposed calendar for 2014-15 has come out. It was presented in the January school board meeting. It will be voted on at the next Board meeting. Here are some proposed changes to mention:
 - Starting grade schools a week earlier in August – this way the school year would start only one week behind RB and ends the same time as RB. All holidays are coordinated with North Riverside, Brookfield and RB.
 - The week of Thanksgiving proposed change – they are proposing to move parent teacher conferences since there are many families that are out of town and do not attend, so there would be school a few days that week and Thanksgiving break would be shorter.
 - Proposing a Thursday late start – start one hour later every Thursday. The idea is that it gives the teachers more time to plan curriculum and cuts down on subs in the classroom. The district is looking at Child care options for those kids that need to get to school earlier than 9am. Looking at the YMCA as an option. There will be a survey coming out about it. The district is looking at the cost and whether they will cover that cost.
 - They are also looking at school start times and would like to coordinate the start times so all the grade schools start at the same time. This will shift Ames to start and end earlier by 5 minutes.
 - Restructuring TDPE – smaller breaks, more structured/instructional.
- A question/concern was raised about how to deal with the lack of time for kids to eat lunch. Possibly afternoon snacks for 1st and 2nd grade kids. Mr. Gierman said he will look into it further.
- Nomination of PTA Officers is coming up. We are looking for someone to represent Hospitality, Room Representatives, and Co-President (this position is a 2 year commitment). We do need a nominating committee. Deanna has offered to head it up.

Treasurer Report -

Lisa Swicionis presenting for Tracy Stanard

- Innisbrook did really well – just waiting on our check.
- Family curriculum night – may need to cancel it this year, based on our schedule and volunteers. May change to every other year. Mr. Gierman suggested that perhaps we replace it with a Spring Dance or Movie night. The new date for Curriculum night was going to be April 17th. Lisa and Mr. Gierman will talk further about another event.

Fundraising Report –

Cristin Evans

- Market Day orders due 2/14 and online 2/15. Kristen Bell is now heading up Market Day.
- NASCAR car wash is still going on until the end of February.
- Parents Night out is in planning – looks like it will be at Flying High again and are asking for more supervision this year from Flying High.
- Book Fair is in planning, for Wednesday 4/23 to Friday morning, 4/25. Using Scholastic books this year - should be easy set up and take down, and can use credit cards.

Cultural Arts Report –

Flavio Gonzalez

- Artist in Residence - Photographer and Videographer – do it during regular classes. We are talking to the artist on the duration (1-2 weeks).
- Also talking about having a Fine Arts night – an exhibition, also maybe music performance
- The next Assembly is scheduled for Feb 19th at 10am
- 5th grade gallery night is something Mrs. Klaus is working on, first week of March. They are interviewing replacements for Mrs. Klaus for her maternity leave.

Other Announcements –

- Science in a Bag is still going on – pick up the new experiment on Thursdays at 8:15am.
- 2/14 is a half day, come to the roller skating party. 2/17 is a holiday.
- Preschool screenings are coming up and they are asking for parent volunteers from each school.
- **Next PTA meeting is at night, 7pm, same location.** Suggestion to do a potluck?
- We have a speaker coming to the April meeting to talk about a program called Girls on the Run.
- We are looking for any parent ideas, fundraisers, events, suggestions, etc.
- We will be deciding at the March meeting whether there will be a Talent Show and/or how it will be organized. We've gotten positive feedback and volunteers through the survey sent out. Also need to make sure it's communicated to parents that anyone is welcome, and no one is cut. But need to prepare your child.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:19am

In Attendance:

Lisa Swicionis, Deanna Hall, Maureen Dvorak, Cristin Evans, Lisa Carlson, Flavio Gonzalez, Stephanie Hart, Elizabeth Kos, Leilani Navarro, Deirdre Tomas, Lisa Hennelly, Liz Buoscio, Karen Nishimura, Anne Adams, Mr. Gierman, Mrs. Lauritsen