

MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2022 - 6:30PM AT SWEETSIR SCHOOL
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: PTO PRESIDENT: KAITLIN PELLERIN
MEETING MINUTES TAKEN BY: JACLYN KELLEY

MERRIMAC PTO MEMBER MEETING	
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE	Jaclyn Kelley, Kaitlin Pellerin, Tracey DeCresenzo, Colleen Forrest, Amanda Merrifield, Jennifer Roberts, Katie Dean, Sara Vendshus, Ryan Vendshus, Dawn Ackerman, Krista Niles, Sarah Elwell
TREASURY REPORT	<p>Financial Status Update by Tracy DeCresenzo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Budget review:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Currently the PTO has just about \$32,381 in the bank.○ Money Raised:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Amazon Smile- \$178 <p>Total Cash In- \$178</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Expenses:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Monthly Website Costs (Renewal and Monthly Fee)-\$ 220▪ Merrimac Goes Back to School- \$433▪ Teacher Breakfast- \$281▪ Sharpies for Square 1 Art- \$127▪ Sales Tax Book Store- \$52▪ Checks Business Expense- \$36▪ Scholastic Book Order- \$49 <p>Total Cash Out- \$1,198</p> <p>Balance: \$ 31,671</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Holds/Commitments:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Harvest Festival- (\$500)▪ Insurance- (\$690)▪ Harvest Festival Income- \$1,500 <p>Total Holds- (\$310)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● There is about \$31,671 available cash as of current date.
HOT TOPICS	<p>Summer Recap</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Merrimac Goes Back to School- This event was a success. Some feedback that the PTO received was to do Kona Ice or an Ice Cream Truck instead of freeze pops. The freeze pops didn't stay frozen very long in the cooler. The lawn games and bubbles were well received by everyone. It appeared everyone was happy with the normalcy of being able to meet their teacher in their classroom.

- **Back to School Teachers Breakfast-** Tracy organized a “Back to School Breakfast” for the staff at both the Donaghue and Sweetsir School. It included some pre-packaged breakfast items, as well as K-Cups for the teachers room.

Principal's Corner

- **Priorities and Goals for the Year-** A member brought up the lack of air conditioning at the Sweetsir School. Her children were at the Extended Year Program and it was a challenge with the heat. A discussion took place as to whether or not the PTO can help fund some air conditioning. Looking into finding some Grants was discussed, as well as the possibility of moving the EYP program to Pentucket Regional as it is air conditioned.
- **Fall Fundraiser-**
 - Meadowfarms will be coming up. The dates will be 9/26-10/10. The catalogs will be coming in within the next few weeks and will be dispersed to students. The PTO will get 30-40% back from the sales of this fundraiser. It was mentioned that we should look into “company matches.” The PTO would like to also post on the PTO Facebook Page an option for people to donate a monetary amount instead of participating in a fundraiser, as this seems to be a popular idea amongst the members.
- **Field Trips-**
 - Teachers have not shared field trip ideas with the administration yet. The PTO had asked that the staff think about what they would like to ask for field trip money. This will allow the PTO to prepare for the year and the monetary needs of the teachers.
- **Yearbook-**
 - Amanda had mentioned that last year was a challenge getting the yearbook organized because of the lack of pictures turned in on time, and some were not turned in at all. There were some issues with the picture company getting the pictures out on time, and inconsistencies with the layout of the Sweetsir and Donaghue pictures. It is also a lot of work for one person to do on their own.
 - One idea that the PTO mentioned was having the 6th grade form a yearbook committee. This can be done by the students, who are more invested in the outcome of the yearbook.
 - An idea to make the yearbook only 6th grade was mentioned, but nothing was agreed upon at this time.
 - It was also mentioned that perhaps the Student Council might like to be involved.
 - An idea was mentioned to have a volunteer come into the buildings and take pictures of students, so that there are enough pictures to add variety to the yearbook.
 - The PTO discussed reaching out to the community to see if anyone who owns a photography company might want to donate some time to come in and take some pictures.
- **Bookstore-**
 - Amanda will be taking over the Bookstore. She will create a Sign-up Genius to get volunteers scheduled throughout the school year and begin organizing the books and ordering what is needed to make the store available one time per month.
- **Harvest Festival-**
 - Sara began a discussion about what the PTO would like to do regarding the Harvest Festival.
 - The ideas that came up were to either have the event at the corn maze that was used last year, or have it at one of the schools.
 - It appears that the popular vote was to have it at the corn maze. It was well liked by the school community, and the PTO received about \$2,000 income from the event.
 - A concern was brought up about the slide not being appropriate for all of the children. The smaller children were unable to use it as it had a height requirement which caused some disappointment. It was also hard to see as it got darker. Possibly shifting the time of the event will help with this, or asking for individuals to bring flashlights.
 - A committee will be formed to begin planning the event. Sara will reach out to Farmer John to get a date booked.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sara had mentioned adding a component of a DJ could make this event fun, or possibly looking into having the Ghostbuster Car at the event. ● Holiday Events- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theresa shared some ideas she would like to facilitate during the holiday season. She would like to have a three prong approach to the holiday season. ○ For the children a Polar Express Movie at one of the schools, or even a movie theatre with hot cocoa and pajamas. ○ For the parents it was mentioned of having a parents night out. Ideas for this included a paint night, parents bingo, holiday themed cookie swap, etc. ○ For the Teachers a tree could be set up in the schools with all of the teachers names and a wishlist item. This will be all inclusive and teachers who may not typically get something for the holidays would have an opportunity to receive a gift. This is similar to an “angel tree.” ● Parent Night Out- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kaitlin is in the process of organizing some Parent Night Out events. She had looked into Barewolf Brewery in Amesbury and Board and Brush. Another idea that was shared was having a floral arrangement decorating night.
<p style="text-align: center;">Misc. PTO BUSINESS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Website- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The PTO discussed making the website clean and easy to navigate. To overhaul the whole website would cost approx. \$800. This was approved by the PTO Members present at the meeting. Going with a new website will save the PTO a lot of money in the long run because of the cost associated with the website, domain, etc. ○ Having a website is important because as a non profit organization it is important that the PTO have agendas, bi-laws, meeting minutes, and all important documents accessible to the public. ● Cultural Events- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ KDO- Kings Day out is a non-profit organization created by a local Occupational Therapist and Author. These individuals work to provide resources and support for the community in the area of sensory processing and special needs. The PTO is working out a way to have this organization come to the school and provide students with a rich learning experience regarding this topic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It was discussed that to start it may be easiest to have an after school event, where people can sign up for a fee, and receive a book written by the author. It would be a maximum of 25 people. If this goes well the PTO would look into ways to have this program available for more children. At this event a story, craft, and car wash obstacle course will be explored by students. ■ As part of the KDO program a fundraiser at Flat Bread will take place in March and the PTO will receive a percentage of food sales. The Book “Kings Day Out” will also be sold and the PTO will receive a portion of sales. ○ Code and Circuit- Kaitlin looked into having Code and Circuit located in Amesbury come to the schools and present a coding program featuring its Boston Dynamics robotic dog. This can be done assembly style, in small groups, or traveling from classroom to classroom. The PTO will look into which way to move forward with this. It was discussed to try to incorporate this into Hour of Code Week that Mrs. Ackerman organizes. ○ Birthday Books- One of the PTO Members asked about the status of the Birthday Book Program. Tracy will reach out to Mrs. Villani to see what the status is and if the PTO can help in any way.

The Next PTO meeting will take place on October 18th at 6:30 at the Sweetsir School. (Change due to a Special Town Meeting the night before).

