

Butler PTA General Meeting 12/15/15 8:45-9:45 am

Minutes taken by Lisa Listerman, Recording Secretary

In attendance:

Rola Baghdady, Carrie Redi, Andrea Press, Eliza Wu, Ann and Ed Ozawa, Asma Mumtaz, Marina Haroutounian, Rose O'Neil, Joanna Dunn, Kathryn Whittemore, Azra B. Nelson, Snigda Roy, Megha Durukkar, Jing He, Marisena Lajoie, Sabine Baghdady, Basudeb Roy, Sarah Applewhite, Erica Elia, Dawn Rizvi, Anita Bogati, Julianne Vidaver, Kathleen Conneely, Lisa Listerman, Mauro Lance, Miranda Cohen

Rola Baghdady and Barbara Bulfoni open the meeting

Butler PTA and BASEP 2015 Audit Reports - report by Mauro Lance

The Audit committee has been formed (same individuals as last year: Mauro Lance, Cara Cogliano and David Engerman).

Committee was compliant in filing the report by 11/15/15. This report will be sent out in newsletter (which has since been done).

A few copies of the report circulated for viewing during the meeting.

PTA has done good job (no findings). Everything financially is running well. PTA is financially healthy!

Let us know if you want a copy; we would be happy to send it to you.

Nominating Committee

- Need to vote on a Nominating Committee for next year's PTA officers.
- The nominating committee is in charge of finding officers for the PTA
- Bylaws state there needs to be nominating committee appointed 6 months in advance. (The next election is in June, so need to form this now).
- This committee is tasked at looking for candidates for PTA Board.
- There has to be at least 2 people on the committee.
- We are looking for volunteers! If you would like to do this, let Barbara or Rola know. 5 people volunteered.
- Lance moved to approve nominating committee. Barbara seconded. All approved.
- The new committee is: Kate Weinstein, Molly Arnason, Laura VanderHart, Katie Auffinger, and Julianne Vidaver. Thank you!

PRESENTATION ON SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

This is part of a district-wide initiative.

Introduction of SEL by Ms. Babson (principal intern)

What is SEL? Why is it important to incorporate SEL into children's lives?

Overall culture of the school

Core value of the school

Promoted and sustained by everyone

5 Core competencies

Viewed video (from Edu-topia) that explained and illustrated SEL

- self awareness
- self management
- social awareness
- relationships skills

- responsible decision-making

“Growth Mindset” by Mrs. Crowley (resource teacher)

Growth mindset is the belief that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. Brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

You can change your brain and neural pathways thru perseverance, persistence, commitment, extra time and effort.

Something may be hard, but don't give up! We want students to say, “I can't do this yet”.

Viewed video of Butler students being interviewed, some of whom have done program for a few years, other for a few months.

These students explained, “What is growth mindset” and how they used it.

Emphasizes the importance of making mistakes. Change your words: “Mistakes help me improve. Instead of “this is too hard”, say “this will take time and effort”.

This is infused into the curriculum and through conversations. Colorful bulletin boards in hallways reinforce and provide visual reminders.

Praise the effort and persistence/ strategies they used (don't praise intelligence).

Handout was provided that outlines brain research.

Trying to get growth mindset into all the classrooms. Right now it started in 3rd and 4th grades.

Starting with some of the 2nd grades. Done presentations with some of staff in each grade level.

“Mindfulness” by Mrs. Romig (guidance counselor)

Mindfulness means maintaining awareness of our thoughts, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment. Mindfulness is explained to kids as “paying attention to what is happening right now and focusing on what is happening right now”.

Focuses on self-awareness and self-management competencies.

Mrs. Romig discussed the benefits of regular mindfulness practice, the components of meditation/ mindful breathing, and the effects students have noticed through practicing mindfulness.

This is an 8-week curriculum used in some of the classrooms. Teachers and kids have been responsive.

Mindfulness Meditation

these techniques are practiced in the classroom

teaching students to attend to their breathing

Stay in the moment

Notice when thoughts have drifted away, bring attention back to breathing (present moment)

Can change structure of the brain when mindfulness meditation occurs regularly.

Learning to be aware of what you are feeling in the present moment

emotional, sensory awareness, focus on what you are seeing/ hearing, noticing when you get distracted

There is a good video of (not Butler) kindergartners: “Just Breathe”. Google “Just Breathe” and you can view it.

Mrs. Romig has done mindfulness curriculum in 3 classrooms so far.

8 week curriculum meeting 2x week.

She has gone into 4th grade and K classrooms. Will do other classrooms in Jan.

Next round: 3rd grade, K, 4th grade.

Teachers learn it concurrently, so they can continue the teachings after the program ends.

Ways to incorporate mindfulness into home routines:

Suggestions: mindful breathing; read book on mindfulness; at dinner, have happiness jar - everyone shares something that made them happy that day - creates positive atmosphere; gratitude journal; take a listening walk; help child identify emotions as they experience it focus on mindful eating; doing body scan at bedtime

“Apology of Action” by Mrs. Babson (3rd grade teacher)

Making amends is more than saying you're sorry. Learn what children can say and do to take responsibility for their behaviors and actions.

Includes role playing when not in the moment of conflict.

Teaching empathy and promoting positive language. Paying attention to body language when making apology.

Motto: “You break it, you fix it”.

Incorporating this year and will be on-going.

website: parent tool kit

Edutopia.com

On Jan 6 at the Middle School, Rachel Culliner (expert consultant working with district) will be doing presentation for elementary-aged students .

Question from audience: How can this program help an already emotionally dysregulated child, who may be special needs?

Team identifies these students who may need more than 8 week program.

Handouts on these topics were provided.

A follow up survey was in the back of the room and will also be sent out about what parents would like to see related to SEL for the next steps

Meeting adjourned 9:45a

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