

REACH Parent Group MEETING NOTES

11:30am-1:00pm, Friday **MAY 14, 2021**

[Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 821 9438 3860, Passcode: 301801) [*note new ID/PC EACH MTG!*]

REACH Parent Group, a committee of the PTA Council, is a parent group dedicated to supporting gifted and talented programs in District 205 and encouraging higher level educational opportunities for ALL District 205 students. Our area of focus includes:

- Providing parent and student resources for gifted and advanced learners
- Organizing advocacy at local and national levels
- Sponsoring and/or promoting academic-based extra-curricular activities that are accessible to all students
- Collaborating with REACH teachers to provide additional resources and student opportunities.

TODAY'S AGENDA (meeting 9 of 9) - *last one for the 2020-2021 school year!*

Participants: 53

D205 Guests: Leslie Weber and Ava Hollis

Meeting topic(s) - Guest, York senior Ava Hollis of [Ava's Summer Science](#) shares the "Positive Impact of the REACH Program" on her life. We also expect to have a Q & A with "New to REACH" parents and details of 2021-22 planning by Sarah Jensen (*expected at >=noon.*)

Ava Hollis - runs a science course, weekly, via Zoom.

Link to Ava's Summer Science:

<https://sites.google.com/view/avassummerscience/home?authuser=0>

She has been in REACH for English and math since 3rd grade (took Honors and AP courses in high school). She got three full ride merit scholarships for college and decided to go to University of Virginia.

How the REACH program helped Ava:

1. The program builds a critical thinking mindset that no other program offers. All the projects and creativity during classes helped Ava develop a mindset for the future, how she uses the information she is presented with, and pushing past comfort zones for growth.
2. Confidence in academics - your talents are valued.
3. Organization skills

For the future Ava thinks that collaboration and teamwork are key. Ava emphasizes creating based on your own ideas and opportunities, thinking outside the box. She thinks that her creativity and outside the box thinking helped her get the college scholarships.

Q: Did you feel that there was a lot of pressure to study more and get high grades? Did it feel overwhelming?

A: Ava was able to balance everything. She was not a perfect A student, but she had a work ethic that was built in the REACH program, so she was able to stay organized. She joined other clubs in highschool to have fun and not always study. York is not a high pressure school, so there is focus on mental health and balance.

Ava took enriched classes at York and the credits will transfer to college, so she will finish in three years and get her masters in the 4th year (already part of her scholarship package).

Question about competitive sports and accelerated courses. Ava did competitive tennis and she said it was possible to participate in sports and stay on top of academics.

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Question on executive function skills and balancing schedules. How did she find balance between sports, academics, applying for college? Ava said that REACH emphasized setting a goal and achieving it. Multitasking does not help, one project at the time. These skills of setting goals and staying focused helped her keep everything balanced.

Having an older student role model helped her a lot.

Sarah Jensen asked what can the parents group do more to help; any specific tools you wished you had to better help you? Ava suggested inviting guest speakers that do cool things, that are really good at their jobs, and people who are highly successful in their field.

Ava talked about her desire to not fit into the box, but to recreate the box. Maybe create an incubator for students that think outside the box to allow them to be creative.

One of her favorite quotes is: better to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission. Take risks, and push past what you think your limitations are.

Leslie Weber - new title - Director of Instructional Services

Updates:

- testing for appeals is happening now
- the website is updated weekly
- MAP assessment is retested for appeals; the COGAT does not change
- there are over 320 appeals.
- the highest MAP score is considered for appeals and entered into the rubric.
- families are informed on the MAP scores if they are not able to make it into the program.
- students are rescreened for REACH in 5th grade; appeals happen every year.
- at the 6th grade level families can choose a single accelerated pathway for 7th grade without additional testing.
- all families will know appeals results by May 28th.

June 3rd at 7:00PM webinar for new to REACH families. The same presentation will be available in August.

Optional summer bridge for math (June 14 - July 23rd) for newly identified students - Khan academy with optional office hours remote.

Recommended summer reading list? Sarah to reach out to teachers to create a reading list per grade level.

Reading list recommendation:

<https://www.rebeccacaudill.org/images/2022/CaudillCumulativeList.pdf>

Leslie hopes the appeal process was more transparent this year than the previous years. The appeal process identified more students for the program this year, some of them without additional testing.

The REACH program recommendations are still on pause until future plans can be reviewed with the new superintendent, Dr. Campbell. Any new information will be shared as soon as it is available.

Sarah Jensen - top priorities for next school year:

- communication and open dialogue
- review former speakers on executive functioning and study habits; share where applicable.
- Leverage Thrive 205 - social and emotional impact.

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- Leverage Career days? More student panels?
- Monthly meetings schedule: Fridays at 1PM?
- Meetings in person but still Zoom available for those not able to attend in person.

Officer and Chair/Team Reports (updates)

Finance Chair - Carrie Kaufman (2021-22 Miena Hall) - **NO CHANGE**

- Budget of \$2150, Expenses <\$1563> = \$587 balance to carry over for 2021-22
- Use of \$587 balance - *teacher donations; please advise group of needs*
- Reps and/or teachers-submit reimbursement form.

Website Administrator - Anna Wick (most recent revision, Parent Resources!)

Social/Social Media - Ioana Fernandez - subscriber counts, reminders

Mathletes - (participating elementary schools): Gwen Reedy (Edison), Gina Padgett (Jefferson) & Sarah Jensen (Field) - **INCLUDE IN 2021-22 BUDGET**

Suggestion from Gina - district to take it as an initiative and have teachers help run it. All schools should have the opportunity to run the program. Sarah agreed to have small group discuss with Leslie and Dave Beedy.

Elementary School Math Nights - there are kits available; reps should be discussing fall dates with schools.

BOE representative - still in the works; BOE liaison to the parent group.

President – Patti Berner

- **Filled 2021-2022 Finance Chair - Miena Hall! And ALL School Reps.**
- **Open positions for 2021-22 - BOE Liaison, Other interests?**
- **2021 Parent Info Nights** (REACH sponsored) planned - June 3 & Aug 23, 7 pm “New to REACH” Parent Info Nights (both will have the same content)
- Teacher Donations - Reps make purchase for them (or get reimbursement)
- PTA Council updates

ALL Reps

- Elem, math kits (for Math Nights)
- MS Math Leagues (Churchville, Bryan, Sandburg - reimbursements requested?)
- **Teachers - all added to REACH Parent Group News!**
- Other topics?

Questions and/or Request from School REACH Reps? Parents?

PAST ITEMS - Feedback?

UPCOMING DATES/EVENTS

2020-2021 School Year

Respectfully prepared by 2018-2020 REACH Parent Group Chairman, [Patti Berner](#)

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May/June

- 5/24 Mon 6 pm - MEZ (Math Enrichment Zooms)
- 5/28 - ALL Appeals results shared with families
- First week of June - info on REACH Summer (Math) Bridge sent to all eligible families
- 6/3 Thur 7 pm - New to REACH Parent Info Night
- 6/14-7/23 - Summer Bridge (math) Program

2021-2022 School Year

August

- 8/18 Wed First day of school
- 8/23 Mon 7 pm - New to REACH Parent Info Night