

Burroughs PTA Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2016
6:30-8:10 pm

Officers Present:

Lesley Farmer, President
Jessica Wood, Vice President
Deb Ward, Treasurer
Angelina Philips, Treasurer Assistant
Beth Goodpaster, Secretary

Welcome and Introduction, Lesley Farmer

Review and Approval of Minutes, Beth Goodpaster

Beth read the minutes for the November 15, 2016 meeting, and the motion to approve the minutes carried.

Community Meeting Report, Principal Ana Bartl

Ana updated PTA on the “Community Conversation” held on January 17, 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to identify ways to enhance the positive and inclusive environment for all students at Burroughs. Forty to fifty people attended, including parents and staff. The attendees split into discussion groups and identified steps that could be accomplished this year, as well as some for next year. A summary of the ideas generated by the participants was distributed and can be found as a [separate attachment to these minutes](#).

The conversation was connected with the work of the District’s “Positive School-wide Community Engagement Team”. That team receives training throughout the year. In addition to staff, there must be both a community member and a student family member on the team. The first staff training was held Monday, January 23, and was attended by teachers representing most grade levels, Beth Alvarez, and specialists. Both Ana and Lonnie Hulsey thought the training was supportive, positive, and encouraging.

A parent at the meeting asked whether the work of the team included making changes to lunch at Burroughs, that is, creating a family-style lunch. Ana replied that this option will be considered, but such a change is not likely for next year. Given the large number of students at Burroughs, it will take a lot of planning.

Another parent asked where the conversation about making changes to lunch is happening, i.e, is it part of the Positive School-Wide Engagement Team’s work? Ana reports that these discussions have been happening at Site Council and will continue in that forum.

Mindfulness Curriculum Update, Jen Feriancek and Ana Bartl

Jen made a presentation at the November 15, 2017 PTA meeting describing a curriculum that incorporates “mindfulness” into elementary school classrooms. The [Mindfulness Curriculum](#) teaches children (and teachers and parents) strategies for calming themselves and practicing kindness to themselves and others. [See Minutes of November 15, 2017 PTA Meetings for further description of the curriculum.] In discussions with parents and school staff since the last PTA meeting, Jen has received an enthusiastic response to introducing mindfulness lessons to children at Burroughs.

Jen developed a proposal to teach 10 lessons (of the 16-lesson Mindfulness Curriculum) in every Burroughs classroom this school year. The cost for these lessons and materials would total \$13,720 for the year. This curriculum is not included in the current PTA budget. The proposal can be found as a [separate attachment to these minutes](#).

Ana made a motion that the PTA approve the funds to implement Jen’s proposal for a Mindfulness Curriculum this school year. The motion was seconded.

In discussion that followed, Ana stated that in her discussions with staff, all but two were in favor of adding the mindfulness curriculum to classrooms at Burroughs. The two opposed were not opposed to teaching mindfulness strategies, but rather were already taking similar steps using another curriculum called MindUp; their concern is trying to coordinate the two.

One parent asked whether the curriculum changes from year to year, i.e., would it be repetitive to students after the first year, or does the curriculum change with grade levels. Jen answered that the lessons can build on the first year.

Another asked whether the curriculum would be shared with specialists who see Burroughs kids in all grades. Jen said she could add that. Jen will also be meeting with special education teachers to coordinate the Mindfulness Curriculum with mindfulness lessons those teachers are using already.

The final question concerned whether PTA has the money to implement the mindfulness curriculum proposal. Both Deb Ward and Lesley Farmer confirmed that yes, the funds are available for this year. Ideas for funding the program next year include making it the annual Fund-A-Need auction item.

All PTA members present voted in favor of the motion to accept the Mindfulness Curriculum proposal.

Read-A-Thon, Melissa Albert

Lesley began by expressing gratitude to Melissa for taking on Burroughs biggest fundraiser this year – it is a ton of work! Melissa said she plans to chair the Read-A-Thon committee next year as well, but she will need a co-chair.

Melissa passed around a signup sheet asking for volunteers for the current Read-A-Thon, assembling the packets distributed to kids January 31, and tallying minutes and prizes on March 9, 2017.

The biggest change to the Read-A-Thon this year is that the Read-A-Thon themed t-shirts will no longer be prizes based on the amount of money the kids raise; instead they will be awarded based on the level of minutes read. Kindergartners who read 2,500 minutes or more during the month, and 1st through 5th graders who read 3,000 minutes or more, will receive Read-A-Thon t-shirts. Previously, meeting a \$125 fundraising goal was required to receive the t-shirt prize. This year, the prize for raising \$125 will be a journal. Melissa emphasized that she hopes families will not reduce the amount of money they have donated in the past. After this year, the Committee will evaluate whether changing the prizes reduced fundraising revenues.

Parents and staff at the meeting supported the change, and suggested voicing support for the initiative through the Burroughs Parent Facebook page.

Fall for Burroughs Auction, Catherine Lipinsky

Catherine highlighted remaining Great Gatherings that have tickets available for purchase during the rest of the semester. She distributed a handout listing the many options, which include tickets to a Burroughs-only showing of the Lego Batman premiere. These are also listed in the Burroughs Bulletin. There are some tickets set aside for those families who cannot afford to pay; Beth Alvarez helps distribute these tickets.

Former Auction chair Regina Folken encouraged people to ask to attend sold-out events as well, i.e., ask to be placed on a waiting list.

Catherine reported the updated Auction financials. As of January 23, 2017, all revenue totaled \$102,753.00. She expects another \$5,000 to \$10,000 from ongoing purchases to Great Gatherings. Expenses for the event were approximately \$29,000, netting \$73,000 for the Burroughs Fund.

The Auction proceeds have paid for the Fund-a-Need Chrome Books, and another \$55,000 has been transferred to the Burroughs Fund. Another check to the Burroughs Fund will be cut in June.

Volunteers are needed soon to help plan the next Fall for Burroughs Auction on November 10, 2017. The new venue for next year will be the Minneapolis Events Center in Northeast. The costs will be same or less than this year.

Special Request, Linda Frederickson

Linda Frederickson, Library Media Specialist, requested \$500 to bring Minnesota author Shelly Boyum-Breen, author of books such as Shelly Bean the Sports Queen, to read to each grade and talk about her experience reading and writing about sports. She will also be selling and signing books. [Parents are welcome to attend.] Ms. Boyum-Breen will be at Burroughs February 10, starting at 9:30 a.m.

Lonnie Hulseley made the motion to approve \$500 for the author visit; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

EZBucks For Burroughs, Lara Tickle

Lara gave her update of year-to-date fundraising revenue from “EZBucks for Burroughs” sources, including Box Tops, Office Depot/Staples, and Loaves for Learning.

Burroughs also receives money from Kowalski’s, based on the number of receipts placed in the Burroughs receipt bin at checkout. Angie Philips mentioned that she needs more information about how often Kowalski’s makes these donations; she has received a couple of checks but does not know the applicable time period for the donations.

Box Tops collection has been going well. The goal for this year is \$3,000; Burroughs is at \$1,358 so far. Lara is interested in any suggestions for Box Tops goals for next year. Burroughs received an additional \$5,000 for allowing filming of Box Tops promotional videos in the Media Center and music classroom last spring.

Lara urged families to be attentive to the expiration dates on Box Top labels; a large number of BoxTops collected this fall were expired (at an estimated value of a couple hundred dollars).

Burroughs has also been collecting Campbell’s soup can labels, which are worth 1 cent apiece. Lara has a large bag of these collected labels that have not been counted yet. Lara suggested that she could donate the uncounted Campbell’s labels to other schools that may be willing to count them up and receive the funds.

Lonnie Hulseley moved to identify a school to which to send the Campbell’s labels; the motion was seconded and approved. Ana Bartl suggested that in the future, we could consider label-counting as a potential student council activity.

Lara gave a presentation on a new EZBucks for Burroughs tool on the way. The program is called Scrip. It allows people to purchase gift cards for any of 700 stores (including Cub, CVS/Walgreen's, Holiday, Target, Starbucks, just to name a few); with each gift card purchase, a percentage (averaging 2-20%) of the card amount goes back to Burroughs. The gift cards must be ordered through Burroughs, after creating a Scrip account online. The cards would be delivered to Burroughs a couple of days after ordering, and then made available for parents to pick up.

Feedback from PTA members was very positive about this new fundraising-while-you-shop method.

Bylaws Review and Amendments, Lesley Farmer

Lesley informed parents that the PTA needs to review and amend its Bylaws. The PTA Officers will be reviewing them and make a recommendation to PTA members for amendments (such as expanding the number of officers needed to carry out the PTA's work). But Leslie welcomed others to review the Bylaws too, and offer ideas and suggestions for any changes. The current PTA Bylaws are posted on the Burroughs web site.

Treasurer Report, Deb Ward

Deb reported that we are on track for filing PTA's IRS Form 990 February 15. The CPA firm Murray and Associates has assisted with the filing, and we have asked them to do an external audit of PTA's books. With that audit, the firm would make recommendations for process improvements, bylaws, and investments. Deb looks forward to working with this firm, which advises PTAs regularly.

Angie Philips discussed her plan to provide a written one-page budget report at each PTA meeting, starting with the next PTA meeting in March. She also reported that cross-country skis for all students to use in PE classes (the Fund A Need for last year) have been purchased. PTA has also transferred the Auction proceeds to the Burroughs School Fund, which is managed by Achieve Minneapolis.

Lesley Farmer mentioned that she has been involved in discussions with PTA Officers and Burroughs administrative staff about outsourcing portions of the PTA treasury role. The discussion will continue as part of the Bylaws review. The change would recognize that the time commitment needed for PTA treasury work throughout the year is far more than should reasonably be asked of a parent volunteer.

Art Displays, Ana Bartl

Ana gave a brief update that work is in progress to raise funds for glass art displays to use throughout the school to showcase art created in Mr. Pilon's classes. Artwork that

each grade made this fall was auctioned at Fall for Burroughs; Ana is working with Catherine Lipinsky and Jessica Wood to have high quality reprints of the auctioned work made so that the pieces can raise additional funds. Deb Ward suggested that the PTA could consider purchasing the displays independent of fundraising efforts related to the Auction pieces.

Spiritwear, Linda McConley

Linda reported that total sales for Spiritwear this year are \$5,341, which is \$1,200 more than all of last year. The Friday Spirit Days have contributed to increased demand. Two-thirds of Spiritwear sales are from in-person Atrium sales on Fridays; the rest are online sales. Spiritwear is fully stocked now. Soon there will be Spiritwear available with the new Burroughs Bobcot logo! (Maybe yard signs too?)

Unfilled Committee Chairs, Jessica Wood

Parent volunteers are needed to chair the All-School Picnic Committee and the 5th Grade Promotion Ceremony and Reception Committee. Please let people know about these end-of-school-year volunteer opportunities.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10