

Burke PTO Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2020
Meeting Called to Order: 7:01 pm

- Second of our on-line meetings via Zoom. 22 people signed in

Principal's Update: Darren Rasmussen

- Today was first day back in person. Burke was very well prepared academically and with safety and sanitary protocols.
- All students entered the building with masks but were also provided an extra mask from the district.
- Social distancing is the challenge because of crowds in hallways. Staff working hard to keep kids moving to classes and not stopping to congregate and visit.
- Day one students are being very compliant with new procedures and expectations.
- Families need to be sure to keep students home when they have any symptoms. There will not be negative consequences for legitimate absences as there have been in past years where the focus was on maximizing attendance. This year the focus is on keeping others safe. If students are staying home they can join class remotely so they do not miss learning. The missed day will be counted as an absence, but they can still join online class and receive instruction.

Special Guest: Barry Thomas, Director of Equity and Inclusion for Omaha Public Schools

<https://district.ops.org/DEPARTMENTS/Equity-and-Diversity>

- In this role since spring 2019. Former director of social studies, teacher at North High School and Macmillan Middle School before that. Has been part of OPS since 2002.
- Briefly worked with Deb Frisen at Burke High School and has worked with social studies team at Burke High in the past.
- Large part of this job is to make sure families are integrated into the education process. Especially important in remote and hybrid learning times.
- Equity and diversity page is located on the OPS website. Links and information available there for additional information. The caregiver tab offers a lot of options for families to look into learning about anti-racism.
- Prioritizing the ethic of care: to want for others and recognize that everyone is in a relationship with humanity and shows compassion to others and ourselves.
- Prioritize access and opportunity to historically marginalized communities within our school district.
- Focus on persuing diversity vs. having diversity within Omaha Public Schools to make curriculum, students and staff more inclusive as we move forward. Great example is Burke High School's Educators Rising program. We are growing our own future teachers by allowing access to dual enrollment education classes through UNO so they graduate high school already on the path to becoming OPS educators. Working on recruiting and retaining diverse staff members.

- Building efficacy within OPS community: looking into identity and connections to our learning or work space.
- Social responsibility: work to bring society together through education. Looking at relationships with the people we work for and with through an ethic of care.
- A question was asked about how Burke PTO can encourage a more diverse parent population to join our PTO and become involved in family-school activities. Mr. Thomas' advice: Look at where we can meet people where they are ... where can we get families at school and offer flexible access and opportunities to be more inclusive. Reach out and actively invite current families of color and possibly alumni specifically seeking to broaden our inclusivity.
- Role of his job: Consultations with schools, staff and administrators to look at equity issues within schools, roles, curriculum based on the guiding principles to become more equity oriented. Covers every aspect of the school from cafeteria workplace to
- Compliance and investigations: State DOE does random compliance audits to ensure schools are compliant with states nondiscriminatory practices. He also helps with staff or students have complaints if they feel they are being discriminated against.
- Staff Development: Working with principal supervisors about student mobility rates and how to service students with high mobility. Also looking at topic of race and how it intersects with the mobility issue.
- Policy updates and changes and Title IX coordinator.
- Community engagement to make sure he hears what the needs of the community are when he hears from families at school board meetings.
- Priority as a school district right now is that we make sure we are helping students be socially and emotionally prepared for what is going on in their world right now. Students must feel safe if we want them to learn.

Teacher Spotlight: Terese Hammond

September: Jamie Johnson

3rd year of teaching at Burke. Became a teacher after having been impacted by her own teachers in youth. Teaches Freshman English and reading intervention. Happy to be back in person and working with students.

October: Jenny Razor

18 years at Burke High. Has known since high school that she should become a teacher. She is currently teaching AP Literature and AP Seminar. Has taught every grade level except freshmen.

Fundraiser: Cash Instead of Bash

- Given the restrictions and possible health concerns with large gatherings, we are not doing our annual dinner auction Burke Bash fundraiser.
- Instead we will do a monthlong cash campaign seeking donations to support Burke PTO.
- Goal is to have AT LEAST 500 families donate to this cause. The money raised will be our budget for the entire year. Families can donate any amount, but there are donation threshold amounts that come with Burke spirit incentives.
- [Link to information about CIOB.](#)
- Hardware has been installed on poles out front for new banners outside the school for Burke welcome as well as corporate sponsors for this year.

Treasurer's Report: Alan Hauschild, Michelle Krapfl

- Revenue: \$3600
- Expenses: Tree gift to Mrs. Lannan, welcome sign for returning students
- Upcoming expenses: Teacher Grants have been approved costing \$7600
- Current balance: \$48,633.65

Secretary's Report: Wendy Kendeigh

- August Minutes Approved

Closing Remarks: Susie Gundersen

- Kudos to cash instead of bash team
- Karen Burmood and Michelle Fryzek created individually wrapped dessert treats for parent teacher conferences.
- Thank you to Alan Hauschild for coordinating the "Welcome Back Bulldogs" Big Day Yard Card signs to welcome students back to the building. Signs will be up through Thursday so that all students are welcomed back to in-person learning.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:08 pm

Next Meeting: Monday, December 7, 7:00 pm, Zoom
Special Guest: Barb Boltinghouse, Social Studies Teacher