



# Union Valley Elementary PTO

## General Meeting Minutes November 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM Union Valley Library

### I. Principal's Report:

- A. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held Wednesday 11/13, Thursday 11/14 and Friday 11/15. Students will be on a half-day schedule and dismiss at 12:50pm on all 3 days.
- B. The 1st marking period ends on Thursday 11/14. Teachers will share progress and grades during the conferences, but report cards will be officially available on the portal on November 22.
- C. A form was sent home to parents who may be interested in nominating a teacher for Governor's Educator of the Year. Paper copies of the form are available and are due to the building by November 18.
- D. American Education Week is celebrated next week. On Monday November 18, parents have the opportunity to come in and shadow their children from 9-10am (Grades K-5), 10-11am (PreK). Parents may come in at any time during the hour to visit. Parents should only visit their own student's class and are asked not to bring any younger siblings, to turn off phones, and to refrain from taking pictures.
- E. National Education Support Staff Professionals Day is Wednesday November 20. The PTO will sponsor a breakfast to acknowledge and thank the support staff for all that they do.
- F. Picture Retakes will be on November 21. Any student wishing to have a retake should bring their picture packet in with them (unless retakes are due to absence). An email was received saying that pictures would be in soon.
- G. The PBIS Rewards Program is going well. For the end of the 1st MP, instead of the store exchange that students did for September and October, they will be doing a bigger celebration or exchange on December 13. The celebration could be an option of a movie and popcorn or dance party. Some of the students in the younger grades are eager to spend their money at the store so may not have the Bulldog Bucks to participate, whereas older kids are holding onto their money for the big end of marking period celebration or other bigger items like Chick-fil-A lunch.
- H. Bingo Night is a PTO sponsored family event and will be held Friday 11/22. Doors will open at 6:30 with games starting at 7:00. It will be held in the cafeteria so parents may park and enter in the back.
- I. Ms. Elwell and Mrs. Curry will hold a Kiss a Pig Assembly on 11/25. This is based on a Fun Run incentive in place of the "Silly String the Principals" that is usually done at the end of the Fun Run. They will talk to the students about their participation and fundraising for the school and read a book.
- J. Spirit Day will be Weds 11/27. It is not a traditional Friday, but instead the day before Thanksgiving Break to avoid conflict with a district dress down day for a cause.
- K. The Holiday Shop will be held on Wednesday 12/4 at 6:30pm.
- L. The 4th Grade Holiday Show will be on Tuesday 12/10. There will be 2 performances during the day for students and 1 at night which only families of 4th graders may attend.
- M. Interims for Marking Period 2 will be December 18.
- N. 1st Grade Polar Express Day is 12/19. Teachers will reach out to parents to ask for volunteers and donations.
- O. Santa will visit student classrooms on 12/20.

## II. Board Updates:

### A. **Board Report:**

1. There will be a vote at the end of the meeting for voting members regarding Background Checks for Board Member and Committee Chairs.

### B. **Treasurer's Report:**

1. The year's Proposed Budget as well as monthly expenses so far have been printed and are available for viewing.
2. Our current balance is \$24,063.81.
3. We have had money coming in for the Holiday Photo Fundraiser, Candy Grams and Disney on Ice.
4. We earned \$10,713.84 from the Boosterthon.
5. Our upcoming outgoing expenses will be for holiday gifts for students and teachers.

### C. **Secretary's Report:**

1. The October minutes have been uploaded to the website.

## III. Committee Reports:

### A. **Yearbook**

1. We will need to soon decide which vendor we want to use for the Yearbook. An option is Canva. Books could be printed for about \$20.
2. The PTO needs to decide a theme for the Yearbook and the 5th graders will design the cover. Mrs. Wood will hold the cover contest in December.

### B. **Fundraising**

1. Thank you to Kate Densten and Joe Tursi for sponsoring the Holiday Photo Event and Raffle Baskets. We had 42 families attend who each paid \$40. The photos should be coming this week.
2. We sold 922 Candy Grams. They were assembled by TC students for community service hours.
3. Double Good Popcorn has ended but \$625.50 was earned from that.
4. Texas Roadhouse Fundraiser for gift cards and rolls is still ongoing until November 17.
5. Our next fundraiser is the Santa Breakfast at Applebee's on Sat 12/7 from 8-10am.

### C. **Council of Schools**

*Nothing to report. No meeting was held.*

### D. **Communications**

1. Many flyers went home for various fundraisers taking place.
2. The November newsletter was distributed and uploaded to the website.
3. Our gracious sponsors were recognized via FB, Remind, Newsletter and added to our website.

### E. **Spirit Wear**

1. There were 152 items ordered. A later order was placed due to order forms being mixed in with Candy Gram forms.

2. We are looking into streamlining Spirit Wear orders. Other schools using the same vendor use a website to place orders which would help avoid the error that sometimes happens with paper forms.
3. We also did have issues of people making payments via Venmo or the website, but then not sending in an order form. When ordering spirit wear- you must fill out an order form, regardless of the way payment is made. We will need to adjust forms to include a Venmo verification number.

**F. Staff Appreciation**

1. The Support Staff Breakfast will be on 11/20 from 8:00-9:00 am.
2. A Signup for donations will be sent out.

**G. Student Recognition**

1. The 1st two Spotlight Events of the Year were a success. The kids seem to really enjoy the ice cream and changes were made for the October one to accommodate students with allergies. Kids played BINGO and enjoyed the recognition.

**H. School Store**

1. The school store was in October for all grades. It was split up between 2 days for Grades K-2 and 3-5. We made \$988 from both.
2. New supplies will be ordered for January.
3. The next school store will be January 8th for K-2 and January 22 for 3-5.

**I. Helping Hands**

1. We worked with Mrs. Marchesani to help students in need this Halloween. We were able to provide 1 gift card and 2 new costumes to students. In addition, at their request, we provided the counselors with generic costume items and accessories (pirate, butterfly). These items will be used for students who may not have a costume for the parade, but still wish to dress up. Enough were ordered to be used in upcoming years.
2. The Giving Tree will run similarly to as it was done last year. We will have a tree in the cafeteria with about 300 tags with age specific categories. Students will fill in a permission slip to participate. The permission slips will go home this week. Participating students will be allowed to select their own tag from the tree on Mon November 25. Gifts will be due by Fri 12/6.

**J. Holiday Shop**

1. The Holiday Shop will be Wednesday 12/4 at 6:30pm.
2. A flyer with more information will go out later this week.
3. We are using a new vendor this year. Some items have arrived and we have received an email stating that the rest of the supplies are shipped and will be here soon ( possibly Friday).
4. Thanks to early ordering, we received a prize background which will be used in our Santa class photos.

**K. Bingo Night**

1. Will be held on Friday 11/22. Doors will open at 6:30pm and the games will begin at 7:00pm.
2. Information will be going out this week as well as a pre-order pizza form.

3. We will need a Signup Genius for snack and drink donations and volunteers.

**L. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

1. The Halloween Party was a huge success! A huge thank you to parent volunteers. The kids were engaged, had fun and well-behaved. The kids enjoyed the food, the creepy table and the other activities.
2. Our next event is Candy Bar Bingo Night on Friday 11/22.

**IV. New Business:**

- A. The request for Background Checks of parent volunteers has come up. It was discussed at the last meeting that our school superintendent said that PTO Parents are not considered School Volunteers according to state guidelines. According to the state of NJ, a School Volunteer is anyone who spends more than 20 hours a month in a school. For this reason, Background Checks for Parent Volunteers are not required. Background checks from the state of NJ are \$40 and good for 90 days. It was to be brought to vote tonight to see if we still wanted to require and pay for background checks for board members and committee members.
- B. A member brought up that Volunteer Clearances should be free and is familiar with the process of obtaining one that is free. She will look into this and get more information so the vote will be tabled until then.

**V. Open Floor:**

- It was suggested that in the future, we do a QR code that leads to a Google Form sign up/permission slip in place of a paper form to be returned for the Giving Tree and other events.
- There was a request for another Double Good Popcorn and Panzarotti fundraiser.
- There was a suggestion to have a QR Code for Monthly Events so parents don't miss Fundraiser Dates.
- There was a question regarding the change of price for the Photo Event from what was recommended in the summer board and committee meeting. It was suggested that we try to make events more affordable for all families in place of making a larger fundraiser profit.
- There was a suggestion to have better communication about the Holiday Photo Event regarding the background choices and location. For offsite photos, it was recommended that there be better signage to indicate UV Photo Event to help families locate it.
- There was a suggestion to do a Holiday Photo Event where photos could be printed on demand.
- There was a suggestion to have a point person for events to assist with communication by utilizing a Google Voice number.
- There was a question regarding the amount of fundraising money used towards 5th grade events and whether they pay class dues or do their own fundraisers. It was explained that there is a \$5,500 budget for 5th Grade that comes from the PTO. We are all together because in years past when we were not, it was that the PTO and 5th grade were essentially competing for the same funds. It seems to work better to be all together.

*Meeting began 7:07 PM*

*Meeting ended 7:53 PM*

**No Meeting in December!  
Our Next General Meeting is January 14, 2025**

**Union Valley Library @ 7:00 PM**