

PTA Meeting Minutes

Eagle Hall – Thoreau Middle School

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Attendees: Beth Eachus, Barbara Rousseau, Sarah Helmicki, Laura Schmorrow, Ms. Aguilar, Mr. Azimi, Michelle Alonso, Kelly Sund, Wendy Pearson, Lydia Newsom, Sandy Pompelli, Sonya Marsden, Rene Newman, Kavita Naimpally, Diana Nash, Mary Pat Julian, Julie Philipp

The meeting was called to order at 9:41am. Beth Eachus presented the minutes from the January 19, 2017, PTA meeting. There was a motion to approve the minutes by Sonya Marsden. Kavita Naimpally seconded, and the minutes were approved as written.

Student Services Report

Ms. Aguilar also reported that the school is in the middle of course selections. Course selection dictates teacher requirements. In addition, visits were made to schools for those entering high school. Ms. Aguilar also reported on Thoreau's use of a Monthly Wellness Session (as opposed to a Wellness Week.) This enables the students to have ongoing wellness opportunities rather than concentrating everything into a shorter weeklong event. One month, counselors introduced the benefits of dancing and exercise. This month, students were introduced to the benefits of Therapy Dogs.

Mr. Azimi congratulated Ms. Aguilar and the Student Services department who were awarded with a RAMP certification, which is a Recognized ASCA Model Program. The ASCA is the American School Counselor Association. In order to be designated as a RAMP school, the school-counseling department must meet the qualifications of a comprehensive, data-driven school counseling program. Out of 14,000 schools, only 650 schools have this designation. Both Madison and Marshall High Schools have this designation as well. Within the pyramid, it is an excellent benefit for students.

President's Report

Beth began her report by noting the upcoming Crosstown Hoops event, which will take place on April 6. She noted that the coaches had held tryouts and had selected their teams. There are teams for both boys and girls representing both the 7th and 8th grades.

Beth noted a continued need at the Thoreau school store for volunteers. Beth also thanked Sandra Frederick and her Hospitality team for planning a Valentine's Day treat for teachers. Teachers were treated to a Valentine's Day coffee as well as to a Georgetown cupcake.

Lastly, Beth noted that planning for the 8th Grade Farewell Dance is underway. Please contact Beth if you have interest in helping to plan the event.

Treasurer's Report

Laura Schmorrow presented the Treasurer's Report. The bank balance on 1/31/17 was \$26,879. Laura noted that we exceeded the financial goal for the No Fuss Fundraiser. However, membership dues are lower than budgeted by approximately \$750.

Laura noted that she broke out revenues and expenses for the 7th Grade Dinner. This event made a small profit of just over \$400. Lastly, Laura noted that she would pay our dues to the county on March 1.

Committee Reports

The following committees provided updates:

Crosstown Hoops: Barbara Rousseau, Chair of the Crosstown Hoops event, gave an update. Crosstown Hoops will take place on April 6 this year at Kilmer Middle School. She said that there is a need for volunteers to attend lunch and sell tickets to the event. Proceeds from advanced ticket sales will stay at Thoreau, whereas proceeds from ticket sales at the door will be split with Kilmer. As a result, TMS benefits from early ticket sales. Barbara also noted that there may be a need to help with clean up on the night of the event. Since the host school manages concessions, the need for Thoreau volunteers is lower this year.

Marshall High School: Kelly Sund, Marshall HS liaison, is a member of the Marshall HS PTA nominating committee. She noted that Thoreau sends a small percentage of students to Marshall but represents a large portion of the PTA Board. They are in need of a Thoreau Liaison, Secretary, Treasurer and VP for next year.

Madison High School: Beth noted that the Madison PTA is in need of a Treasurer for next year.

Dining for Dollars: Michelle Alonso, chair of the Dining for Dollars fundraisers noted that Thoreau made \$130 at our January Dining for Dollars event. She reminded the group of the following events:

- February 23 – Fosters Grill; 11am-9pm; 20% of sales with receipts
- March 28 – Chipotle; 4:30-8:30pm; 50% of sales if mention Thoreau
- April 26 – Social Burger; 4:00-9:00pm; 15% of all sales

The May Dining for Dollars will be MOD Pizza or possibly Ledo Pizza. She was reaching out to both restaurants.

Rebate and Rewards Programs: It was noted that March 1 is the deadline for box tops submissions.

Landscaping and Courtyard: The committee held a meeting with Bonnie Fitzgerald of Maverick Mosaics to review the site and plan for the implementation of the courtyard design, a mosaic eagle. Bonnie is a local artist and expert in public mosaic art.

New Business

No new business was presented at the meeting.

Principal's Report

Mr. Azimi presented the State of Thoreau at the meeting, which was also a Principal's Coffee. He reviewed the benefits of the renovation and expansion project which cost \$35 million and which added 70,000 square feet of space. He also noted that with the additional space that Thoreau could expect to grow in the coming years and take some pressure off of Luther Jackson Middle School. In 2017-2018, LJMS is expected to have 1600 students, whereas TMS is expected to have 990 students. With the new building, TMS will have capacity for 1340 students, so in the 2018-2019 school year, we expect more students from other area elementary schools, such as Marshall Road, Oakton Elementary and Mosby Woods.

The TMS Capital Campaign helped support the funding for the renovation with new equipment because the county had not allocated all the money needed.

Mr. Azimi noted that while there is a teacher shortage in the county, TMS does not suffer from any issues and can fill open spots readily. TMS is known for its great community of faculty, staff and parents.

Mr. Azimi also reviewed his “Playbook” for the next three years. The playbook includes Block Scheduling, Project-Based Learning and Executive Functioning Training. While these plans are specific for TMS, county-wide there is a focus on literacy using the four strategies of reading, writing, discussion and thinking. Thoreau will also spend time focusing on literacy.

The Grading and Reporting policy was reviewed. Mr. Azimi noted that TMS uses the same policies as Madison High School, primarily since most students matriculate there after leaving TMS. Mr. Azimi also highlighted the Eagle Time program. The purpose of Eagle Time is intervention, remediation, organization, work completion and enrichment.

Lastly, Mr. Azimi noted that there had been some vandalism in the school. There was a two-week period of issues, but the problem has subsided.

Beth ended the meeting at 11:10 am.