October 1, 2019, 6:15pm, 6:30pm

RKE PTO Executive Board meeting and General Meeting
Attendees:
Elizabeth King
Audrey Baran
Melissa Chernovsky
Catherine Bishop
Lindsey Rouse
Lisa Lyman
Maggie Sosman
Becky Gilmor
Jazmin Lawhorn
Wendy Smith
Jill Fleshmann
Crystal Covington-Alexander

6:15pm Executive Board:

- Vote to approve budget items: T-shirts ($266); Teacher Appreciation dinner, decorations, drinks ($645); K/1st grade meet and greet ($200)
- Lisa moved to approve, Lindsey seconded, approved.
- Melissa will provide the board with a copy of the budget and expenses to review before the next meeting to help facilitate discussion and whole budget approval.

6:30pm General Meeting in the Media Room with members of the PTO
Presidents Report (Elizabeth King)

- Welcome, introductions, happy to see new faces.
- Will need a new President, Vice President and Special Events Coordinator next year.
- Need to vote Maggie Sosman as current Secretary. Lisa motion. Audrey seconded. Approved
- Will hear from Principal Jazmin Lawhorn at the end of the meeting, encouraged membership to submit questions by paper during the meeting
- Annapolis Education Commission:
    - Looking for representatives from RKE to attend monthly meetings.
- Mids for Kids:
    - Need volunteer drivers week of 17th to pick up Midshipmen 9:30am to take to RKE and return to Naval Academy 11:30am.
- Backpack Buddies
    - Run by Renee Reilly
    - Need volunteers to help fill bags and distribute to classrooms.
    - Can sponsor a child $250/year.
    - A suggestion was made to get Kiwanis Club to sponsor, or individual companies to sponsor.

    - Also could use help with grant writing.
- A Beautification Committee to include the outdoor classroom will be formed later.

Vice Presidents Report (Audrey Baran)

- Tries to do something to show teacher appreciation once a month.
- We have 102 members this year down 20 from last year. Hoping for more this month.
- PTO gives $100 gift card to supplement teachers
- There will be a luncheon on Oct 15th during conferences
- There are Sign Up Genius sign ups for all of these events. There will be a link to them in the Rocket Blast

Treasurer's Report (Melissa Chernovsky)

- Passed out a balance sheet for everyone to review: $26,597 in account.
- Explained Backpack Buddies has restricted funds of $10,371 deducted from the balance.
- We've spent $1,974 this year and this is detailed on the back of the sheet.

Volunteer Coordinator's Report (Lindsey Rouse)

- To volunteer in classrooms or on field trips you must get a background check, or be fingerprinted (AACPS on Riva Rd); watch the online video and return the associated form.
- This year you must sign out when you have completed your volunteering and return your badge to the office.
- We may begin a physical log in the office to keep track of volunteer hours. Elisabeth explained logging hours really matters and helps the school with funding and recognition such as with National Blue Ribbon School rankings.
- Include outside hours when tallying up your work, including PTO meetings.
- You can also email Lindsey your hours.
- You can find out about volunteer opportunities in the Rocket Blast, from your child's teacher, or email Lindsey!

Special Events/Rocket Blast (Catherine Bishop)

- Hardest part is finding people to run events. It can be more than one person or even a committee running events.
- Committed Events (with volunteer head):
    - Father/Son Ninja Event
    - Father/Daughter Dance
    - Variety Show
- Looking for someone to run the Movie Night
- Running an event is a good way to get involved, Cathy suggested shadowing someone this year and taking over next year.

Race for Education (Lisa Lyman)

- The race is very successful and the school gets a large percentage of the profits.
- Only thing we ask people to do all year. Although there may be a reintroduction of restaurant nights. Elizabeth explained that these don't really bring in much revenue to the school they are more of a social/community building opportunity. It was suggested that we try a non-perishable food drive at restaurant night to collect for Backpack Buddies.

Principal Jazmin Lawhorn

- Personal introduction and experience
- Passionate about growing students, growing teachers and cultivating a safe learning environment.
- Discussed the countywide "All means All" directive.
- Here at RKE "We are all in this together." This includes staff, teachers, kids, parents, and also their families and the community at large.
- Communication is important, the goal is to get accurate information out asap and be transparent.
- Security- new this year, you must sign in with your ID even if we know you. This is countywide rule. The Office of School Security is coming to walk the grounds. They will take a look at things like the fence along Generals Highway.
- Thank you to PTO for everything so far this year (K/1st Meet and Greet, School Kits, Weeding, Back to School Night Dinner, Gift Cards, families greeting teachers)
- Question: Can we move toward Parent Square (a closed network (sign in) online interface to keep all class info together in one place and where one can message other parents)? Answer: We can look into it for next year but it has to be vetted and approved by the School Board. There is a fear of accessing personal info. Also looking into online payments.
- Question: How will sign ups for conferences be handled this year? Answer: We are still working on this but there are now two full days for conferences so everyone can have one. A sheet will go out with suggested times taking into account grouping conferences for people with multiple kids, grouping for interpreters as needed and then there will also be an online sign up option as well.
- Question: Why is the school calendar so fragmented with no solid week of vacation and with weeks broken up by mid-week early dismissals and teacher work days? Answer: Trying to fit the approved number of days between Labor Day and June 15th. Everyone is encouraged to participate in the countywide school board meetings in the spring when they vote to approve the next year's calendar.
- Question: Do we have emergency preparedness drills? Answer provided by Ms. Smith. Yes we do and she elaborated on upcoming drills and how handled in the past. Only time it has been communicated to the parents is when a "lockout" was practiced during arrival. They will work on "what ifs" this year (i.e. What if the normal exit isn't available).
- A compliment was paid to the staff and PTO for helping build a beautiful community at RKE.

New Business

- Members of the Rolling Knolls Community would like our help.
    - They want to petition the county for a sidewalk on Valley Road near the crosswalk, a light at the intersection on Generals Highway. There was a lot of discussion about ways to help.
    - Another dangerous area is where drivers turn right into the driveway during pick up.
    - A letter from the PTO may be helpful
    - Elisabeth suggested publishing an article and reminders to parents to slow down in the Rocket Blast with a link to the petition.
    - There was a motion to approve the letter and information in the Rocket Blast, Lisa seconded. Approved
- All meeting notes and info about the PTO can be found on the website www.rkepto.org
- There will be a directory
- It was suggested that meeting times and events be advertised in a Facebook Group for RKE parents, but the PTO and Ms. Lawhorn said they could not be involved because this group is not officially affiliated with the PTO or the school.

NEXT MEETING: next general meeting is Dec 3rd
Adjourn approx. 7:35pm