

Cultural Awareness and Diversity Grant Request for Liberty Bell Elementary School PTA

Unit: #00021743

Event: Passport to the World

Event Date: March 2015

Submitted by: Angela Ast, PTA Vice President
abc1900@yahoo.com , 267-261-1196
Melinda Behrens, PTA Treasurer
mbehrens@ptd.net , 610-282-3501

Dear Mr. Mark Conner,
Family Engagement Chairman
412-639-9136, mconner@papta.org

One of the most exciting and successful events we have at Liberty Bell Elementary is our annual Passport to the World event!

Liberty Bell Elementary's population of 370 students is multicultural and rich with diversity. Many children at our school are 1st or 2nd generation to this country. Other students participate in our 1st to 3rd grade Spanish Immersion program. Both our students and teachers understand the importance of acceptance and embrace this beautiful difference. Our Passport to the World event celebrates this cultural diversity.

Description:

Each year we ask the parents/grandparents of students to participate in a one day exhibit of their own personal international culture. Much like Disney's Epcot or the World's Fair Exhibits of the past, each family is allowed to showcase their customs, traditions and culture. We ask the families to display items from their heritage, any crafts, music, customs, photographs, maps, flags, artwork, unique language features, etiquette, landscapes, traditional dress or dance.

We then allow small groups of students the opportunity to view and visit with families at each display. Students are encouraged to ask questions and participate in this "Show and Tell".

On the Passport to the World day, each student receives a "passport", they then have it stamped at each participating country.

So far, this year, we are planning for the following countries:

Afghanistan, Argentina, China, Columbia, Germany, Greece, India, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia

Student Benefits:

Students response to this event is delightful! Passport to the World is a fun way for children to learn about other cultures using all of their senses. They are engaged, intrigued, and insightful. These students are eager to visit each participating country, while families are eager to share. Many of the participants tailor their exhibits to include traditional children's customs and activities. Having participated in past Passport to the World events, it is truly a moving to see the spirit of acceptance and inclusivity.

Request for Additional Funding:

We currently have a \$150 budget for this event. However, this only covers janitorial costs and lunch. We provide a lunch for all our participants since this event does take an entire day.

We are asking additional funding for the following:

- Maps, Posters and Flags: Depicting the countries represented. (Would be saved and used in later years.)
- Food Samples for Children: Due to School District policy, we are not able to accept any homemade foods. Children love to “taste” other cultures. If we were able to purchase pre-packaged labeled foods for pre-approval by our school nurse, we would include it in our country displays.
- Passports: Currently our “passports” are photocopy paper. To make this more of a tangible experience for our young travelers, we would like to improve these passports, using card stock or color copies while incorporating a student passport photo.
- Rubber Stamps: Representation for each of our countries in an official stamp. Right now we have a variety of stamps that do not represent an authentic passport stamp. (These would be saved and used in later years.)
- Souvenirs- In lieu of food being offered at each table. A replacement of a small keepsake or memento.

Thank you of taking the time to read through our proposal. We appreciate the opportunity to have our wonderful school considered in this mini-grant program.

Respectfully,

Angela Ast
Melinda Behrens

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by:
Samuel Hafner
Principal of Liberty Bell Elementary School

Patricia Spitzer
President of Liberty Bell PTA