



**Thurston Elementary  
Parent Teacher Organization**  
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**Thurston PTO General Meeting  
September 17, 2019  
Thurston Library  
Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members present:** Vice-Principal Callahan, Kelly Delp, Bruce Fields, Allison Jeter, Mary Manthey, Diane McIntyre, Elizabeth Morehead, Jon Svoboda, Eve Wright, Nadine Wong, Principal York

**Welcome:** PTO President Allison Jeter welcomes everyone to the first PTO meeting of the year and asks for all in attendance to introduce themselves, including PTO Board and committee members and members of the Thurston community.

**Approval of Minutes from June 13, 2019 Meeting:** Motion to approve made by Corentin Cras-Méneur, seconded by Elizabeth Morehead. Approved with no objections

**Treasurer's Report:** A budget overview was presented by Jon Svodoba. The PTO will aim to provide more transparency to the budget. The balance of the PTO accounts as of the new fiscal year, beginning on August 1, 2019, was \$62,961. There has been a positive trend in the PTO funds over the past few years. This would indicate that there is room in the PTO budget to consider larger scale improvement projects.

The PTO will be supporting all fees associated with field trips this year – the fees will include any admission fees as well as the costs of buses. The PTO will support three field trips per grade for this year. This is a change from recent years where the PTO only supported costs of transportation. The Treasurers will look into the estimated costs associated with admission fees for all field trips.

A copy of the budget is available on the PTO webpage (<https://www.a2schools.org/Page/1750>). Ideas and suggestions for any ideas on how to use PTO funds can be shared during a PTO Meeting or by emailing the PTO President ([pto.thurstonelementary@gmail.com](mailto:pto.thurstonelementary@gmail.com)).

**Principal's Report by Ms. York.** A reminder of the upcoming Curriculum Night. Childcare will start at 6pm and will be provided for all Thurston-enrolled students. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend the Informational session starting at 6:30pm, which will describe the new no-food classroom party/celebration policy. The school is running this new pilot policy to encourage healthier and safer practices and to provide a more inclusive environments for all students. They hope that this new policy will encourage more creative and productive celebrations for all students. In this pilot phase, the no-food policy will only apply to parties and celebrations that occur in the classrooms during instruction times.

Book Room Request presented by Ms. York. The Book Room serves as a take-home library and space for small group reading. Due to the school growth, the book room has been relocated over

the previous years. The proposal will look to add new bookshelves to the new Book Room location and to also purchase new texts, especially for Grades 3-5 and storage containers. The initial budget request for the Book Room is for \$19,000.

This item was tabled until the next General PTO Meeting in October.

**Teachers' Rep(s) Report:** Allison Jeter thanks all the Thurston teachers and staff for providing feedback via the PTO survey on the following: (1) How can PTO help you in your classroom; (2) How can PTO help Thurston school? (3) How can PTO help Thurston families?

Ms. York introduces Ms. Eve Wright as the PTO Teacher Representative

MPR Lighting System Request: presented by Ms. Tabaka. A description and history of the lighting system in the MPR, initially for the Thurston Talent Show was provided. EMU donated and installed a lighting system comprised of 8 spotlights and a control system. The system current lacks cabling and dimming packages. There are also some electrical constraints that prevent all 8 spotlights to be on simultaneously. In the current electrical configuration, 6 spotlights can be turned on simultaneously and is being used for other events, including International Night.

Ms. Tabaka has identified vendors for the cabling and dimming systems and has received a quote of \$2584.53 for purchase and installation of these systems. The installation of this package will enable all 8 spotlights to work. Ms York will put in a work order to have the electrical limitations investigated further. Any expense related to the electrical work would be covered by the district. Regardless of the electrical work, the cabling and dimming system will make 6 spotlights operational. The goal would be to have the lights operational ahead of the EMU performance in the Fall.

*Motion to approve up to \$3,000 for the purchase and installation of the cabling and dimming system by Corentin Cras-Méneur, seconded by Elizabeth Morehead. 1 Abstention. The motion passes.*

300 Books before Kindergarten Request presented by Ms. Bureau on behalf of the literacy committee. An overview of the program that was launched last year and that will be further introduced at the upcoming Curriculum night was provided. The goal of the program is to encourage families to read together. In the past year, over 23 family signed up for the program and read over 1000 books. Ms. Bureau described the program cost from the previous year associated with books, incentives and other activities, which she estimated to about \$300. Some of the costs were offset by her teacher grant and the surplus was covered out of pocket.

In addition to current incentives and other activities, the literacy committee would like to include a year-end celebration that would include a performance by the Baby Theater group. She requested \$500-600 for the program for this year. Several parents in attendance spoke highly of the program and about how much their preschoolers and families enjoyed participating in this program.

*Motion to approve up to \$600 to support the 300 Books by Kindergarten program by Michelle McManman, seconded by Maisha Ostergren. 1 Abstention. The motion passes.*

Rugs for SISS Room Request presented by Ms. Wright. Due to the removal of bookshelves from the SISS room, there are now uneven tiling in areas of the room. Ms. Wright requested two rugs to ensure more even and comfortable floor coverage in the SISS and an additional rug for her room.

*Motion to approve up to \$1000 for the purchase of three rugs by Elizabeth Morehead, seconded by Maisha Ostergren. 16 Yes; 10 Abstain. The motion passes.*

### **Committee Report**

Fundraising: Black Tie, Blue Jeans Auction update by Maisha Ostergren. Maisha mentioned that the target ticket sales to meet Ms. York and Ms. Callahan has not yet been made. The silent auction is live. The BTBJ committee is looking for some volunteers on the event. All relevant info has been shared via the newsletter and is on the website. She encouraged everyone to buy tickets, help and bid to support the PTO.

Fundraising: Fun Run Update presented by Kelly Delp. Kelly reminded everyone that the Fun Run is the biggest fundraiser of the year. Pledge information will be coming home soon and the Fun Run will kickoff on Monday. As in past years, there will be weekly raffles. The Fun Run is scheduled for October 18. This is a whole day event but there will be specific time slots for specific grades. More info will be shared once the schedule is finalized.

Safe Routes/Safety Chair Update presented by Ms. Callahan on behalf of Alisa Cox. Thank you to everyone who has helped with the various Safe Route events. A reminder that Walk to School Day is happening on October 4 with a visit by Mayor Taylor and athletes from Concordia. The Spring Bike Rodeo is another event organized by the Safe Routes/Safety Committee.

The committee is looking for volunteers to help at drop off/pick up times, especially on Wednesday mornings. The committee requested funding for refreshments for the Walk to School guests. The PTO has already allocated \$200 in the budget for the Walk to School event.

Thurston Nature Center Update presented by TNC Chair Elizabeth Morehead. An overview of TNC was provided including an update on the various projects that were recently completed and are being planned at the TNC. Elizabeth encouraged everyone to visit the TNC. Bulletin board, TNC kiosks and the website for more information (<https://thurstonnaturecenter.info/>). Elizabeth mentioned that there is a dying tree population problem at the TNC and will provide more details at a later time. She also shared a copy of the Water Valve Usage Plan ([https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uFyKLSitzZgTFgOoDMRHP3e6\\_NhQRwBowuMxe9fM7gY/edit?ts=5d8cf447](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uFyKLSitzZgTFgOoDMRHP3e6_NhQRwBowuMxe9fM7gY/edit?ts=5d8cf447))

Thurston Community Players. No update.

Other Reports/Updates presented by Allison Jeter. There are still many open volunteer positions, e.g. PTOC Rep; Thurston Pantry; DAW; Chess Club/Tournament; Gardening/Landscaping; Winter Carnival co-chair There will be some information and sign up opportunities at Curriculum Night.

The Thurston School Directory is in progress and there will be regular updates to the PTO webpage by webmaster Jamie Tomasello.

### **Other Items:**

PTO bylaws update/amendment presented by Allison Jeter. The PTO Board has been working on updates to the PTO bylaws. A draft of the amended bylaws will be shared with the Thurston community via the newsletter and will be on the agenda of the October PTO meeting.

Purchase of Heron mascot costume presented by the Fundraising Committee. The Turkey costume has been damaged and the committee would like to purchase a Heron costume to be used at various school activities e.g. Fun Run, Turkey Trot etc.

*Motion to approve up to \$400 for the purchase of Heron mascot costume by Jon Svoboda, seconded by Jamie Tomasello. 1 Abstention, The motion passes.*

Online option for teachers grants presented by Allison Jeter and Jon Svoboda. Items can be purchased directly by PTO rather than through receipt submission/reimbursement process. This should streamline the process and decrease upfront expenses by the teachers.

Boy Scout Troop Service Project. Boy scouts will make 5-6 signs for pet waste reminders.

Winter Carnival Co-Chair is needed.

Child care situation. A request was made by Dejuana Jackson for time at a future PTO Meeting to discuss the child care situation at Thurston, including program capacity, waitlist and options.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.