

**Jeremy Ranch Elementary School (JRES)  
Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)  
Meeting Minutes - March 7, 2017 at 7 p.m.**



1. Call to Order – Bari Nan: Welcomed everyone (introductions and discussion on Shamrock Shakes). She will send the minutes out via email from last meeting for approval.
2. Science Fair Wrap-up: (Sarah Altschuler and Stacia Hoots) This year at JRES, there were 192 individual or team participants (34%) and with class projects (56%) – non-DLI classes were the only ones that participated in class projects. The goal next year is to boost class participation in K-2 as they get a lot out of it. Individual projects are in 3-5. Sarah is hoping to put together about 4 projects for K-2 of varying lengths (one day all the way to several weeks long) and the teachers can choose what they want to do (if anything). Sarah will meet with the teachers early in the year and work the projects in within each classroom if they'd like to participate. It will be structured and planned so that can help with the activation energy of getting it started. She doesn't want to force it, but the benefit of the younger kids becoming familiar with the scientific method is of value and a lot to be gained by it. Her idea is to be able to hand it over (step-by-step) and then be available to assist the teachers and the class. She is also considering maybe allowing 3<sup>rd</sup> graders to do engineering projects as well as science (currently, only 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> can participate in engineering projects). The idea of building things has more appeal to some of the kids over science. She was impressed with the projects this year. We need teacher support and she will talk with Paula and the teachers. 9 of the projects went to district and 6 are going down to state. A lot of participants from Ecker and Treasure are former JRES students.
3. Principal's Report: (Mr. Kuennan) The current issue he is dealing with is addressing appropriately the level of homework assigned to kids. As adults, we are all over the map concerning homework (the amount, its value, etc...). He'd like to know what is the best thing to do about homework. Research is not in favor of homework, generally. It doesn't equate to improved academic performance. The habit we form from doing homework is helpful. Reading certainly has proven benefits. If there is to be homework, following the 10-minute rule is effective (1<sup>st</sup> grader does 10 min, 2<sup>nd</sup> grader does 20 min, etc...). 6<sup>th</sup> grade doesn't have any homework. There are many tears over homework. The culture at this school is 4<sup>th</sup> grade has a lot of homework. Why not just reading and then the "homework" is the work that doesn't get finished in class or if they need extra homework to work on a particular area for that particular child? DLI teachers may not be able to cover everything in class (additional spelling tests, etc...) so perhaps they need homework. There is no state mandate here in Utah regarding homework. By sending unfinished work home with the kits, it could help teachers identify what kids need more help. Almost every kid has activities nearly each night. The kids are tired. Outside activities give them tools like problem solving, life skills etc...that is where they need to be (sports, singing, running, etc...) vice being at home doing homework. It is healthy to have extra activity. Formulated so that it is not a stressor. What is right for that child? Do X minutes of homework – expectation – they can finish it, if they want. Homework helps renew what you learned during school and helps the parents know what the kids are learning in school. The kids are spending close to 32 hours a week at school. That precious time we have with the kids is spent yelling at them trying to get them to do their homework.
  - a. Kindergarten for next year – in response to the difficulty with grouping kinder classes, there will be a change this year. In the past, a screening time for 10 min is all they have, to place the kids in the classrooms. This year, it has been really unbalanced across the 4 classes. The teachers came to him to see if they can have all the kids the first week or two of school so they can assess, learn more about the kids, then make the class lists. Then they will do a kindergarten back to school night a week or two into school. They could potentially take this school-wide.
  - b. Staffing – there are no changes re staffing for next year, yet. We need to budget for each teacher. He will know by June.
4. School Board meeting today – grade realignment was set for Aug 2017 but because of the procedures in place, they couldn't change it until there was a formal proposal and change (which happened). Grade realignment will now take place in fall 2018. The vote today is for a bond for Nov 2017 and must be prepared by Aug 2017. The details of the bond are hazy at this point. The plan is to build the 5/6 school first so they can move out of elementary and out of that school vice 9<sup>th</sup> moving into PCHS before it is ready. They can build by fall 2018. If the bond fails, they can do a levy. They have to do a truth and taxation hearing to do a levy. They would take plans from an existing school in Davis County (which works in Park City). They have land and/or they may buy different land. They own very valuable land. The 2018 calendar survey may have been sent out but several have not received it. If you have a strong opinion about buildings, calendar, etc...talk to the school board members.
5. EATS: Laura Tettlebach wants to do Girls on the Run so will not do EATS next school year. If anyone wants to volunteer, let Sarah/Bari-Nan know. They are writing a grant to fund the snack program for all schools. They would need each school to fundraise as well (between \$3-4,000 to fundraise for JRES). It is being piloted at McPolin and takes about 10 min to get the food in place. We piloted it here in a different way a few years back. We raised money for it and we paid for snacks for a year

for Kindergarten. (whereas parents contributed before). We didn't continue it because we couldn't find people that had the right schedule to do pick-up and delivery. Our next PTO meeting will be in April and Ann Bloomquist can send someone to our next meeting to explain it. The idea is that it will be optional and healthy and for every kid in the school. Some parents forget, some can't afford it, etc... We raised approximately \$1,200 for it a few years ago.

6. Fall Fun Festival: Katie Blandford had a great initial meeting. They are planning on doing food trucks instead of pizza and soup like last year. One food truck they've talked to will give 15% back to JRES. They are thinking maybe a taco truck, a slider truck, a cookie truck, and/or waffle truck. Are there any JRES parents who have a food truck to give them the option to participate? Cash and credit card only no tickets for the food and maybe the parents can help collect the money so the food truck folks can cut down on labor costs. Some older kids want more "mature" games. Katie has booked the jumpy house company from last year. It will be held on Sept 15<sup>th</sup> – we are hoping the weather will be nicer. If it is raining, the food trucks could be on the playground. They will simplify the tickets this year. The auction needs a "chair". We need to start now (after the Spring Art Fest) and collect items – it should not be a raffle (unless certain things work out better as raffle items). The "golden ticket" option might work or big packages. We need to make sure there is more advertising for the business that is contributing.

#### Additional Discussion

1. Ink or toner program – you need to purchase toner at Staples to do the program or have "proof" from previous purchases there. If anyone is going to buy it, let Sarah Altschuler know. We can only turn in 10 cartridges per account but teachers can turn in 20 per account. We get \$2 for every cartridge – we have received about \$2100 so far.
2. One thing brought up is how DLI creates division in certain schools. Some grades have classes together but the social pool is limited to about 50 kids so, they don't get as many opportunities to meet and know the other kids in the other classes. Is there a social stigma? Who they find their time with is who their friends will be. That happens but there are derogatory terms used by some of the kids about the other kids. With our school, it is now a little different because of the STEM program. It isn't "You didn't get in" – like the DLI kids are special. You choose the different paths. The culture is starting to change. It may not go away but there is a division – how do we manage it? It is a worthwhile program that may not be good for every kid but is great for some. We are all Hawks! It is about how you manage it. Parents try hard to be inclusive. Playworks will help with it too (everyone is on the playground together).
3. Yearbook deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup> – Joy Conneally is looking for "clubs" - Jump Rope club, Debate, Girls on the Run, Choir (PC3 and Harmonic Hawks), Spirit Kids. She'll talk to the front office to make sure they are all covered.
4. Gently used spirit wear will be taken home by Jeanette Murphy and taken to Wendy St. James for distribution.
5. There are free student tickets to see Jeff Corwin on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was concluded at 8:38.

Persons present: Bari Nan Rothchild, Sarah Smyth, Joy Conneally, Jeanette Murphy, Shelby Hladon, Lexi Rohner, Julie Bargowski, Teresa Scanlan, Sarah Altschuler, Haiyan Zang, Stacia Hoots, Katie Blandford, Robin Hastings, Mr. Kuennan.