



Fort Caspar Academy

PTO Minutes

April 11, 2017



GC Member	Attendance	GC Member	Attendance	GC Member	Attendance
Chelsea Chase (Principal Appointee)	x	Stacia McCain	Excused	Emily Rudkin	
Ali Dugan	x	Jeremiah (Chairman) / Missy Muldowney	x x	Shannon Ryan (Secretary)	X
Emily Farley	x	Jennifer Quinn		Kim Sabus	
Megan Gorman (Vice-Chair)	x	Amy Revell	x	Angie Schrader	X
Justin Hurless (Treasurer)	x	Rachel Roberson	x	Kenda Spicher (Member at Large)	Excused
Stephanie Lamb	x	Sarah Romer	x	Matt Teterud	x

Administrative Faculty	Attendance	Administrative Faculty	Attendance
Rick Edwards, Principal	x		

Parent/Guardian/Staff	Parent/Guardian/Staff	Parent/Guardian/Staff	Parent/Guardian/Staff
Stephanie Soliz	Juliann Harvey	Theresa Green	Mrs. Skimbova

Start Time	Meeting Called to Order
6:35	Jeremiah called the meeting to order.

Student Council	Angie Schrader / Shannon Ryan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling Program: Student Council has paid for recycling pick-up for the months of April, May and half of June. All recycling bins have been overflowing every month, so this is something SC wants to keep doing. • No Bullying Campaign – The SC has a sub-committee that is focusing on a no bullying campaign. They met with Mr. Edwards and Mr. DeWald and decided to focus on promoting kindness instead of discouraging bullying. Kindness Week will take place the last week of April and will include daily announcements and posters around the school. • Spirit Days: Camo Day will be the last Friday of April. School Store will also take place after school. Star Wars Day will be May 4th. There will be NO School Store that day. • Pastries for Parents will be moved into May sometime because there are so many other events happening in April. • Canned Food Collection: SC will be taking part in an event called "Canstruction". Students will collect canned goods and build a sculpture that will be housed at FCA. The food will then be donated to Wyoming Food For Thought. A sub-committee will be meeting on Monday, April 17th to strategize. • Staff Appreciation Breakfast will take place in May for the kitchen and custodial staff. • Suggestion Boxes: Students are interested in having a "technology day" as a spirit day / Discover Day. This led to a discussion on FCA's technology curriculum. Mr. Teterud stated that the technology boards that PTO paid for several years ago are not being used. Mr. Edwards said that we do have a Technology Committee and they are working on the standards for technology in the classroom. This committee will be presenting to the Building Leadership Team at their next meeting. 	

1. Staffing for 2017-2018:

We are allocated staff based on the number of students we have enrolled.

- **2016-2017 SY:** Staff was allocated based on having 440 students. We started the year with 420 students and now have 418 students.
- **2017-2018 SY:** Right now we have 405 students enrolled for next year.
- Over the past 2 years we have lost 64 students.
- When all grade levels have their numbers capped FCA's capacity will be 456 students.

Questions and concerns raised by PTO Members:

- Is there a way to find out if we are losing students at a higher rate in certain grade levels? Mr. Edwards said yes, we could find that out through the district.
- Can we do an exit survey to have families report why they are leaving FCA? Mr. Edwards said yes, that is something they have been discussing.
- The general consensus is that we need to do some research and reflect on why families are leaving our school.

Teacher Staffing Changes:

- Mrs. Lenihan has resigned, she is moving back to Idaho. Her position will be filled from within the district.
- Mrs. Garcia is retiring. Mr. Woodward will stay full time as our Special Education teacher and we will get another half time person.

2. Vision Statement : The new vision statement is near completion. At last month's Coffee & Conversation there was some concern by parents about the word "rigorous". Mr. Edwards pointed out the following:

- The word rigorous has always been a part of the FCA lexicon and even though the dictionary definition sounds harsh, what it means in education is: challenging, high expectations, not lax, not easy.

Questions and concerns raised by PTO Members:

- Who is the audience for the vision statement? Parents? Teachers and staff? Prospective families? The concern is that the word would be off putting to prospective families. Juliann Harvey stated that coming to FCA mid year, she didn't feel like the word was off putting at all. She liked the word and felt that it fit what she was looking for in a school.

3. Volunteer Appreciation: Mr. Edwards plans to do a luncheon for volunteers and write personal thank you notes. He felt that they didn't have the money to do a monthly gift card drawing.

4. Handbook – Staff Practice Inconsistencies: Mr. Edwards wants to be sure that the FCA handbook is being followed. Some areas of concern are homework, grading, and housekeeping issues.

- Mr. Edwards is hearing repeatedly that families are woefully overloaded on homework. He said that we need to hold teachers accountable to the handbook as well as students. He is working on this with teachers. It is also a concern to parents that when students are absent there is an inconsistency among teachers regarding what is sent as make-up homework.
- Another concern that parents have expressed is whether or not recitations, spelling, phonograms and book reports "count" as homework. The general parent opinion is that those should count, but not all teachers feel the same way.
- Another concern that Mr. Edwards expressed is that some students are doing well on standardized testing, but are doing poorly in their classroom grades. This is something he will continue to investigate.

- Mr. Edwards would like to encourage parents to share their concerns with him as we prepare for next school year. He is open to hearing concerns so that we can tackle any inconsistencies head on.

5. Parent Requests: Reminder: Parents must observe teachers before making a teacher request, unless they have had that teacher before. A letter will come home with the dates for observations. We will put off observations until the fourth grade position is filled.

Treasurer's Report

Justin Hurless

- No full treasurer's report right now.
- See attached proposed and amended budgets. Some discussion points are noted below.
- ✓ Discretionary fund and benevolence fund have been combined.
- ✓ **Nurse request for clothing:** Council members agreed that we could get donations for the clothing items requested by Mrs. Berryman. Megan Gorman will organize the donations.
- ✓ **Nurse request for conference:** Missy asked that Mrs. Berryman ask for funding at the district level first. If they refuse, it was suggested that she ask her other school to pay half and we can revisit paying half at the May meeting.
- ✓ **Custodial request for backpack vacuum:** Mr. Edwards agreed to pay for this out of his budget.
- Megan motioned approval of the amended budget, Rachel seconded, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Quorum Change

Emily Rudkin

At the March PTO meeting Emily Rudkin proposed that we make a change to the by-laws to change the voting quorum from 10 to 8 since we don't always have enough Governing Council members in attendance at PTO meetings.

Some of the GC Member comments included:

- It has only happened a couple of times that we have not had enough members in attendance for quorum.
- Several members voiced the concern that members would not be as motivated to attend meetings if the quorum number was decreased. There is already a concern that attendance by GC members has been low.
- Megan Gorman asked if we could vote by e-mail. We have done this in the past, but Jeremiah stated, and others agreed, that it is preferred that people voting were present for the discussions.
- Stephanie Soliz mentioned that at CCA they have done voting by text if they did not have enough members in attendance. Jeremiah added that voting is at the discretion of the chair and in an emergency situation we may consider voting in this manner.
- Mr. Edwards pointed out that at 10 members the quorum is already at a bare minimum for a majority vote. It is standard practice to have a majority of members present to vote.
- Jeremiah called for a vote on the proposal: None in favor, all opposed, motion did not carry.

Teton Science School Scholarship Request

Missy Muldowney

There was a situation where a 5th grade student had raised money to go to Teton Science School and later found out he wasn't able to attend. He donated the money back into the scholarship fund, which went to help other students afford the trip. His family's plans have changed, and he is now able to go on the trip, but cannot afford to pay again. An anonymous donor has agreed to pay for his trip. Thank you for your kindness and generosity anonymous donor!!

Handbook Changes	Shannon Ryan / Jeremiah Muldowney
<p>Proposed changes to the FCA Handbook will be voted on at the May PTO meeting. For handbook changes to occur the proposal has to pass with a 2/3 vote of the voting PTO membership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shannon proposed that procedures / guidelines for drop off and pick up be added to the handbook. • Jeremiah proposed that the 10-hour volunteer commitment be removed from the handbook. <p>Parent comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Several parents commented that they like the 10-hour commitment and they may not have volunteered otherwise. ✓ Others commented that the lack of volunteerism is a school culture issue. Parents are expected to volunteer and are not shown appreciation, or are treated rudely by some staff members. Jeremiah revisited FCA's inception and explained that when FCA began there was massive parent buy-in and the parent population has changed greatly. Some staff members still have the same expectations from 20 years ago, but perhaps it is time to readjust our expectations. ✓ Mr. Edwards suggested changing the word "expected" to "asked". ✓ Amy Revell and Emily Farley have offered to co-chair a volunteer committee next year. 	

Committee Reports

Nominations / Elections	Jeremiah Muldowney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeremiah will send out Governing Council nomination information via school e-mail next week. Voting will take place via survey monkey and at the May PTO meeting. 	

Activities	Missy Muldowney
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee is getting ready for Last Blast. They are looking for volunteers to set-up, run stations and help with clean up. Missy is investigating the possibility of offering pizza and chips for sale during at the event. Juliann suggested using Signup Genius to manage volunteers. 	

Fundraising	Sarah Romer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water balloon sales are due on Tuesday, April 18th. This is our last fundraiser of the year. 	

Connections Committee: Coffee & Conversation	Emily Farley
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee and Conversation is on Thursday, April 13th from 8:15-9:00 a.m. Fifth graders will be showcasing their artwork. 	

Open Floor	PTO Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theresa Green said that a student exited from the left hand side of the car at drop off and nearly walked right in front of her car. This has been happening more frequently since the cones have not been put out in the morning. Mr. Edwards will ask Jan to put out the cones again during drop off time. • Mrs. Skimbova was in attendance, but had to leave before the meeting adjourned. Her concerns were the amount of homework / make-up work in 5th grade. She was also concerned about the peaks and valleys in homework load. 	

End Time	Adjourn
9:14	Justin motioned to adjourn the meeting, Megan seconded, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Next Meeting: May 9, 2017