

Brichta Elementary School PTO Minutes

Location: Brichta School Library
Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2009
Time: 7:00 pm
TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Members Present: Sabrina Cruz, Jennifer Schroeder, Diana Kingfisher, Liz Dalglish, Kerry Hodgkinson, Stephanie Hamilton, Jim Carrasco, Cindy and Joel Lucero, Veronica Sandaval, Jane Simpson, Jodi Thompson, Elma Alvarz, Rene Valenzuela, Danielle Filivaa, Mar Ann Estrada-Lujan, Jaime (Tata) Estrada, Deirdre Giampietro, Alexis Huicochea

Meeting called to order by Jennifer Schroeder, Vice President

Jennifer - Proposal to have a fundraiser for Easter selling See's candy. It would start in February and go to March 17, 2010 to ensure delivery for Easter. A flyer would describe the items and families could order directly from it and return to the school. A motion was made to sell See's candy as a fundraiser for the PTO. It was seconded and approved.

Parent – Questioned if Brichta charged groups to use the facility after hours such as homeowners associations. She mentioned her homeowner's assoc. meets at a different school and pays rent. She would like to have Brichta take advantage rentals to similar groups.

Kerry – Brought information regarding Original Artworks fundraiser. It was suggested to plan this for next year. Hold off discussing this until the end of the year.

Jodi – Working on the Brichta Blast. Currently sending out letters soliciting donations. Suggested possibly a kick-off for the Brichta Elementary 50th Anniversary?

Bianchi's night – Raised \$239. Little work for this event. Just need to make a flyer for the evening. Will check into this event again for the Spring.

Rummage sale – Will plan to have this event in May on a Saturday. Start collecting items in Jan. Jim will put something in the school newsletter.

Liz – PTO meetings for the upcoming year: Jan 12th, Feb 9, March 9, April 13, and April 27th.

Culture Night will happen in 2010. Details to follow.

Principal's Report–

Bond project complete. New carpet in the library, tile in the portables, hand dryers, realignment of the school driveway, re-graveling the parent parking lot (environmental friendly).

Cell phone tower on Brichta property – Would the revenue benefit outweigh the negatives? Discussions are still occurring regarding this proposal. Where would the revenue go? Companies have been known to come into properties and negotiate improvements to allow the tower to be on the property. The first meeting will be in Jan regarding this proposal. Call and let Principal Cruz know if you are interested in providing input. Your help is needed. The neighborhood association is not against it. Where would it be placed? What would it look like? A digital image of how it would look could be provided. A comment regarding the health implications was brought up. A parent responded that any negative health implications have not been proven.

Neighborhood Association – Safe routes to schools. They wanted feedback.

21st Century learning grant – It is going excellent. The garden looks great. We are expanding and have a preschool program in this grant. The vision is to have a full time preschool program. The vision for the school would be to have a birth to 8th grade school. Family fitness night will begin on Thursday evenings in January, 4-6pm.

5th grade at Brichta – Currently Brichta has a 4th grade accelerated program. 4th graders are able to work on 5th grade level. Many schools are under enrolled in their 5th grades. What can we do? Expand the program to include a 6th grade. Consider the idea of a K-6th or K-8th grade program. It would be open to current enrollees only. In order to grow the program siblings could come back to the school or pull some kids from other places.

Why expand? 1. Kids 2. Funds

Funds for schools are becoming more and more competitive. We want money for our kids. We offer students the opportunity they are not receiving at other schools. How would you feel about this? A proposal would need to be in to the district by February. Concern raised that we have a “community” school environment at Brichta and want to preserve it, not lose it by expansion.

Concerns were raised regarding have Kindergarten students mingled with 8th graders. The school needs to have funds to run at a bare minimum. We want to focus on “our” students and don’t want to have any security risks. Would more specialists be added? It depends on our population of students. We wouldn’t bring in new students.

This is a good time to expand and if approved funds would be available for infrastructure. We could become a magnet school and focus on technology.

Why did you come to the meeting tonight and what will help you?

Parent comment – What is going on with our school? The newsletter is “warm and fuzzy”. We want to know what is really happening in our school. We need “meat and potatoes” in the newsletter. If we are out of paper, let us know and we can have a paper drive. If we don’t know, we can’t help. Now we are low on toner? Where do we get that? What is the immediate need? Do we have soap? We need that available at all times to prevent the spread of germs. What is happening with the vacuum? The carpets are dirty. Do you need money to fix the vacuum? If we don’t know what’s “really” going on, we can’t help. What are students being split up in classrooms when their teacher is absent? It was chaos when a parent visited a kindergarten classroom. Utilize the newsletter as an effective tool for communication to parents. What is the policy regarding students entering the cafeteria and the side gate being locked? This appears to be a monitor issue and is concerning.

No rent is charged to the local neighborhood association. It is pro-bono. The district makes the decisions on how much to pay for facility rentals.

Principal Cruz – Thank you for your concerns. The paper was relocated to a different spot in the school. Many copies were being made and were “junk”. Did not fit the 21st learning environment for Brichta. Want to discourage “busy work” on paper. Teachers need to look at what they are copying. Don’t want copies in the trash.

Soap – There was a period when the regular custodians were absent and the supplies were placed in a different place. Principal Cruz will look into the soap.

Substitutes – The district dictated that the sub budget be decreased and there were occasions when a kindergarten teacher was out and the class was split up. Just informed that the sub budget has money and subs will be called in again. Regarding increasing the budget? Waiting on several things. The parents should have been notified.

Custodians – Don’t “need” a vacuum. They can use brooms and dust pans. There is a work order put in 2-3 weeks ago to have the vacuums repaired. A parent volunteered to purchase one for the school.

Toner – We do still have some and have been asking teachers to conserve.

Wish list – Idea was presented by a parent to utilized the website for this or to “adopt a class”.

Database to be utilized to contact parents via email was suggested.

Volunteer list is being utilized. Some parents might not have been contacted because their name has not been “gotten to.” Title I is utilizing this list. Marissa – Targeted assistance students only. Active role to address this.

Grandparent – Do you have a fund in your budget for gifts/donations? Yes. PTO was presented

with \$100 donation. Thank you! Possible use – purchase toner?

PTO is here to help. If we had known, we could have purchased paper. We are here to fill the financial gaps that appear and we can act quickly.

Cafeteria in the morning? – When inclement weather occurs the students are directed in the cafeteria. It was suggested some type of signage be utilized to inform parents. The gate being locked will be looked into by Principal Cruz.

Thank you to all for attending!

Next Meeting:

January 12th, 6:30pm

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30pm