

Mohawk Elementary PTO minutes from October 24, 2023

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Katie Ruzala

Attendance:

Board Members – Courtney Hannah, Ashleigh Balsamo, Marie Laskowski, Michelle Schmidberger, Katie Ruzala, Katie Fohey, Jill Talant, Julie Hasse, Stephanie Burkart, Nicole Milam

Staff members – Andrea Verellen, Katherine Braun

Parents – Jennifer Smith, Traci Bowman, Jeff Talant, Kristi Dedenbach

Principal's report:

- This year Mohawk is focusing heavily on ELA and reading.
- Presentation – Teaching Children to Read.
- There is a National Reading Crisis.
- Parents participated in an example of what the kids are learning in ELA. Learning to breakdown the word to sound it out instead of memorizing.
- 4th graders will be given NAEP test in the winter.
- In Chippewa Valley less than half of our kids are reading proficiently – better than 55th percentile.
- The Science of Reading – students need specific instruction on how to read and interpret what they read.
- Listen to Sold a Story Podcast for more information on why we are moving to this new structure.

Teacher's Report:

- None present.

Officer Reports:

President's Report-

- Katie Ruzala approved minutes from September 2023. Seconded by Ashleigh.

Treasurer's Report- Statements read by Michelle Schmidberger

- Bank Statement through the end of Sept: Checking \$10,700.40
- Savings \$5.

Parent Concerns:

- Parents concerned with tight timing of the schedule. No transition time allotted between specials/subjects.
 - Ms. Verellen said she created the schedule to show wasted time and to have teachers and students use their time more efficiently.
- Parents concerned that mass instruction (90 straight minutes of ELA) could have an adverse effect.
 - Ms. Verellen said this research has been around since the 1970s, and has been proven to be beneficial.
- Kids are coming home exhausted, tired, and cranky from the rigid schedule.
 - The school is concerned with getting all kids to read. Need to give it time.
 - The rigidity of the schedule will let up as time goes on when teachers and students get used to this new way of teaching/learning.

- Katherine Braun, the reading interventionist, is working with the teachers to learn how to bring their teaching style to this new way of learning to try to cut down on teacher frustration.
- Kids are coming home saying they are not allowed to use the bathroom, or drink, or eat during class.
 - Ms. Verellen says it's just the 60-minute block that the kids' waters have to be under the desk and no eating. Research shows if you are eating or drinking you are not paying attention. Bathroom may be used if it's an emergency.
- Parents concerned that lunch has been rough for the kids. Lunch ladies won't allow them to talk above a level 2. Assigned seating. Food runs out at lunch, and frozen food is being given to kids to eat (Examples were: Frozen Salad and peanut butter & jelly sandwiches).
 - We have a new lunch service and new lunch ladies. Ms. Verellen will talk to the lunch ladies. She said there should not be assigned seats, and she was unaware this was happening. It is not all grades.
- Parents asked if we are allowed to volunteer in the lunchroom to help out.
 - Ms. Verellen said we cannot have volunteers in the lunchroom because it could take away union jobs.
- Email Ms. Verellen about food issues (moldy food, not enough, etc.) – she can send it to food services at the district.

Committee Reports:

- Tiger Trek made \$22,227
- Art to Remember – orders in by November. To be delivered by Christmas.
- Little Caesars Pizza kits runs October 9 – November 9.
- 10/27 Family Fall Fest at Blakes.
- Build a Buddy Event 11/3.
- Santa Shop 12/4-12/6. Makeup day 12/7. Need Volunteers!
- A Night with Mr. and Mrs. Clause 12/15.
- Chuck E cheese 11/17 3-9pm
- New Rink 12/4 6-8pm
2024
- Bingo Night 1/26. Parents and kids. Mohawk students only.
- Daddy daughter dance 2/2 at Shelby Gardens.
- 2024 January Penny Wars. Funds to possibly pay for a book vending machine.
- Mother Son night 3/6 at Dave and Busters.
- Bike to school is in Spring.
- Little Caesars pizza in spring.
- Scholastic Books May/June
- Read a thon March.
- Buddies Restaurant Night March 12th
- Staff Appreciation May
- Muffins with Mom in May 2024.
- Donuts With Dad in June 2024.
- Mom to Mom March or April
- Chuck E Cheese days 1/23 3-9pm, 3/13 11-9pm (Half Day)
- Cutting Edge Open Gym 1/13, 2/17, 3/30, 5/18 2-4
 - \$15 for 2 hours. Mohawk makes 50%.
- Field Day Fun Day in June.

Open discussions:

- Voted to purchase Walkie Talkies for PTO. Unanimously approved.

Next Meeting is November 28 @ 7:00 p.m. at Mohawk Elementary.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm

Minutes compiled by Jill Talant PTO Secretary