

Jefferson Parent Council Meeting Notes

Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019

Officers Only

Attendees: Sara Eldridge, Leann Murphy, Kim Patterson, Meghan Wirth, Jason Danielson

1. Final days of the 2019 Cash Drive

- We have not raised enough money yet to fund teacher stipends for the 2020-2021 school year. Discussed options for more advertising with posters (during the holiday performances?) or with small business cards.
- How should we be tracking donors? Probably best to use the PayPal summary. But, be sure to thank donors for their full donations (PayPal takes a cut).
- The Day of Awesomeness campaign came first, so many may feel they cannot contribute again.
- Are Jefferson families feeling that the JPC fundraising is worthwhile?
 - Should we send out a Survey Monkey to parents? Maybe have a survey or link in the next e-newsletter?
 - Grade-level ambassadors should contact parents using the class directories to encourage them to view the JPC website and sign up for the e-newsletter.
 - **Kim will draft an email.** The email should come personally from the ambassadors to avoid the impression of spam mail.
- We should post frequent updates on the website. **Leann will send numbers to Sara. Sara will post to website.** It would be nice to show a thermometer-type graphic.

2. Grade-level grants and the 2019/20 JPC communication initiative

- While some teachers have used their grant money, others have not, and some teachers appear to be struggling to develop a plan.
- Discussed some of the limitations teachers have in their flexibility to alter their curriculum or challenge/stimulate students in different ways.
- Discussed the need to support curriculum that benefits kids across all socioeconomic levels and that is mission-based for JPC.
- Suggestions were made about using JPC funds in other ways if we cannot raise enough for teacher stipends next year. As an alternative, we may want to identify some “big ticket” items to save money for so that we can approach Jefferson families with more specific fundraising goals. Examples include the playground blacktop, a computer literacy or STEM club, and a video recorder for the auditorium for student performances. This should be discussed further at subsequent JPC meetings and/or voted on or discussed with more parents/guardians included.
- Discussed some of the communication gaps between JPC and staff.

3. Global Read Aloud and the Montana SMART Green Schools Challenge

- Meghan reported on a meeting with Susan Seilbach and Darby where Susan introduced the Global Read Aloud, <https://theglobalreadaloud.com/> as a substitute for the One School, One Book program. She has been discussing this with Darby, Kim and Susan.
- This program will also be incorporated into the foreign language program by including foreign language books. Darby will wrap the books as gifts for the teachers.
- K through 2nd grade students will get picture books, and 3rd through 5th grade students will get chapter books.
- This led to discussion for the need to expose Jefferson students to different cultures, probably through arts and languages. Money originally budgeted for One School, One Book could be used to bring in a guest speaker or other cultural program related to the Global Read Aloud program.
- Claire Marshall from Bike Walk Montana wants to give a presentation at the next JPC meeting. Discussed having a spring bike challenge at Jefferson, and Claire could help us promote safe walking and biking routes to school and on Montana roads.
- Meghan and Matt Oppedahl, Paraeducator at Jefferson, submitted an application for Jefferson to Montana DEQ for the SMART Schools Challenge. The project involves working with Claire Marshall of Bike Walk Montana to expand walking school buses at Jefferson and track miles walked to Jefferson. Schools across Montana compete to see who can save the most money and resources by conserving energy, recycling waste, and implementing green practices that benefit student health. At the Challenge's conclusion, the top twelve performing schools will be rewarded. Four champion schools are selected in each of the three sub-challenges. These winners will become a certified Montana SMART School, receive a \$1,000 prize, and statewide recognition from the Lieutenant Governor.
- Meghan will draft a letter of support from JPC for the Montana Avenue/Highland Street pedestrian improvement project. The letter will be addressed to Mark Young with City of Helena. A federal initiative that encouraged pedestrian improvements to create "safe routes to school" is receiving less federal funding for projects so the city will take on the costs. The city has set aside money for transportation improvement projects like the Montana Avenue/Highland Street Project near Jefferson (to be completed in spring) and sidewalks along Knight Street between Benton and Cleveland (in final design stage). The City is requesting letters of support for sidewalks to schools projects.

4. Other

- Let's bring in a coffee/tea/cocoa cart for teachers. We could also bring in donuts and pastries to thank teachers. Frequency should be about once per month.
- Need more discussion about what is JPC's role. What should our funding and fundraising priorities be?