

Grand Canyon School PTA Meeting Minutes

October 24, 2017

Grand Canyon School, MPR

Edibles provided by the culinary department at the school. Thank you!

In attendance:

President Cherie Benefield, Secretary Kim Besom, Bill Sweeney, Angela Elias, Cory Clark, Brenda Clark, Lisa Otto, Christine Kennedy, Linda Rakow-Schenkoske, Jeanette Scheller, Dan Tobin, Kara Chenevert, Craig Chenevert, Peg Lyle, Rose Moquino, Esther Sacco, Alejandra Flores, Suyen O'Campo, Tracey Triggs, Barb Shields, Ruth Ella, Andy Pearce, Cordelea (sp?) Begay

Agenda:

- Guest speaker- Perri Spreiser, Suicide Prevention presentation**
- Call to order, welcome members and guests**
- Thank yous**
- Approval of 9/26/17 minutes**
- School update- if school admin present**
- Guest speakers**
 - Nicky Indicavitch, NAZ Regional Director**
- Treasurer's Report**
- Approval of Financial Audit/ Review**
- Old Business**
 - STEM grants**
 - Halloween Carnival**
 - Updates**
- New Business**
 - Half Marathon Fundraiser**
 - Movie Night?**
 - PTA Social?**
 - Voting Item- small purchases approval**
- Next meeting day/ location**
- Adjournment**

The meeting started early with guest speaker Perri Spreiser, who joined us to talk about Suicide Prevention Awareness, in recognition of Suicide Prevention Month. Takeaways included:

- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in this country
- She provided a handout with a list of indicators that should be considered signs of suicide concern if noted in a student (or any person)
- Another handout provided a list of crises and help lines around Northern AZ that can be contacted in times of concern
- Within the park, in the event of a suicide concern, call 9-1-1
- Perri is also a park resource for suicide concerns or questions. She may be contacted at Perri_Spreiser@nps.gov.

During a 10-minute break, middle school science teacher Kaylin Oates demonstrated the newly purchased Makey Makey kits. Fun!

The meeting came to order at 6:18pm.

Thank yous

- Thank you to the Grand Canyon Squire Inn for providing accommodations for guest speaker Nicky Indicavitch!
- Thank you to David Shepard and the culinary arts class for the night's yummy edibles!
- Thank you to Ellie Pearce for providing child care during the meeting, so that parents of youngsters could attend!

Approval of 9/26/17 minutes

Motion by Kara, seconded by Christina to approve the September meeting minutes. Approved unanimously.

School update

Assistant Principal Lori Rommel was in attendance and gave a brief update on upcoming events at the school. Be sure to check the online school calendar for updates at:

<https://www.grandcanyonschool.org/>

Guest speaker

The second guest speaker for the night was Nicky Indicavitch, the Northern Arizona Regional Director for the PTA, who came to introduce herself and remind attendees that if AZ legislative issues affecting schools and school funding are important to us, it's important to stay informed about those issues and to hold our state elected officials accountable. Takeaways included:

- AZ teacher pay is ranked among the lowest in the country. Because of low pay it's difficult to keep good teachers in AZ.

- Nicky noted that AZ Governor Ducey had recently given his staff pay raises of 20% while only recommending a pay hike of 0.4% for teachers. She had gone to Phoenix to protest low teacher pay and to recommend, on behalf of the state PTA that AZ teachers get a 20% pay raise, which, if implemented still wouldn't move them from the bottom of the pay rankings. T

- Know your state representatives and know how they vote on school-related issues. Our District 6 representatives are Sylvia Allen, Bob Thorpe and Brenda Barton. In an AZ School Now ranking of how state Senators and Representatives have voted on measures that affect children, all 3 of our representatives scored 0's, on a scale to 100. If these issues are important to you, make your voice heard through voting.

- Budgets for schools at the AZ state level have been steadily decreasing for years because of regular tax cuts, including corporate tax rate cuts. With the tax cuts reducing the overall purse from which to draw funds statewide, school funding has been likewise reduced. More tax cuts equals more school cuts. If this is a concern, contact state representatives- by calling, writing, or emailing to voice that concern.

- AZ Schools Now has a website where school issues are addressed:

<https://azschoolsnow.org/>

- Also feel free to contact Nicky, or our own Dan Tobin if you have any questions about school-related ballot measures.

Treasurer's Report

We now have 48 PTA members!

Income last month came in from new memberships (\$50), while outgoing expenses went to pay for PTA membership dues, new merchandise to be sold at the Halloween Carnival, and other school related purchases mentioned later in these minutes (\$1447.42), leaving a balance of \$14,494.15.

Old Business

STEM/ STEAM Update- Middle School science teacher Kaylyn Oates is continuing to work on procuring grants from APS and PTA to secure free STEM kits, and for Family STEM Night games.

Halloween Carnival- We have 3 PTA sponsored tables planned for the Halloween Carnival. Cory and Craig have the Plinko game under construction. Another table will sell cotton candy, while the third will sell merchandise- the newly designed t-shirts and light-up spirit bracelets. There are still spots available for volunteering to help at the PTA tables. Betsy Donehoo will be coordinating the set-up starting at 4pm. Laura Chastain and the Tusayan Chamber of Commerce have procured the candy prizes. Everything appears to be on track.

T-shirt Sale Campaign- The 3-week campaign to sell a new GCS t-shirt has kicked in. See samples of the shirts and find the link to the t-shirt sales website on the PTA website (see below), or come to the Halloween Carnival to purchase tees, hoodies, and baseball style shirts with new artwork by Amy McBroom. There are no shipping costs if you purchase directly from the PTA, and a \$5 shipping cost if you purchase from the website. The PTA will have sample shirts on display at the Halloween Carnival. The deadline for purchasing shirts is November 9, with an expected delivery around December 7.

Amazon Smile- Continue to spread the word about Amazon Smile and the ability to designate the GCS PTA as a charity recipient, so that 0.5% of the purchase comes back to the PTA.

Purchase of Brita filters- The PTA recently purchased 12 Brita pitchers and replacement filters for the elementary school, which currently has blocked water pipes, which prevents kids and staff from being able to drink safely from the classroom faucets. Bright Angel Bikes also donated 150 water bottles for students to use in the classrooms. Thank you Bright Angel Bikes!

Purchase of Makey Makey kits- The PTA purchased 2 Makey Makey kits for the middle and high schools and is in the process of purchasing one more.

Movie nights- The family movie night that piggybacked on the Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser was a success with good turnout. We might try to again combine with other dinner fundraisers in the future. Peg and Jeannette are looking into a November family movie night.

Backpack Food Program- Dan Tobin has been working with school administration to get the St. Mary's Food Bank Backpack Program approved and implemented. This program would provide backpacks of food to hungry kids every Thursday before the kids go home for the weekend. Xanterra has agreed to provide storage and delivery of the packs if the school can provide the locale for the kids to pick up the backpacks. Still, to make this happen, the PTA has to commit to providing some of the needed manpower. It's hoped that the program can start the weekend before Thanksgiving. Major thanks to Laura Chastain and Dan Tobin for your dedicated work on this.

New Business

Half Marathon fundraiser- Cherie and Roger Benefield worked a station at the recent Grand Canyon Half Marathon race, handing out drinks and fruit to runners, to make \$250 for the PTA. Thank you Cherie and Roger!! This is an easy fundraiser that we can do in the future as well.

PTA Social- For anyone interested in getting together to eat, socialize and talk PTA, Cherie is planning on scheduling a PTA Social, held somewhere like the Maswik. She'll pick a date and place in the near future.

Voting item- The PTA has been getting requests for small ticket items to provide supplies for classrooms. Dan motioned that the PTA board be allowed \$100 per month discretionary funds to dispense without requiring a member vote. It was seconded by Craig, and passed unanimously.

Next meeting day/ location- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 28, 2017, at the GCS. We will aim for having the December meeting in Tusayan.

The meeting was **adjourned** at 7:29pm, one minute ahead of schedule!

The PTA email address is: GCSchoolPTA@gmail.com and the website is: grandcanyonschoolpta.weebly.com

Please send us any comments or suggestions. We love to hear from you.