

Thornell Road PTSA Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 14 2021 9AM

Attendees: Thahara Thavakumar-Slavin, Megan Bonaforte, Shruti Basim, Ivana Nadler, Tracy Castleberry, Virginia Brown, Emily Waller, Sadie Szrama, Colleen Emmons, Laura Pullem, Amy Ord, Roger DeBell

Zoom attendees: Andrea True, Michelle Miller, Rachel Nichols, Jessica Morrison, Kylie DeGrave, Kelly Pearson, Drew Morris, Emily Morgan, Noelle Cullen, Kristin Bergholtz

Call to order 9:13 am

Introductions and welcome to the incoming chair of TRE PTSA Colleen Emmons, Mr. DeBell and the other attendees. District PTSA president Tracy Castleberry was present to offer support for our programs and activities. This meeting was a pilot of providing a zoom option to the in person PTSA meeting. It was coordinated by Gina Brown and worked really well.

Mr. DeBell:

Welcome to all in here and on zoom, happy to be able to hold an in person meeting.

Colleen Emmons:

PTSA membership – please join the PTSA by signing up for the membership. It is the best way to support your child, every dollar goes directly back to school. PTSA membership gives your family voting power and leadership roles eligibility. For more information about where your money goes and how to sign up, please visit pittsfordptsanet.net. While everyone is welcome to volunteer with the PTSA, you can become a member and not volunteer if you do not have time. You can also find other PTSA information on this website.

TRE PTSA has already been busy and it's only the fourth day of school – we were present at the new family orientation, Back to school classroom days, put up welcome balloons at the school and hosted teacher breakfast. All of these are possible thanks to the membership dollars!

Welcome back picnic is on Friday, Sept 17th and the weather is looking to be nice. There's going to be games, music and a raffle. New this year! Marty's Meats and JoJo's Cool Bus will be available for dinner and dessert purchases. Bring your own picnic dinner, pre-order whole pizza(s) or purchase pizza by the slice on the day of the event. ALL PRE-ORDER PIZZA(S) MUST BE ORDERED BY WEDNESDAY, 9/15! Use the link below to view the Marty's Menu and/or PRE-ORDER your pizza(s).

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/.../thornellswelcomebackpicn...>

Whatever you choose, we can't wait to see you there!

There is going to be a signup for volunteers. Sadie Szrama suggested and agreed to organize nametags, color coded for grade level to allow people to connect better.

Thornell Road Directory is online on <https://thornellroad.membershiptoolkit.com/>

Please sign up, the directory is separate from infinite campus. You can find students, teachers, parent email information. PTSA can send messages using this directory, and it's the best way to get information

about volunteer opportunities. If you signed up last year, you still have to confirm your information. If you prefer not to have your personal information public, please share at least your email address. You can download the app on your phone, Membership toolkit. All the Pittsford schools use Membership Toolkit, you can switch between schools if you have students at more than one school.

Mr. DeBell:

Thank you, Colleen for stepping in, it's a lot of work to chair PTSA. There is always a place for volunteers and many hands make light work.

Carol Webber is starting today as a new principal's assistant. Comes from East Rochester middle/high schools and has been living and working in this community for many years. Please make her feel welcome.

I've been happy to welcome parents back to school in person at the parent student orientation. Things are so far going well this year. The only complication we ran into was bussing. A lot of families have signed up for busses, but many more families are picking up in person than we expected. That created a traffic jam in the lobby with the waiting children. Starting today, all the parents who are picking up and have will be moved to Cafeteria – Door 15. The parents are asked to park their cars and pick up in person. There will be staff present to dismiss the students to the correct grownup. This should alleviate the congestion in the lobby.

Our community is growing! This year, with the exception of grade 2 and 4, there are 4 sections per grade level. We have the largest kindergarten class ever. The enrollment is up and the building is getting full. The goal is for the kids to get home from school happy.

Lunches are in the cafeteria this year, each grade level has its own lunch period. There are 4 kids/table maximum, about 6 ft from each other. There is a short amount of time to eat (15 min), but they have time to socialize at recess.

Thank you for your patience, support, and encouragement, couldn't do it without you.

Liz Rudder, treasurer:

We will post the proposed budget for this year very soon on the website to review before we vote on it at the October 14th PTSA meeting. It will be up for about a month and we will make sure to share the way to access the budget.

Treasurer on record is Teague Ruder, Liz Ruder is helping out. Teague is looking for a replacement treasurer, please let us know if you are willing to step into this role.

The building budget is looking good, as a lot of the budget didn't get spent last year.

Should we budget money for field trips? Mr. DeBell: As of right now field trips are on hold, we don't know when they may be added back. Decision is to put the money in the budget and roll over if it doesn't get used. Field trips that may be cancelled in the future are still scheduled, hoping we get a go further down the line.

The district will be covering less of our budget for the Cultural Arts, and therefore we need to use more of our budget for this item. We are trying to do more experiences online, such as Joe Crookston - we could try to budget some \$ for those. Joe Crookston used to come to TRE to work with 3rd graders to create art. Last year all was virtual.

Is the bookfair fundraiser going to be in person or online? If online, we do not get cash, but online scholastic \$. Amy Ord said that hybrid is possible, she ran a hybrid bookfair last year at another school. Students shop in person, parents can shop online. Parents can preload \$ for their child. Kids would make a wish list, kids can use the \$ they preloaded in person or parents can buy their selections online at home. We get better profit for the in person option. A smaller space may be a good option for the hybrid bookfair. Mr. DeBell is worried about what November will look like pandemic-wise. It is prudent to plan for some version of online. There will be no roller skating parties this year.

Every year PTSA makes a gift to school. Does Mr. DeBell have any specific requests for this year? Last year we had \$2,000 allotted to buy iPads, that didn't go through though. We should have money left over from last year. Any gifts to school should be items from which every child is benefitting in some way. Mr. DeBell needs to think about this question for a while. Anything that would aid teachers and their classrooms would be amazing, such as building their classroom libraries. Doing a survey, perhaps "go fund me" like page for the teachers would bring more ideas. PTSA may set up a used book selection for the teachers to go through. Another option is playground equipment. Will come back to this at future meetings.

PTSA Fundraisers:

Membership dollars and Cans King are easy fundraisers to raise money for the PTSA.

District allotment is going down from a little over \$6 to approximately \$4, membership will help with the allotment to stay closer to what it normally is.

This year we will again have a Super Sale Trail instead of the traditional indoor Super Sale at the High School. The change will yield less \$.

Gina is looking into SquareOne art fundraiser. Either Mrs. Lubbers or parents from home would submit a piece of art and parents can order an item such as a magnet, keychain, mug etc. with the child's artwork on it. If we got the Art ambassador program up and going, we could have a project set up and tie it in with this fundraiser. The artwork is restricted to a small square. We could do this in spring, for Mother's or Father's day gifts.

Holiday gift shop / Reindeer Lane- kids can shop for gifts for holidays, every culture would be included. Hanukkah is early this year. We would plan this for Nov 30th – Dec 2nd. Depends on whether we could be in person, otherwise we would bump it to the next year.

Cans King fundraiser- People can take their can and bottle returns to any Cans King, mention the TRE PTSA for the donations to go to.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee report – Sadie Szrama:

Last year we had a successful year with the book club. This year we plan to continue with it, already have the first book picked out. Stay tuned for news on this. Also, if anyone would like to join the committee or has any ideas, please let us know.

Yearbook – Virginia Brown and Megan Bonafonte

There are more people who want to be involved, which is great. While the sales of the yearbook are a long time away, the plans to submit pictures for the yearbook are getting off the ground. Teachers do a great job submitting pictures. The company we work with for the yearbook also has an app 'Yearbook snap', anyone can submit pictures. Gina still needs to set it up for this year. Also, we always start with the cover contest for the yearbook. Last year the theme was "shine like a star". This year we need to get started on it soon.

After School Enrichment – Ivana Nadler

This year we are back to in person enrichment! Program coordinators are currently talking with vendors who have been providing programs in the past years. We are looking at Drama Kids International (Drama club), Rochester Chess Center (Chess Club), Butterfly Kids Yoga (Yoga Club), and new this year Art Club with Joanne Andrews. If anyone would like to coordinate Coding club, please let Ivana Nadler know. The company who ran the online coding club last year would be interested in running an in person Coding club. It is also a possibility to run this program online, like it was done last year.

It will be harder to find enough space for the afterschool clubs with the building filling more of its classrooms. Stay tuned for updates!

There has been interest in gardening in the greenhouse. Logistical issues have to be resolved in regards to this, including the fact that most of the harvest would be picked in the summer when the school is not in session.

After School **musical ensembles** will be held in school this year.

Monday – 4th grade chorus, Tuesday- orchestra, Wednesday – 5th grade chorus, Thursday – band

Science Action - Rachel Nichols,

Rachel set up a science action curriculum that was very Covid-friendly last year. It worked really well, the plan is to do the same this year. School is trying to limit parent volunteers inside school. Shorter visits are more open, longer visits (an hour in the classroom) are a no go right now. We'll see what we can do as the year progresses.

Spirit wear - Colleen Emmons

We work with Idea Works company. The plan is to have the order form ready by Friday, order to close on Sept 29th, hopefully be able to pick up the spirit wear by the 3rd week of October. There are going to

be two spirit wear sale periods. The fall one will feature the familiar star logo, the spring one something different. New items will be available.

School Picture day is October 13th. It is unclear whether there can be a parent volunteer present as of now.

Light the loop

Last year, based on Colleen's suggestion, we started this community night. This fundraiser featured people decorating the bus loops of all the Pittsford elementary schools with carved pumpkins followed by the drive through. The intent is to have walk throughs this year, possibly on the Saturday before Halloween. Each building is asked to have a building volunteer coordinator to join a district committee to organize this event. If you are interested to help organize this, please let us know. It is going to be done by the end of the October.

Happy birthday cha cha cha

This organization is providing City of Rochester school kids with a bag of useful goodies on their birthdays. We are planning to collaborate with them once again to collect items that are needed, possibly coordinating with the Student Council this year. This is a wonderful organization, more information can be found on the following website - <https://happybirthdaychachacha.org> Be on a lookout for an event!

In November, Thornell Road Elementary is going to celebrate its **75th birthday** - Mr. DeBell is planning something for this event.

Future evening Zoom Meetings:

Parents have reached out repeatedly to have access to meetings, especially to have some of the PTSA meetings in the evening and therefore accessible to working parents. You have been heard! Everyone's presence is valued. We are figuring to make the meetings fair and accessible to all who want to participate. Be on the lookout for information.

School Spirit Days

School Spirit Days are back. They are organized by the Student Council, look out for the announcement about them. This year PTSA would like to help out. PTSA will contribute popsicles and pencils for all the students. We are looking for volunteers to be grade level liasons. These volunteers would get the pencils

+ popsicles from the PTSA and work with the teachers on their grade level to organize Grade level celebrations each month.

Contact PTSA :

Email: tre@pittsfordptsanet.net

Facebook: Thornell Road Parents

Facebook: Thornell Road PTSA

You can also get information about what's going on with the PTSA by signing up for eBlast. Andrea True sends it out for TRE on Mondays