

**Jefferson Parent Council Meeting Notes  
(attachments)**

Thursday, March 12, 2020

5:30 pm, Jefferson School, Rm 9

Attendees: Sara Eldridge, Leann Murphy, Kim Patterson, Meghan Wirth, Sherry Hallard (4<sup>th</sup> grade), Melinda Reed, Claire Downing, Rachel Carrol-Rivas, *Lona and Jason not present*

**1. Operation “You Are My Heart,” presentation from Claire Downing, Lewis and Clark County 4H Ambassador and junior at Helena High School (letter attached)**

- Montana 4-H is the youth development program of Montana State University Extension. 4-H is the largest, out-of-school youth development program in the state, reaching nearly 20,000 youth in all 56 counties each year. Members complete a variety of projects. Claire is a Team Leader and working on a service project this year, “You Are My Heart.”
- Partnering with Montana Office of Public Instruction’s Operation You Are My Heart to provide deployed service members and their children with books to have a shared story time.
- Asking for \$160 to fund 10 families; program ends March 31
- Discussed having JPC provide funds, but while most everyone supported the idea, the program is not specific to Jefferson students. Therefore, it was decided JPC should not support You Are My Heart directly.

**2. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Grant Report: Sherri Haller**

- Strong interest in teaching more Montana history to students, and wants to fund more field trips to the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Lewis and Clark Caverns, etc.
- Also wants to buy Fraction Stax to teach fractions and a classroom timer; the total requested is \$495. She will place her own order.

**3. Finance Report**

- Leann reviewed line items of the new P&L statement (attached)
- Meghan’s employer donated \$500 and received \$150 from PacificSource to Fall Cash Drive; second check from Chef’s Night Out was \$247
- Reviewed expenses that have yet to come in
- Second Chance Breakfast is on-budget
- Need to follow up with teachers on the grade-level-grants deadline after checking in with Lona first. Leann will send an email to teachers.

- Rachel suggested we create a database of donors and funding sources for future reference.

#### 4. **Read-a-thon fundraiser, Melinda Reed:** <https://www.read-a-thon.com/>

- Melinda described the program, a way to raise money by getting people to support students who spend a few weeks focusing on reading.
- To sign up, we must provide teachers' email addresses and the number of participating students. They print materials to send home with students and promotional posters, packets for local businesses to get involved.
- Donations done on-line, an official web page is created; program lasts 2 weeks and 10 sessions are recommended, best done during classes
- Choice of No Reward, Jefferson gets 80% of donations, or With Reward, Jefferson gets 75% of donations plus credits in the read-a-thon store
- In Montana, 3 schools have participated before
- Success depends on the number of students participating
- Discussion points: there is value in having the kids reading and directly involved in the fundraising, but we don't want another situation like the 2019 Day of Awesomeness, when some kids were getting prizes and others were not. We could start small with a few grades participating next fall.

#### 5. **Testing Incentives**

- Second grade testing scheduled for week of March 16. Students had a pizza party last year. Do they want a pizza party again this year? Sara will email Ms. Hawkins and Ms. Leiberg on Friday (March 13).
- Third grade testing scheduled for week of April 22. Teachers have asked for non-messy treats. Discussed options and how/when to bag up: string cheese, snack packs, fig bars, fruit leather, etc....

#### 6. **Teacher Appreciation Day/Week**

- Thinking of ideas, don't want to do food again.
- Sara suggested a Hawaiian luau "party," will bring items from home to explore idea further at next meeting.

#### 7. **PAC Update from Laura Pfister via email, summary of meeting held March 10**

- **Playground Padding Materials:** Questions regarding what is acceptable "fall resistant" and how decisions are made about which school gets what/how funded, etc.
- Technically pea gravel is considered fall resistant and is therefore acceptable, but the district is not looking to use that moving forward.

- The district budget available to support additional padding material varies from year to year.
- Warren's Parent Organization is funding their new padding material independently and is coordinating with Kalli Kind (facilities director at that District) to remove the old material/install new. The cost is ~ 17K for the entire playground and they are working with Mark's Lumber (wood chips/wood 'rubber').
- **COVID 19:** Obviously an evolving topic but the district dedicating time and resources to preparing for this now and working hand in hand with the L&C Health Department.
- In the end, the district is quietly preparing for various scenarios and will fall in line with what the L&C Health Dept. recommends (follow their lead).
- A couple of students are already in self-quarantine w/in the district as they have recently returned from a Level III country.
- This topic forces the district to take a hard look at its digital platform. The district has nearly enough chrome books that each child could be sent home with one for ongoing instruction in case of school closure...however this assumes the district is fully set up with its digital platform (which it is not).
- If a state of emergency is ever declared because of the virus and schools are closed, that declaration supplants the OPI's required days/minutes...if that scenario ever plays out, those days will not need to be made up.
- The district has one electrostatic machine available for cleaning (apparently acquired this last year b/c Bryant had a bout of Norovirus it couldn't shake), and a second machine has been ordered and will be in hand within the next two weeks. The district has enough solution to fog all schools and buses (It sounded like they are fogging buses daily already).
- **Budget Update:** In looking at the 5-year projections (draft attached), there are currently shortfalls projected for elementary from next year onward...so some choices will need to be made re: expenditures moving forward. These numbers are obviously only a set of projections and are forecasts based on specific inputs and assumptions, etc. However, it is meant as a planning tool to give a starting place for discussions and the fact that projected deficits continue over the next 5 years does indicate there are likely some systematic problems/issues that need to be addressed.
- They have already made estimated expenditure cuts associated with the high school b/c of the expected enrollment declines, so those annual budgets appear in better stead.
- **Other:** Expecting to make all safety/security upgrades by next fall.
- Still ongoing discussions regarding potential future bond re: Helena High School.
- Also, we received notes from the February meeting (they do not always provide this) so thought I'd share those and point out the following in response to one of Meghan's earlier questions:

- **Encouraging participation in Walking School Buses:** Central has done well with this in the past and what worked for them is to have a specific set of volunteers identified for a couple of designated meet-up spots/routes and market these routes across the school. These volunteers should commit to leading the walking school bus every day (and recommended that they go through the district's background check as volunteers). So, it is essentially what is done for our walk/bike to school day but implemented on a daily basis. Also, they recommended that one of the walking school bus stops be at a place where parents can park/allow kids to meet (like a park). Other activities that they tried to get people interested is to schedule trash pickup days with donuts provided at the end, etc.

#### **8. 24-Hours of Giving, April 30-May 1**

- Greater Helena Gives is the Helena Area's annual 24-hour online giving campaign designed to raise money and awareness for our local nonprofit community.
- \$75 to sign up, then donors throughout Helena can give money to charities of choice.
- Should JPC participate? This is not a targeted audience for Jefferson, but would we benefit asking for donations from the broader community?

#### **9. Action Items Summary (as of March 12)**

- Kim:
- Leann: Deadline for teachers to spend grade-level grants: verify with Lona, then send an email to teachers.
- Meghan: Follow up on SMART schools presentation
- Sara: supplies for teacher/para appreciation luau
- Jason: