

Fellows Elementary School PTO, Inc. Meeting
January 10th, 2012

The meeting was called to order by PTO President Courtney Witte at 7:00pm.

Attendance

Courtney Witte (President), Michelle Lenkaitis (Treasurer), Heidi Chopskie (Secretary), Carol Page (Principal), Michelle Attinger, Michelle Kessler, Carla Murphy, Kara Berg, Kelly Conner, Elise Wright, Mavis Butler, Cheryl Lawson, Darla Emery, Peter Thompson, Tracy Nicholson, Brad Criswell, Nick Lauter, Tess Abamo, Gil Ben-Shlomo, Stephanie Hamilton, Mary Heindel, Annie Arbuckle, Eman Salti, Wendy Robinder and one illegible sign-in

Facilities Committee members in attendance

Gerry Peters, Chuck Winkleblack, Steve Shuey and Kevin Stow

Science Night

Science Night will be held on February 16th from 5:30 - 8:00pm. Tracy Nicholson reported that there are 16 presenters scheduled for the event. Volunteers are needed and can contact Tracy or Courtney for more information.

Game Night

Fellows Family Game Night is scheduled for January 26th at 6:30pm. Families are invited to bring a favorite game. Notes will be sent home in Friday folders to remind families of this social event.

Fellows Fair

The Fellows Fair is scheduled for Thursday, May 24th. Volunteers are needed to chair various committees. A volunteer meeting is scheduled for January 11th at 7pm in the Media Center.

PTO Gift

The PTO purchased 22 iPads for classroom use. The total cost of the iPads were 11,400. The technology director for the district accepted the iPads as a gift for the school. One iPad was given to each teacher for classroom use. The iPads will be used to provide errorless learning applications and allow independent practice for literacy. The teachers offered thank you notes to the PTO and all Fellows families.

Facilities Committee

The Facilities committee held a special forum as part of the PTO meeting. The role of the Facilities Committee is to receive, review and react to the proposed elementary school plan that is being created by the school board. The working documents, agendas and meeting minutes for the Facilities Committee can be found on the Ames Community School District website.

Current items that are being addressed and considered:

*Build the new Fellows elementary school on the current Fellows site. Students would be kept in the current school building during the construction phase. Safety measures would be in place and disruption would be monitored.

*If the Fellows location remains at the current 20th street, the George Washing Carver land would be sold. The sale of this land would allow for 30-40 single family homes to be built which would generate additional property taxes for the school and possibly add additional students to the district.

*The 24th Street property that is owned by the school district is being considered for use as athletic fields. This could include baseball, softball, cross country, tennis, facilities, and administration.

*A long-term plan for the 5 elementary school plan will use a sustainable site plan. This allows a new building to be constructed on the current elementary school land when the life-cycle of a school building has been reached. This sustainable plan would apply to all 5 elementary school sites.

*Renovation of the elementary buildings would be scheduled for two summers and one full school year for each building. Sawyer, Mitchell and Fellows will be the first three elementary schools to be constructed. Construction will be limited to one school site at a time and the decision has not been made as to which school would be constructed first.

The Facilities Committee invited questions or comment from those in attendance at the meeting.

*A question was raised about the objectivity and subjectivity of the current site. Struxture Architects, the independent firm hired by the school district, had suggested that the George Washington Carver location was the best location for the new Fellows school site. The school board preliminarily chose the current 20th street location as the new location where Fellows should be re-built. The Facilities Committee commented that they were put in place to collect opinions on where the new school should be built and that the decision has not been made at this point.

*A comment was made on the positive value of the current high school site and it's close proximity to Fellows. Fellows students are able to walk to the high school to take part in various educational opportunities and high school students are able to walk over to Fellows for volunteer work. The walkable distance allows there to be a zero transportation cost for the school.

* One parent suggested that the school board should look at that parking lot and drop-off congestion at the current Fellows site, and address these during the planning and design phase.

The Facilities committee will submit their final plan to the school board on January 16th.

The school board will make the final decision on the location of the Fellows site and the 5 school plan on January 23rd. The bond issue for the 5 school elementary school plan will take place on April 16th.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm by Courtney Witte. The next PTO meeting will be on February 7th at 7:00pm in the Media Center.

Minutes submitted by Heidi Chopskie PTO Secretary

*minutes are subject to approval at the February PTO meeting.