



THE BANFF SCHOOL

PTO Minutes

March 21, 2017 | 6:30 PM |

The Banff School PTO Mission

Promote the well-being of students by providing support for their educational needs and to provide school functions for the purpose of promoting fellowship among parents, students and teachers.

In Attendance – Quorum needed is 10 active participants

Erin Jones, President
Nancy Diaz-Garcia, Treasurer
Deborah Wasser, Administration
Josh Harbour, Administration
Sophie Sindu, Staff/Parent
Ben White, Staff
Anne Groth
Anita Elliott
Christopher Sweet

Angela Mitchell, Vice President
Andrell Gautier Hutton, Secretary
Dana Sauls, Administration
Kiley Fisher, Staff/Parent
Nick Sindhu, Staff/Parent
Tiffany Ruckman
Russ Blocher
Anglia Sweet

Welcome

The PTO President welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked attendants to sign in for record.

Agenda

Erin Jones asked if anyone would like to add an item to the agenda for the evening. After no responses were received, the agenda was voted and approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The approval of minutes for November 1 and February 7 was voted and approved.

PTO Reports and Business

Erin Jones announced that Game Night was a success with over 60 participants. Expenses were \$156 for games and \$285 for food. The games purchased for the event have been stored and will be used again in future years.

Ballot results were announced:

We will continue to have Spirit Diners at Restaurants

PTO Meetings will be held every other month and the location will remain at the school

Family Movie Night Under the Stars will be the next main event, replacing the Spring Carnival

In regards to Family Movie Night, the PTO is asking for volunteers for the event to be held on May 19.

The PTO President announced upcoming events:

April 19 – Spirit Dinner

April 21 – Parent/Teacher Conference

May 1-5 – Teacher Appreciation Week

May 2 – Final PTO Meeting – *this date has been amended to May 9*

The PTO is electing officer candidates for next academic year and is seeking a new person for treasurer. Ballots will be sent home to parents and were also distributed at PTO meeting.

Special Business and Presentation from Administration and School Board

The School Board President addressed the PTO and led the discussion. He stated that the school is very strong financially and the Board unanimously voted to continue operating the school and continuing Ms. Banff's legacy. He did express that currently the BOT is working to gain a better understanding of the final numbers left from Mrs. Banff and that they have a fiduciary responsibility to take these matters seriously. He then opened the floor for questions and discussion, which were as follows:

How come PTO money is being used to fund class items like the STEM program?

Mr. Harbour responded popular non curriculum items and requests start to become part of the curriculum. He stated that we need to reeducate teachers to ask administration first and forms are being printed to create more structure and boundaries.

Why do we have a lot of fundraising and can we consider placing into tuition?

A number of parents requested to just provide a target budget number and place into tuition or have an option out amount to pay at the beginning of the year for those parents who do not wish to participate in fundraising. Some parents also expressed growing concern of an imbalance between those who donate time and/or money and those who do not. Mrs. Wasser expressed that the international students pay additional fees to reflect fundraising in their tuition. The BOT President said that he would like to come back at a later time to provide an answer.

Will you be able to retain teachers?

The BOT President responded that teacher continuity is very strong and will continue to be a main focus on their agenda.

Is there a 3, 5 and 10 year plan for the school?

The BOT President responded this was a big question among the BOT. He stated that we need to provide better communication and transparency within balance among administration, staff and parents. The BOT is considering many options for the future of the school. Tuition is on that agenda but they are carefully considering the implications of raising costs and the effect on parents and enrollment. The President would like to provide a better response at a later time.

Does the school have a plan to expand students?

Administration responded yes and the plan is to double enrollment by creating better advertising (such as digital ads), surveys to prospect parents and current parents. Mrs. Wasser explained that lots of data is being gathered about the school, such as feedback from Shadow Day. In addition, huge efforts are being put into place to retain the school's best teachers and placing an emphasis on intensive ESL classes to prepare international students before coming to Banff and only accepting the highest ranking international students moderately fluent in English already.

Mrs. Wasser the posed a question to the parents and asked if anyone knew the mission of the school, which is educating the whole child through STEM; Finer Arts and Social Community? She further asked if this was something parents believed. Mrs. Wasser would like this topic to be discussed that the next PTO meeting.

After no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled on May 9 at 6:30 pm in the Banff School Cafeteria. This will be the final meeting of the academic school year.