**Willis Elementary PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, September 22, 2017**

Starting Time: 8:45 am

Board Members Present:   Mr. Stenger, Mrs. Fintel, Bianca Lawrence, Sky Galliano, Tara Merino, Cathy Magda

Other Members Present: Listed separately

Minutes submitted by Cathy Magda

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and Thank you Message
2. Open Positions
3. WAT (Business Partners)
4. Mr. Stenger / Mrs. Fintel Remarks
5. Staff Appreciation
6. Donuts for Dad
7. Financial Update
8. Speaker Session
9. Q&A

**PTO Welcome Message / Open Positions**

1. Bianca welcomed and thanked the attendees for taking time to get involved. She discussed open positions and volunteer opportunities. There are two open positions: Business Partners Chair and Walk-a-Thon prize execution co-chair.

**Walk-A-Thon (Business Partners)**

1. Walk-A-Thon is Friday, September 29th 8:45 to 11:45. Mr. Stenger launched it on Thursday afternoon to students.
2. Volunteers are needed on Friday to count laps, manage cones and take pictures for yearbook. Signup genius to go out next week.
3. Tara discussed the WAT being our largest fundraiser and historically makes up over 60% of our fundraising dollars
4. For the 2016-2017 school year, the PTO invested in an ELA program called Making Meaning, 120 book leveled libraries for every classroom and renovated the Media Center.
5. Past STEAM investments include purchasing iPads, laptops, interactive whiteboards, supplies, creating a Maker Space in the Media Center and drum sets.
6. There is a new class this year dedicated to STEAM.
7. This year we will be continuing our commitment to STEAM, ELA and professional development.
8. Tara discussed the online fundraising tool available again this year. The link to the fundraising site is an easy way for family and friends to sponsor your child. All online donations must be submitted by the morning of Walk-A-Thon.
9. Tara discussed the new and exciting prizes such as the Ninja Warrior experience as well as a new light blue dri-fit t-shirt for children that qualify.
10. We have 25 business partners – 19 of them are new business partners this year.
11. Our school is a recognized 501c and meets the eligibility criteria for corporate match programs meaning many companies will match your contribution.

**Mr. Stenger / Mrs. Fintel Remarks**

1. Mrs. Fintel commented on the Making Meaning program. The program includes academic goals as well as social goals.
2. The program encourages children to make responsible choices and take ownership for their actions.
3. Mr. Stenger would like to continue efforts in ELA by expanding on the 2nd part of the instructional programs for the classrooms.

**Valerie Demino / Denise West**

1. Valerie Demino discussed Staff Appreciation which is May 7-11th. Planning meetings will begin in January 2018. She will create a signup genius for volunteers at a later date.
2. Denise West discussed Donuts for Dads which is October 6th. Dads will enjoy coffee, orange juice, and donuts all of which have been donated for this function. Dads and children will also have their picture taken together and can visit the book fair in the Media Center.
3. Denise also discussed yearbook and all she needs are people to take pictures and submit to her or Liz Baas.

**Financial Update**

1. Tara reported on current financials.

**Speaker Session**

1. Bianca introduced Rebecca Blitz, Make A Wish Regional Director – Southern Counties.
2. Rebecca discussed the importance of philanthropy and being a strong community member.
3. Make A Wish empowers children with life-threatening medical conditions to fight harder against their illness.
4. The funds raised stay in our area and are used to grant the wishes of children here in our communities.
5. Funds are raised through events such as Cooking for Wishes, Dishes for Wishes and Christmas in Candy Land.
6. Proceeds from childcare during the spring fundraiser will go to Make A Wish.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.