

Blakely PTO Minutes 11-20-14

Principal's report

- List of grants awarded from BSF (see attached)
- Little Bits – sample passed around and TED talk
- Little Bits are currently used in Ms Wilson's class, but also pockets of engineering throughout the grades and throughout the district. Efforts start as grassroots, then is grown from there. We are now seeing sense of urgency, desire from parents to build a program for kids for k-12
- Robotics update from Tricia: Will be offering Lego Robotics (MindStorm EV3) class starting in February. Will run three 5-week sessions, 14 kids per class, starting with 4th grade. Curriculum will repeat with each class to allow as many kids as possible to have exposure to robotics. Dates and times TBA.
- Hour of Code – December 8th dedicated day for all kids. Started last year.

Guest speaker: Lori Spickard, BISD Science Specialist

-Science enrichment program K-4. Regarding additional time (50 minutes/week) for instruction during teacher planning – decided that science would be the curriculum. Pilot is 2014-2015, implementation 2015-2016. New Science Standards = next generation science program in place for next school year. WA state is one of first adopters of next gen standards. Other states are adopting them slowly but surely.

Our science option committee is in 2nd year of looking at standards, changes that need to be made. Two goals: educating all students in science and engineering. 2: Providing the foundational knowledge for those Core Ideas: Life, Science, Physical Science, Earth and Space Science, Engineering and Technology. Students will receive this enrichment program next Fall. Piloting a lesson sequence. Teaching plan is Laurie Fielding and Diane Bedell. Oct-May. Teachers self-select. Will have primary and intermediate lesson sequence at each of the 3 elementary schools. Pilot Curriculum: identified holes in existing kit program, pockets of engineering. Goal is to for students to be able to define criteria and constraints, work on solutions, look at solutions and help each other optimize solutions. One curriculum piece is Engineering is Elementary (1st grade teachers got grants for this), Project Lead the Way. Seeking curriculum that is going to serve the needs of these three teachers at each school and the students.

Pilot at Blakely 4th grade:

Lesson 1 – expectations, structure and function of seed, how seeds move, ended with challenge. Challenge: design and make a wind dispersed seed that will travel the furthest distance.

Lesson 2 – movie clips of seeds dispersed by wind to provide, constraints, design
Lesson 3 - Students saw the models, then went to work with their own materials. Brought in a fan for wind source, then tested designs. Then make plans for optimizing designs.

Lesson 4 – shared results, redesigned, shared final design. If it went further, you were successful!

Then provided practical examples of why this matters. Youtube clips of things successfully moving in air, real world engineering designs – wing suit, Velcro, lego air car, compressed air car in France. Velcro was an example of something moving well without moving in air. Kids were impressed that Velcro took 8 years to develop – the engineers stuck with it, didn't give up.

At the final seed dispersal systems – lots of celebrating and high fives!

Curriculum next school year:

- Continue to address other holes in science program. Natural resources, waves, ecosystems, heredity, force & motion.
- Investigations from existing kits that are never taught b/c run out of time or too messy/ too spacious
- Experiences on school grounds
- Science Fair support

Each student will come to a science classroom for 50 minutes once a week. A dedicated, all science class.

Will also be incorporating Maker models.

Making-Inspired Models:

- Maker Spaces: Little Bits, Makedo, Rolobox
- pla-doh, makedo&rolobox, squishy dough, little bits, makey makeys, lilypads & modkits, hummingbirds
- will be more than just letting kids mess around – concepts will be taught.

Another example: Ordway kids made earthquake-proof structures. Structure had to hold stuffed animal that would sit on top for 10 seconds. At the end, they labeled design features that were most successful. Realized that base mattered. Placed the structure on homemade shake table – could pull and simulate a 5.0 earthquake.

Q: Just three classrooms? A: That's just for pilot. Next year every classroom, every student will have science class.

Teachers will have design challenge, work through it, move onto next.

Q: How will you find the time – the 50 minutes? A: Will be a challenge, but feasibility study has shown that every student will be able to have this 50 minute class each week.

Q: Where did the extra time come from? A: Teacher planning time, 50 minutes a week.

Q: Will this science class be part of the specialist rotation? A: Similar, but not in the rotation – it's its own class.

Q: Any curriculum on public health, biology? A: The driver is Next Gen science standards. Will have to look at those standards, but haven't seen this subject available for elementary level curriculum.

Q: Will the teachers travel between schools? A: No travel is proposed. Feasibility study shows .65 or .75 time in a building. Next optimal scenario is a room in the school. There is a big commitment to this in the district.

Q: BSF involvement? A: BSF is totally funding the entire pilot! It wouldn't happen without BSF! Materials, concept, people, resources – all from BSF.

Q: Funding after pilot? A: Not sure, but must be covered by the district, it is in their plan.

Approval of minutes - approved

Treasurer's update:

Michelle : PTO Grants close tomorrow. Looking good, great grants. Paired teachers that have written many grants with new grant writers. Had grant writing parties, mentor teachers that helped them write grants. Now rolling out this process to other schools.

Q: How to make grant process sustainable with Michelle and Jen moving on? A: That's why they worked with teachers – identified lead teachers to get process moving. Reese is committed to it, took whole building days and helped with grant process.

Volunteer Report: Lee

- So much help already received this year, so grateful!
- Lisa Timmons – Blakely directories
- Earthquake emergency kits are complete.
- Square 1 art is complete, successful.
- Game Night went well, was great
- CAST tutors set up – 20-25 kids. Committed to tutoring 14 weeks, up to 2 times a week. Will have a significant impact for those kids.

Holiday Shop – Heather Burke

Donation period starts next week. Only 8 donation days. Will be sending out emails, making signs. Heidi will be making signs. Hoping to get cookie donations. Monday Dec 8th will be the date. Fifty cents an item. Looking for volunteers to help setup – day of can get in at 10:00 am. All school email going out tomorrow. Would love to have older Blakely alum kids to help with wrapping, writing names, helping to pick out gifts, running messages to parents. Idea – get a bunch of stuff from the dollar store to donate.

Auction Update:

- Art is done for the auction.
- Bridgett Lockett is catalog chair – doing catalog design. Hoping to design catalog, not just spit out what auction software creates. Also having online component. Hoping to have kid art for the cover of the catalog. Call for art submissions – due Dec 5th. Came home in backpacks. Ones that aren't chosen for the cover will be tiled on the back, and possibly on display at auction.
- Piece of auction will be earmarked for outdoor ed. Blakely trivia game with questions written by Blakely teachers. Each teacher is submitting 45 questions that are grade-level appropriate. Similar to "Are You Smarter Than a Third Grader" type questions. Will be packaged up and sold. Those funds will go to outdoor ed. Will sell at auction to highest bidders, then can take orders to get more after.
- Invitations went out. Have to go to website to buy tickets. Direct people to Blakely website, then click button to get to auction site. Doing this because URL for website is very long. People are already buying tickets online. New system, trying it out. Can buy ticket, buy teacher ticket, donate money all from website.
- In January will remind people to please donate money if they can't come, and ask relatives to donate.
- Sponsors this year for the first time. So far have 5 corporate sponsors: north cascade Harley, Bainbridge Pediatrics, Bainbridge Magazine, Fire Dragon Acupuncture, Omni Billing. Get logos on website, in auction catalog, on screens at auction. Three sponsorship levels: gold 550, silver 350, bronze 150

PTO website update

- Received request for photos to be updated
- Dani is working on website and making changes