

British International School of Houston Parent Teacher Organization

Membership meeting - Minutes

Date: December 9th 2022

First membership meeting of the newly constituted BIS Houston PTO

Presents from the board:

President- Yasmin Wilkinson

VP- Programs- Martha Quintero

Treasurer- Olga Takhtarova

Secretary – Claire Allard

Communications Chair- Kym Kettler- Paddock

Volunteer Chair- Ann Schade

Fundraising chair- Katrina Abel

School Delegate – Principle Barrie

Neighborhood rep delegate- Lori Worley

Used Uniform chair- Servane Remnant

Excused from the board:

VP- Neighborhood reps- Susan Lam

Hospitality Chair – Oxana Dubrovina

Parliamentarian role held by Katrina Abel.

The meeting started at 08:35. The quorum was confirmed with 19 members present.

Agenda

Welcome
Update on PTO registration
Finance update
Budget review and approval
PTO Shirts/Pins – review and feedback
Executives and Chair introductions and updates
Open floor suggestions
Close

It was reminded that the goal of the PTO is to support the children and teachers, and to help create a sense of community for all the families.

Update on the creation of the PTO

The PTO is formally registered. The only document pending is to obtain a letter of determination from the IRS. This letter validates the non-profit status.

This year, no formal elections were held but everyone who volunteered for a role was given this role. In March 2023, the PTO will hold formal elections for the 2023/2024 school year. The current positions end in June 2023.

Finance updates and budget

The budget was presented by Olga, the treasurer. The budget will be amended at each membership meeting as it is the first year of the association.

The PTO now has its own bank and Paypal accounts. The PTO will buy two credit card payment terminals, one for the uniforms and one for the events.

The budget includes actual revenues only, other revenues will incur with the Summer Fayre, international food festival, etc. For the Summer Fayre, wristbands may be sold to access all the inflatables.

Olgo is looking at PTO today financial software, this software is dedicated to PTOs.

The funding this year is a lot smaller than the funds the PTSA had at its disposal last year.

The neighborhood funds are not in this budget, they should be integrated next year to the PTO.

For this year, all the funds will be kept separate.

A membership to PTO today may need to be added to the costs (\$150 per year) but the school may bear the costs for this year.

The financial calendar is adjusted on the school year (July 1st to June 30th)

Budget:

Income		Expenditures	
<i>W. F. school sponsoring *</i>	\$ 3,300	<i>Winter Fayre *</i>	- \$ 3,900
<i>Second hand uniform sales *</i>	\$ 1,400	International day	- \$ 400
<i>Winter Fayre proceeds *</i>	\$ 5,900	Summer Fayre	- \$ 1,600
<i>Petty cash on hand *</i>	\$ 500	Teachers appreciation	- \$ 5,000
Donations (\$10 per family)	\$ 0	Help with graduation	- \$ 2,700
Fundraising and spirit events	\$ 0	Volunteer appreciation	- \$ 700
		Meet and great	- \$ 300
		PTO website	- \$ 250
Shortage of funding	\$ 4,100	Square payment terminals (2 units)	- \$ 100
		Office and stationary	- \$ 50
		Accounting software	- \$ 100
		Check book	- \$ 100
Total Income	\$15,200	Total Expenditures	- \$15,200

Italic: Actual numbers*

The budget is approved. All yays, no nays, no absentions.

PTO Shirts/Pins – review and feedback

A few designs were presented, members will be asked for feedback by email on the preferred shirt and pins designs and modifications proposals.

Tee-shirts may be sold during the next membership meeting.

An idea, for swags, was to sell a cushion for the bleachers, for the parents assisting sports games.

Programs VP - Martha Quintero

For 2023, activities to be hosted are: International day, Principal's curry night out, Third party appreciation, Texas day, Summer Fayre and last day of school ice cream.

The VP Program needs a member to chair the International festival. The Curry night out will be held in spring. The dates of the International day and Texan Day need to be communicated by the School.

Neighborhood Rep VP- Susan Lam Delegate: Lori Worley

The neighborhood rep VP role, this year, is to define the roles, responsibilities and processes of the Neighborhood Representatives (NR).

They will also identify specific fundraising needs (for graduation for example) and they will host NR coffee mornings.

Their next steps are to meet with Gemma Avrette and next, with the NRs.

Fundraising VP - Katrina Abel

The idea is to look at simple ways to start fundraising. For one, Amazon smiles will be started as soon as we obtain the IRS non-profit letter.

Spirit nights are simple and efficient ways to start, especially for specific events (senior night for example).

Katrina aims to organize a Gala around Easter or Spring. The Gala could be the occasion to raffle or auction "principal for a day", "chef for a day" and/or a dedicated parking spot.

Food the international food festival, funds will be raised with a raffle for food baskets and the sale of a cookbook.

Hospitality VP - Oxana Dubrovina

The focus will be welcoming new parents and showing appreciation to staff members (lunch, treats).

Communication Chair - Kym Kettler- Paddock

Communication will be on-going with the parents but also with the school.

A new website will be created (maybe in January), the content will be closely monitored with the school to follow the school privacy rules.

Information will also be regularly communicated via the school newsletter, the idea being to have several communication canals to reach everyone.

At the end of the year, a survey will be done to receive feedback on the PTO operations. All results will be shared; Depending on the funds available, it will be either on a Google form or Survey Monkey (or other paying surveys).

Volunteers VP - Anne Schade

Anne reiterated that we need everyone's participation. All are welcome.

We are open to suggestions. The main goal for this year is to create a very flexible database of volunteers, where people can be added and removed all year long.

Some companies will match for volunteer hours. The PTO can validate hours as needed.

School Delegate - Principal Barrie

The Winter Fayre was a very successful event with children from all ages.

In the future, the school would like to develop Charity work with the PTO.

A school app will be announced in Beta in January, this app should simplify the communication within the year groups and between the Year reps.

A new space for the PTO (including the uniforms) is in-progress and may be available as soon as January. Thi space would be a perfect place to welcome new families.

Open floor / suggestions

It was suggested to create a welcome pack for new families, including a “concierge” i.e. being put in relation with one parent who could help the new family to navigate the school and Houston. A buddy family may also be a possibility. Things like how the CCAs work could be explained in the welcome pack.

Ressource reps could be created, the idea is to create dedicated language groups (Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Russian,...) to help non-english speaking parents (and non-native english speakers) to find their community. The international day will be an opportunity to create those communities. Coffee mornings at school would be great meeting points.

One of the focuses of the PTO will be to find ways to connect with as many parents as possible, one idea may be to set-up tables at the entrance of the school on certain days.

The meeting was closed at 09:35 am.