

PTA Meeting Minutes

Thoreau Middle School, Eagle Hall

Thursday, October 21, 2016

Attendees: Beth Eachus, Laura Schmorow, Sarah Helmicki, Rebecca Aguilar, Mandy Winkelman, Wendy Pearson, Lori Andino, Carolyn Culhane, Kelly Sund, Michelle Alonso, Stacey Leimbach, John Petro, Suzie Garrod, Rene Newman, Sheila Musiime, Nita Correa

The meeting was called to order at 7:37pm. Sarah Helmicki presented the minutes from the September 22, 2016, PTA meeting. There was a motion to approve the minutes by Wendy Pearson. Stacey Leimbach seconded, and the minutes were approved as written.

Principal's Report

Mr. Azimi was unable to attend the meeting due to a personal emergency.

Student Services Report

Ms. Aguilar reported that we would be ending the quarter in two weeks. Quarterly grades/progress reports will be pushed out by the SIS reporting system to all parents. In previous years, teachers would send grade updates every two weeks. Some teachers have elected to send regular/individual progress reports, but teachers are only required to send these if the student has a D or an F in a subject.

Ms. Aguilar also reported that there was a field trip to James Madison High School to learn about their music programs.

President's Report

Beth began her report by thanking all the volunteers who have contributed to the school thus far. She added that volunteers are needed for some upcoming events in particular. The Vision and Hearing Screening will take place on Thursday, October 27, and Friday, October 28. Volunteers are needed so that every student can be screened. Training is provided.

Volunteers are also needed for picture day(s) on Tuesday, November 1, and Wednesday, November 2. Eighth grade parents are also requested to volunteer for Finance Park, the 8th grade field trip that helps satisfy the Economics and Personal Finance credit for middle school. (See below)

Thoreau students and teachers will march in the Vienna Halloween parade on Wednesday, October 26. They will carry a banner to thank the sponsors who contributed to Thoreau's Capital Campaign.

Treasurer's Report

Laura presented budget as of September 30, 2016. A new fundraising opportunity was introduced. This fundraiser would raise money for additional technology that teachers need that was not provided as a result of the capital campaign. In this fundraiser, parents would pay \$40 for a birthday message for their child on the marquee in the front of the school. The announcement would have the first name and first initial of the last name.

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A motion was made by Kelly Sund to accept the birthday on marquee fundraiser as presented. Carolyn Culhane seconded the motion. The birthday on marquee fundraiser was approved as recommended.

Laura then presented a request to purchase the paper for the school directory. In previous years, the paper had been donated by a parent. This year, the donor passed on the opportunity to provide the paper. As an alternative, the PTA can purchase the paper and our business partner, Navy Federal, will still print the directory free of charge.

A motion was made to approve the purchase of the paper for the directory by Stacey Leimbach and seconded by Sheila Musiime. The directory paper purchase was approved as presented.

Committee Reports

Beth provided some updates for the following committees:

Membership: The Membership Committee has reached approximately 75% of their goal for PTA membership and the No Fuss fundraiser. This is one of Thoreau's primary fundraisers, so it is great that they are so close to achieving their goal.

Landscaping and Courtyard: There is still an ongoing fundraiser for which parents can purchase a "brick" for a design in the courtyard. Bricks are \$50/brick. Beth will make sure that details on how to purchase a brick will be available in Thoreau Matters. The committee would like to incorporate a student design for the brick layout. Soon a committee is forming to discuss options. If you are interested, contact committee chair, Katrina Smart.

Hospitality: Upcoming events for the Hospitality committee include Halloween treats in October. In November the committee will provide pies to each teacher for Thanksgiving. Beth asked if parents would consider purchasing a pie and donating it to the event. More information will be forthcoming in the next month.

7th Grade Dinner: Lori Ebert provided an email update for the 7th Grade dinner. A sign up genius was sent out requesting help from volunteers. Teacher and staff invitations went out in the week of Oct. 17. All vendors have been secured, including the food, DJ and photo booth. There was a meeting with Jennifer Hill of the cafeteria staff to fill her in on the details. Advertising for the event is going strong and RSVPs have started coming in for the event. Be sure to check the Thoreau Matters e-news for more details.

Announcements and Presentations

Beth Eachus reminded the meeting attendees about the Proposed Fairfax County Meals Tax. This referendum will be on the ballot in November.

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She encouraged parents to vote for the Meals Tax as 70% of the proceeds will be provided to FCPS.

New Business

No new business was presented at the meeting

Guest Speaker – *Success in Middle School* – Presented by Ann Dolin, M.Ed., President and Director of Educational Connections

Ann Dolin provided a valuable presentation on the importance of establishing routines and good habits in middle school during homework time.

Guest Speaker – *Finance Park Presentation* – Presented by Mary Parker

Mary Parker presented an overview of Finance Park. She described the partnership between FCPS and Junior Achievement. She explained that between Civics class and the Finance Park field trip, 8th grade students receive 15 hours of curriculum that satisfies the Economics and Personal Finance requirement for middle school. The Finance Park field trip will take place on November 17, 18 and 21 this year. Volunteers are needed for a 5-hour commitment. Parent volunteers serve as a mentor in the program. All training required is provided on the day of the volunteer commitment.

For more information, parents can go to the myja.org website to learn more details about the curriculum and information for volunteers.

Beth ended the meeting at 9:06pm. The next meeting will be held at Nov. 17, 2016, at 9:30am.