ROLLING KNOLLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Subject: RKE PTO Executive Board (EB) Meeting	**Date:** 12 January 2022
	Location: Google Meet
	Time: 6:00 PM
	Created by: Lauren Alexander-Binns

ATTENDEE	ROLE
Tiffany Foster (TF)	RKE Principal
Wendi Smith (WS)	RKE Vice Principal
Tiffani Easterday (TE)	RKE Teaching Staff
Michelle Baccomo (MB)	RKE Teaching Staff
Elizabeth King (EK)	RKE PTO President
Catherine (Cathy) Bishop (CB)	RKE PTO Vice President
Melissa Chernovsky (MC)	RKE PTO Treasurer
Lauren Alexander Binns (LAB)	RKE PTO Secretary
Lindsey Rouse (LR)	RKE PTO Volunteer Coordinator
Lisa Lyman (LL)	RKE PTO Race for Education
Carolyn Waters	RKE PTO Rocket Blast Editor
Sarah Seiler	RKE PTO Social Media Coordinator

AGENDA

1. Principal's Report	**Tiffany Foster**
2. President's Report	**Elizabeth King**
3. Vice President's Report	**Catherine Bishop**
4. Treasurer's Report	**Melissa Chernovsky**
5. Volunteer Coordinator's Report	**Lindsey Rouse**
6. Race for Ed	**Lisa Lyman**
7. Special Events	**On hold for time being**
8. Secretary's Report	**Lauren Alexander-Binns**
9. Rocket Blast Update	**Carolyn Waters**
10. Social Media Report	**Sarah Seiler**
11. Teacher's Report	**Michelle Baccomo**
12. New Business (Anything New?)	

MINUTES

Note: Minutes in green front are actionable items and/or questions.

1. Principal's Report (Tiffany Foster)

COVID Updates

- Families have received a couple of things about COVID, and it will go out in the upcoming newsletter, slated for Friday, 14 January 2022, re: the state of emergency declared by Governor Hogan, a couple weeks ago. As a result, some of the RKE families have decided to keep their student(s) home in light of COVID-related concerns.

- Anne Arundel County Public School district came out with a statement saying that if parents choose to keep their children home, it will be classified as an "unlawful absence" and will not be excused. However, students can still make up the assignments that were given while they were absent.
- When children are quarantined due to having COVID or isolation, the district has changed who will get synchronistic instruction. At this time:
    - Students in K-3rd grades are the ONLY students who will get synchronistic instruction. In other words, they will have their teacher provide live instruction, to them, throughout the day.
    - Students in 3rd through 5th grade will get asynchronistic instruction. Asynchronistic instruction means which means they will still receive their daily class assignments, but it will not include live instruction from their teacher. Rather, their assignments will be posted on Bright Space.
        - There are Bright Spaces pages developed for 3rd-5th grade courses.
        - If the student, in grades 3rd – 5th is out on quarantine or isolation, an email is sent out to the parent or guardian of the student(s) with updates about their RKE posted assignments.
- On 13 January 2022, the AA Health Department and AACPS revised the (outdoor and indoor mask requirement policy, from previous guidance in earlier January 2022). Guidance is:
    - Students are **not** required to wear masks while playing outdoors.
- All of the above COVID has been noted in the January newsletter that will be provided to RKE students on Friday, 15 January 2022.
- Communications office from AACPS has FAQs that are helpful guidance should guardians/parents and students of AACPS have questions about the above or other COVID-related impacts and instruction.

- **Question [posed by Ms. Elizabeth King to Mrs. Foster, paraphrased] re:** Clarification about the classification of an unlawful absence due to COVID/Quarantine (instead of an excused absence) if the student is getting their work done
    - **Response [from Mrs. Foster, paraphrased]:** The Maryland Governor's state of emergency does not cover the scenario for when families choose to keep their children home. Thus, they had to choose a code already in the current classification system. However, this is only in effect till the beginning of February 2022.

- **Question [posed by Ms. Cathy Bishop to Mrs. Foster, paraphrased] re:** How RKE stacked up against other schools in the AA District, with regards to the numbers of parents/guardians keeping their students' home from school due to COVID concerns?
    - **Response [from Mrs. Foster, paraphrased]:** It hasn't been as bad as other schools, based on comparison to many of her other colleagues in the AACP{S field who had many of their students test positive for COVID, and would label RKE as above average. No significant concerns about attendance due to COVID "unlawful absences".

- **Question [posed by Ms. Elizabeth King to Mrs. Foster]:** Is there anything that should or could be included in the upcoming Rocket Blast publication?"
    - **Response [from Mrs. Foster, paraphrased]:** Ensuring that the students come to school with masks, and request for donations of Dixie cups and Kleenex as the classrooms are running very low, if not out, of those items.

- **Question [posed by Ms. Catherine Bishop to Mrs. Foster]:** When are volunteers allowed back inside the school?
    - **Response [from Mrs. Foster, paraphrased**]: It was a hope in January 2022 that this could be accomplished, but it is not set in stone, even still in the middle of the month.

RKE Spotlight Topic: Mental Health [Update]

- The topic of mental health has been discussed in prior PTO Executive Board meetings and having the opportunity to highlight this topic with the students.
- Mrs. Foster has a contact, Ryan Volgetone (sp?) who can come and speak to the PTO meetings to speak on the topic of mental health, with specific regard to elementary-aged students.

- **Action:** Mrs. Foster will coordinate discussion.

2. President's Report (Elizabeth King)

Traffic Plans
- Chelsea Spier (sp?) has voiced safety and security concerns regarding the traffic concern at the intersection of General's Highway and Valley View Dr. and has engaged with community and MDOT. The expressed desire from the community is for the installation of a light at this cross section of roads. According to MDOT, it takes 120 days from MDOT to address.

3. Vice President's Report (Catherine Bishop)

Wendy's Restaurant Night
- 17 January 2022 is the date for Wendy's restaurant night.
  - The location of the Wendy's is in Annapolis (on Defense Highway, next to Home Depot, Mr., Tire, and across from Best Buy). Hours are 0630 AM to Close. Verify hours online.
  - The restaurant night was considered as being added into the Rocket Blast publication.

Winter Raffle
- Ms. Catherine Bishop discussed a raffle of a winter wonder land theme for RKE. It could be a large or small raffle, but this theme concept has been utilized rather successfully in other schools.
- In particular item that encouraged participation from student body community was asking the parents/guardians of the RKE community to buy a particular item for a gift basket to raffle, *rather* than a blanket donation towards the raffle.
  - The Board agreed that the more popular interest is when people can directly support and feel more engaged with buying tangible items, rather than writing a check or cash.

4. Treasurer's Report (Melissa Chernovsky)

December 2021 Status:

- 2021-2022 Budget (See January 2022 Budget Report for details)
- Please use Amazon Smiles for RKE great way to support

- **Action:** Ms. Melissa Chernovsky to discuss a check for Spirit Wear in the amount of $70.00 for Ms. Elizabeth King to sign.

5. Outdoor Education/Volunteer Report (Lindsey Rouse)

Donations for RKE Teacher's Lounge
- Ms. Lindsey Rouse mentioned that the food is low in the RKE Teacher's lounge. Based on generative conversation among the board, the feedback on food is as follows:
  - While all drinks and food went very fast, the items that were particularly popular were:
    - Ramen,
    - Fresh fruit,
    - Granola bars

6. Race for Ed (Lisa Lyman)

- Nothing further to add.

7. Special Events

- On hold for the time being.

8. Secretary's Report (Lauren Alexander-Binns)

- Nothing further to add.

9. Rocket Blast Update (Carolyn Waters)

- Publication will be provided on a monthly basis
- An earlier initiative was brought back up: translating the Rocket Blast, into Spanish, and providing an English and Spanish version.
- **Actions regarding translation for Rocket Blast are below** *(from December 2021):*
    - Ms. Foster to check in with Gaston for bandwidth to support
    - Ms. King to check in with Ms. Nambiar for bandwidth to support
    - Ms. Alexander-Binns to test out automated open source methods to support

10. Social Media Report (Sarah Seiler)

- Ms. Sarah Seiler has been performing market research about how other schools are using social media (such as twitter accounts, Facebook, etc.). Ms. Seiler discussed some ideas of the market research, and the Board discussed how they could implement into the RKE community.
- Ideas (on the above) discussed with the Board included:
    - A virtual story night (e.g., Via Facebook Live)
        - This is done in other schools and has positive feedback
        - Example shown to Board: The students are sent home with hot cholate, and they all log in (whether by grade level, or class can be determined), and the story night included hot chocolate and so it felt engaging and very interactive.
        - Another idea is that they send seeds home that work with the book.
- Board discussions also centered around required approvals, protection privacy for students, and which social media outlet is best to optimize RKE and engage the community in a healthy and safe way.

11. Teacher's Report

- **Question [posed to the Board by Ms. Baccomo, paraphrased]:** Are your children still the same kids, at home, as they were pre-COVID?
    - **Response [from Board, paraphrased summary]:** Discussions included the topics of immaturity, possible decrease in social skills, interpersonal skills and discussed the importance of these skills, emphasis on them, especially interpersonal.

12. New Business (Anything New?)

- Nothing further to add.

2021 - 2022 RKE PTO Executive Board

President ~ Elizabeth King
Vice-President ~ Catherine Bishop
Treasurer ~ Melissa Chernovsky
Secretary ~ Lauren Alexander-Binns
Volunteer Coordinator ~ Lindsey Rouse: RKEvolunteer@gmail.com
Special Events ~ This position is currently vacant
Race for Education ~ Lisa Lyman
Rocket Blast Editor ~ Carolyn Waters: RocketBlastRKE@gmail.com

PTO Questions & Concerns: RollingKnollsElementaryPTO@gmail.com