

Mesa Elementary School PTO General Meeting Notes
March 3, 2023, 8:30am

Attendees

Amabel Akwa-Asare, Anna Abboud, April Busch, Carrie Simpson, Jill Walter, Josh Baldner, Kristen Reiss, Kirsten Glennon, Madlena Measelle, Melanie Love, Mike Lakritz, Pete Minor, Rosanna Koren, Shayna Linn, Sunny van der Star

Introductions

- What is our dream job
- Carrie reiterated that if you can't come to meeting we still want to hear from you

District Parent Council

- Mike Lakritz, Mesa rep for the council, mentioned he's leaving Mesa this year
 - Mesa will need a replacement rep
- At meetings: Superintendent, CTO, head of curriculum
 - General council showed up at a meeting
- Best conduit/direct line to the super & C-suite people
- 2nd Wednesday of each month, from 6:30-8:30

Budget Update from Anna

- Not much change since last month
- Got another corporate match from Benevity
- Have funds in excess of \$39-\$40K of budget, still need to carry over 20% though
 - We write the last big check for the paras at the end of May
- By-laws for excess funds state we need to fill out a PTO Funding Request form
 - Anna passed around the form for everyone to review
 - People can fill out hard copies (available at the office) or on line (available on the Mesa PTO website)
 - Mesa teachers, staff and community can submit suggestions any time of year
 - Anna will also bring copies of the form to every PTO meeting
- When filling out a PTO Funding Request keep in mind things like:
 - Does it affect only one grade?
 - Is it an improvement for years to come, or just one year?
 - We want to provide things for the school as a whole rather than to a set group of students
- PTO will have a twice annual call for ideas on ways the PTO can vote on spending any remaining budget (if there is any) in the Spring and Fall
- Per Kristen, in the past we've made the spending allocation decision close to the end of May to ensure that we have enough funds to cover the paras
- Mesa Thrives covers paraprofessionals
 - If we don't have enough through Thrives to cover paras, then other events like Fall Fest will be needed to help cover
- New ideas to consider
 - Josh and April raised the need for math enrichment/support due to Covid
 - April proposed a Decodables reading need for K-2

Fundraising committee for Thrives

- Next year's fundraising committee (Thrives) will have its own committee

- Please volunteer to be on the committee
- 1st meeting this spring, won't meet over the summer but will hit the ground running in the fall
- Big need for classroom ambassadors that would engage/email with other parents in the class on Mesa Thrives
 - Ideally representing each class or grade level
 - This role made a big difference and each time these people would engage, Mesa saw a bump in funds
- Pete has volunteered to lead the Thrives committee again for at least one more year
 - He mentioned it would be good to start training someone

DEI

- Update on DEI event - Youth Equity Council
 - Good number of attendees from 4th/5th grade, a few younger students as well
 - Kids on council related personal experiences
 - Carrie appreciates the work of Christine, Sarah, and the DEI meeting committee
 - If you liked the event, feel free to let BVSD know
- End of April there will be another DEI event around Neurodiversity
- Community Montessori Gender Equity meeting
 - Online meeting, information can be found on the PTO website

Multicultural event update by Anna

- Meeting today at 2 PM, event on May 11
- Still need a few more families to volunteer to host tables
 - Feel free to send an email to the PTO board if you are considering an idea for a table but are unsure
 - We all have culture and we all want our kids to be proud of their culture
 - Doesn't have to just be families with an international parent
- Open to other cultures that families identify with: sports, cultural activities, music, etc; ie culture of Boulder
- Two food trucks are coming
- Will have an event during the school day to create enthusiasm for the evening event
- Another Friday Folder reminder would be helpful to remind families
 - Share the list of what families are doing?

Principal's Report

- On pace to have most attendance at PTO meetings this year
- Some children are participating in "Arts from the Heart" after school
 - Today there will be an unveiling at King Soopers of a permanent installation in memoriam of the KS shooting two years ago
 - Side note - there is a great art installation at the district offices
- Need someone to run for School Board
 - We are losing our South Boulder school board representative, Kathy Gephardt
 - Need a South Boulder candidate to run to replace her
- 52 days of school left this year, almost 30% of the school year to go

- FET continues to work on FAQ
 - Especially helpful for new families or if you're not familiar with how things work in elementary school
 - Amabel has more information on this if folks are interested
- Long-range advisory committee
 - Makes recommendations around enrollment in BVSD
 - Strongly focused on enrollment, meet monthly, Josh is part of committee
 - No proposals yet to the board
 - Timeline is June to make recommendations to the school board on the things to consider around the long term implications of enrollment and what the school board needs to consider
- BVSD has enough money in the budget to support the smaller schools that because of their fixed costs tend to be a bit more expensive, no fiscal cliff in the next few years
 - Coming up with plans as to when schools need to be evaluated, list of criteria that if school meets XYZ, then look for creative solutions
 - Mike reiterated that BVSD board has said our budget is in good shape, not like JeffCo which had major budget issues, BVSD is years away from that issue
 - State statute, have to provide open enrollment
 - A school can get capped, has ebbed and flowed in BVSD over the years
 - Largely in BVSD it's go wherever you want to go
- Amabel is on the District Accountability Committee - some recommendations will be coming around open enrollment, some with an equity lens, but also other recommendations

Eldorado Spring Water

- Teachers signed a thank you note for the water

Mesa Oasis

- Sunny provided an update
- Idea is to repurpose the abandoned garden area and make it a multi-purpose space, for lunches, outdoor classes, general meetings
- Sunny & Josh met with Senior city planner (Mark) and education manager for city of Boulder
 - Those two felt it was a great idea, Mark is a landscape architect and is going to give ideas
- Sunny & Josh got connected E movement (education, environment), Green school yards program
 - BVSD has a mandate that by 2026 have to invested in outdoor spaces, integrate outdoors with education - budget is \$2000/school
 - Josh found out today the facilities person for BVSD, no limits on what PTO can do with the exception that we need to go through a landscaper conjunction on an approved vendor list with BVSD (ie a bonded landscaper)
 - We can acknowledge their support with signage/plaque

Other updates

- Yearbook deadline is coming up
 - If you have photos you want to share, send them to your classroom parent to share back with the yearbook staff
- Still need help with Mesa dine-outs
- Meeting Minutes
 - Carrie made motion to approve January minutes, Sunny seconded; repeated pattern for February minutes
 - Motion to move the January and February meeting minutes
 - Everyone approved with 1 abstention for Jan, 2 abstention for Feb