

**UPPER ST. CLAIR PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES & PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL REPORT–
JANUARY 4, 2017**

PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

January 4, 2017

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:36 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda/Minutes

The agenda/minutes were approved as presented.

Statement of the Treasurer (as reported by Beth Huzjak)

- **The USC Parent Teacher Council's General Fund** had an opening cash balance on November 1, 2016 of \$11,398.11
 - Receipts totaled \$1,550.74 in November 2016.
 - Disbursements totaled \$827.00 in November 2016.
 - The ending cash balance totaled \$12,121.85 as of December 1, 2016.
- The December bank statement was not available as of the time of this meeting.

Reports

- Executive Committee
 - President, Beth Huzjak
 - Thank you to Leria Miles and Streams for hosting our meeting and thanks to everyone else for donating your time to attend.
 - 1st Vice President, Daphna Gans – no report
 - 2nd Vice President, Dr. Patrick O'Toole
 - The Capital Projects Community Input Forum was held on November 29. Various presentations were made at the Forum including one by Mr. Dave McLean of McLean Architects and Ms. Cordisco. Dr. O'Toole explained that tough decisions lie ahead. The School Board must determine the ultimate scope of work of the projects.
 - Work is underway on the budget for the 2017/2018 school year with the proposed capital projects in mind. The School Board of Directors will need to decide whether or not to raise taxes.
 - Mr. Scott Burchill was appointed as the new Director of Business & Finance for our school district effective January 3, 2017. He spent time in December transitioning with Ms. Frosina Cordisco, his predecessor. Mr. Burchill previously held the same position at a school district in Washington County.
 - The district is working on a new contract with our bus drivers. Talks have been positive and Dr. O'Toole shared he is hopeful something will be finalized very soon.
 - Board Advisor, Holly Spina
 - Happy New Year to everyone.
 - Please begin to think about candidates for council and unit openings. That time will be here before we know it.
 - Follow PTC on twitter!
 - School Board Director, Amy Billerbeck (Member)
 - Amy started her report by sharing the district Commendations and Recognitions Report for December 2016. She noted the commendation for Natalie Barefoot, a second grade student at Streams, who has a piece of artwork on display at A.I.R. Gallery, located in Brooklyn, NY now

through Dec. 18, 2016. Natalie submitted a picture that she had made in art class last year when she was in first grade and it was accepted to the show. Her artwork is displayed with other artwork created by children in kindergarten through fifth grade from around the country.

- The School Board held its annual Reorganization Meeting on December 5, 2016, in accordance with state requirements. Angela Peterson was unanimously elected as the President of the Board of School Directors and Amy Billerbeck was unanimously elected as the Vice-President of the Board. Commendations were given by Dr. O'Toole to the outgoing president of the Board and the administrative team for the school district's accomplishments for the prior year.
- The Capital Projects Community Input Forum that convened on November 29. It was very well attended (over 200 people). There were adults and children representing the community, many of whom gave comments. They were thoughtful and well-spoken and many represented the St. Clair swimming community. Detailed presentations were given by the architect and by Frosina Cordisco, the now former Director of Business & Finance for the district.
- The PSSA and Keystone Exam results were reviewed with the Board. All schools in the district outperformed the state average. The high school's score exceeded 100.
- The Board welcomed Scott Burchill as the new Director of Business & Finance for the district.
- A curriculum review is coming up in January.
- The Board of School Directors will be reviewing its goals in January.

Unit Presidents

Baker – Kristie Proud

- Spaghetti Dinner at St. Thomas Moore benefitting the Fera Family in December was an overwhelming success. Although this was not a PTA sponsored event, the outpouring of love from students, teachers and the community was wonderful. Ana Fera was there and the whole family was very appreciative.
- Classroom Winter Parties were a success and enjoyed a nice winter break---we are back to school now and in full swing!
- January 9, 2017 Baker's 4th Grade Spelling Bee with a snow make up day on January 12, 2017-This will be held in the Baker Library. Today is the last day to register.
- January 20-30, 2017- Baker Read-a-Thon! This is the first Read-A-Thon fundraiser at Baker and encourages all students to read for 10 days where they can collect sponsorship. There are several fun things planned during this time including Baker Bedtime Stories where we have teachers and special guests coming to school in the evening to read to the kids and have milk and cookies. Kids will have personal goals and a school wide reading goal of 75,000 minutes. We will have a special treat for the school if they reach this goal...Rita's for the whole school and Dr. MC dressing up as a story character for the day! This is the first fundraiser at school to solely raise funds for the new Baker Playground Renovation. This is a 2-year project starting this year.

Eisenhower – Jill Hicks

- Eisenhower got into the holiday spirit in December by kicking off the month with our ever-popular Holiday Mart. Our Holiday Mart was held on December 7th & 8th in the gym. Students had a chance to shop for their families and choose from a wide assortment of gifts. We had a great volunteer turn out to help set up, tear down and more importantly, keep the students "on track" with their purchases and expenses! This typically is a break-even event, but because of our committee chair's thrifty shopping, we profited an estimated several hundred dollars.
- Eisenhower also held our Winter Party on Thursday, December 22nd. It's become tradition at Eisenhower to have a New Year's Eve countdown for the entire school. Mr. Miller gets on the loud speaker and counts down from 10 to ring in the New Year. Once the clock "strikes midnight" kids run into the halls to blow horns, stomp on sheets of bubble wrap or use their noisemakers. It's always a great time for all of the kids.
- From an Outreach perspective, the gloves and mittens that our Eisenhower families collected for Kelly School students were delivered in December. Similar to past years, Kelly students were incredibly grateful for our families' generosity.
- We are also pleased to report that we are further reinforcing our relationship with the Kelly School on another Outreach Project. We have teamed with Beverly's Birthdays to provide school birthday kits for all of the classrooms at the Kelly School. Beverly's Birthdays are coming to Eisenhower in February to work with our 2nd grade students to assemble the birthday kits for the Kelly School classrooms.

- This project, along with our continued relationship with Education Partnership to build school supply kits for Kelly continues to provide a wonderful opportunity for our students to help others in need and see first-hand the positive impact they have on these students.
- Looking towards the end of the month, our BINGO Night will be held on January 13th at the high school and our Spelling Bee will be held on January 26th. Our next general meeting will be held on Friday, January 13th.

Streams – Leria Miles

- Of all of the wonderful things that we have done at Streams in the last month, including Holiday Shop, chorus concerts, and winter parties...I think back to Holly Spina's encouragement to us, as unit presidents, to report on newsworthy happening that might not necessarily be posted on our website! The most impactful report this month has come to us in the form of a firsthand account from a Streams parent. Kelly Powell, mother of Emily, Nathan, and Paige, had the opportunity to accompany the Streams fourth graders to sing to the residents of Friendship Village and Broadmoor as they shared with them the gift of song. Leria shared her letter with the group. What a wonderful testament to the work of Mr. Leonhardt and the music program at Streams!
- And of course, we have the following events to look forward to in the January:
 - 13- Staff Appreciation Luncheon at 8am
 - 14- Youth Steering Committee at C&RC at 7pm
 - 15- 7pm-8:30 pm for 4th & 8th grade, 9th&10th grade IB Diploma Training
 - 18- NO SCHOOL- Classroom Management
 - 21- 2nd Grade Open Mike 9:30 @Veronica Davis's home (Please RSVP)
 - 25- School Board Meeting 7PM
 - 26- 4th Grade Spelling Bee @Rec Center 6-8pm
 - 28- 1st Grade Special Level Night 6:30pm

Boyce – Katy Loomis

- Boyce PTO Spirit Wear and Spirit Night events were very successful. Thank you to Rachelle Engel and Heather Ziegler for volunteering to run these events.
- Read for a Reason will run from January 15th until the 23rd. Last year the students logged over 100,000 minutes of reading. We are hoping to beat that record this year! Prizes will be awarded every day for individual and team reading. All funds raised will go toward this year's goals of indoor/outdoor recess equipment and supporting the Innovation Hub. Thank you to the Boyce Student Council for taking an active role in this event! Happy Reading!
- Spelling Bee will also take place in January. The written test will take place January 19th during pride time. The Spelling Bee will be on January 31st at 5:30 pm in the Boyce LGI. Please go to the Boyce PTO website if you are interested in signing up.
- Revolutionary War Day will take place on January 20th.
- The next Boyce PTO meeting is January 11th at 9:30 in the LGI.
- February will be a busy month - starting with the PTC General Meeting February 1st at Boyce. We are excited to offer a tour of the Innovation Hub during this meeting.

Fort Couch – Melanie Lenthall

- The Fort Couch third PTSO General Meeting was held on Tuesday, November 15th and following the PTSO meeting, we had a presentation by our 7th grade Guidance Counselor, Lauren Madia, on the adolescent brain.
- Our Reach Out campaign took place in the last two weeks before Winter Break. Students raised \$16,500 this year, which is truly remarkable. As every year, some of the money raised is going toward helping Upper St. Clair families in need through distribution of Giant eagle gift cards with the assistance of the Upper St. Clair Police Department. The rest of the money this year, per student council vote, went to Anna's Army, MS Bikeathon, and Hope for Haiti.
- Anna's Army is especially moving. Anna Ferra is a Baker Elementary student who was diagnosed in April with a medulloblastoma brain tumor. She has been at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and arrived home about a week before her family was presented with the donation. Her sister Olivia is an 8th grader at Fort Couch.
- In the same spirit, Caught You Being Good took place as well these two weeks. This is where teachers and staff give out tickets to students for random acts of kindness and good behavior. The tickets are redeemed for candy and a raffle chance for prizes. These two events culminated in a moving assembly with special guests,

fabulous music from the band, orchestra and chorus. Student council leaders presented to the chosen charities at the assembly.

- Warm Winter Wishes was our send off before the winter break to our Fort Couch staff. They were treated to desserts, hot cocoa and coffee bar which was received with much enthusiasm.
- The Fort Couch Spelling Bee is January 18th in the FC library.
- Scholastic Arts in Education deadlines: Deadline for writing submissions is today January 4th, 2017 and Deadline for artwork submissions is January 6th, 2017
- Our fourth PTSO meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 17th. For our follow-up lecture series, we invited Mr. Palmer to discuss the transition of students from Fort Couch to the High School.

High School PTSO – Sally Ondrejko

- The musical arts were in full swing at the high school in November and December with both instrumental and choral concerts. The Spring musical has been announced. Tryouts occurred in December for “The Drowsy Chaperone” and rehearsals start this month.
- At our November meeting, we enjoyed a presentation by one of three groups of students participating in the Verizon App Challenge this year. The group is designing an app to help improve the USC High School Help Desk program. We also learned about International Education Week events, which occurred December 5-9, from Social Studies Curriculum Leader Mr. Doug Kirchner.
- USCHS won the coat drive sponsored by Model Cleaners which concluded December 9. The high school collected 959 coats. The \$1000 prize will be used primarily by Student Council to replace the Panther mascot which has been AWOL for some time.
- Activities for the USCHS Mini-thon launched during an assembly November 23 and will continue throughout the year until the dance-a-thon in April.
- Discussions are ongoing at the high school regarding a venue change proposed for the Prom by a group of senior class representatives.
- First semester finals begin this Friday and continue through next Wednesday. Following feedback from students and parents regarding the finals schedule last Spring, further adjustments have been made. Some changes were not retained and others were. For example, regular classes will NOT continue during finals, but the finals schedule is based on mods, not on subject areas.
- With the start of the second semester on January 17, the High School Counseling Department will welcome Kristin Scott-Pardini as a full-time, permanent member to fill the position which has been open since last February.
- Our first meeting for 2017 will be Wednesday, January 18, at 9:30 at Central Office.

Standing Committees

Arts in USC – Rachelle Engel

- The elementary contest theme this year is "This Is My World". Information and registration forms will be coming out in February. The contest will have winners at each grade level K--4 within each school, and overall district winners per grade as well. We are hoping to partner with The Arts and Chocolate Spectacular as we did last year and display our winners. This successful event is held at the USC C&RC in the Spring. Stay tuned for more details and deadlines through e-alerts through each school's PTO/A.

Caring & Sharing – Leria Miles – no report

Directory – Brooke Tarcson – no report

GATE – Lisa Clark – no report

Internet Communications – Brooke Tarcson – no report

Open Mike – Daphna Gans

- Looking at dates for the spring Open Mike session.

Outreach – Chrissy Sileo / Kathy Teresi

- Thank you to Dr. O’Toole for hosting the second Casual for a Cause Day for district staff in support of The Education Partnership and Turner and Kelly Elementary. The day raised \$853 toward our big goal! In addition,

Boyce's book fair spare change added \$40.99 to the running total. Eisenhower has also secured their \$5,000 donation to the effort!

- We would like to thank the parent, staff and student volunteers of Eisenhower and Boyce for packing the holiday kits for Turner and Kelly Elementary. We are also very grateful to The Education Partnership, Amanda McQuillan, Kate McQuillan (as Clifford the Dog) and the PTA/PTO/PTSO parents who attended the distributions at Turner and Kelly on December 14. It was very special to be representing USC PTC that day and see firsthand the joy and gratitude of the children and staff of the Wilkinsburg schools.
- We are less than halfway to goal and we need to finish raising the funds to pay for those kits!
- Upcoming outreach events in February include:
 - * Boyce Middle School Stylus Sale
 - * Boyce Middle School Valentine Grams
 - * Fort Couch Middle School Valentine Coin Drive
- In the works:
 - * High School Student Council fundraiser
 - * Streams Elementary general membership vote on donation
 - * Baker Elementary outreach committee discussing options
 - * Council Executive Board initiative
- Boyce and Fort Couch have also donated their lost and founds for the first half of the school year and we are busy getting those cleaned, sorted and ready to deliver.
- While reaching our financial goal is the first priority, the principal and guidance counselor at Turner did talk to us about other needs and we are happy to share those for anyone looking for "gently used" drives at their schools.

PIE – Tracy Barnett – no report

Spelling Bee – Colette LeKachman

- January marks the start of spelling bee season in USC.
- I looked at the calendar on the agenda and noticed that two spelling bees were omitted. Please add the Streams Bee at 6pm on January 23 as well as the Boyce Bee at 5:30pm on January 31.
- I'll be at the February meeting with a full report.

STEAM – Suzanne Wynne

- Developed a plan with the school to purchase in-classroom equipment for the STEAM club.
- Successfully identified a volunteer PTO representative to watch over the club at Eisenhower and Baker. Still in need of a representative for Streams.
- Currently working on a teaching curriculum to be used by the high school volunteers who will be teaching the club. Looking to submit the curriculum to Dr. Wagner soon. Seeking volunteer high school student(s) who may be interested in helping develop the curriculum.
- Targeting March for the club to be held in each of the elementary schools. The club will be offered to fourth graders.
- The high school volunteers and PTO volunteers will be trained one week prior to the start date of the club.

Welcoming Committee—Stacie de la Parra – no report

Reporting Organizations

Community Foundation – Leanne Adamo

- The USC Book Club meets on January 12 at 11am and 7pm at the C&RC to discuss The Good Girl by Mary Kubica. All are welcome to attend.
- Stadium blankets are for sale. The proceeds benefit the Community Foundation of Upper St. Clair which in turn benefits various community activities including most recently, donating \$500 to help with the Baker Playground Renovation project. The Community Foundation also sponsors a number of fun community events including the Free Children's Concert presented by The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Musicians and Outdoor Movie Night.

Odyssey of the Mind – Alison Hess

- Teams met over the holiday break to work on plays, costumes and scenery. There will be one more, large Spontaneous practice for all teams before the big Spontaneous Fun Day competition on February 11.
- Beth Huzjak added that Eisenhower donated the left over bubble wrap from the holiday parties to Odyssey of the Mind.

Youth Steering – Amy Billerbeck

- The Youth Steering Committee hosted a town hall for underage drinking on December 14, 2016. It was a great program. Amy noted two members of the panel who presented during the town hall. The first was Casey Mullen, an attorney who dealt with alcohol and substance abuse in his younger years. The second was District Judge Ron Arnoni who shared his experiences as a judge who sees many cases for underage drinking.
- On January 18, 2017, there will be a presentation by Family Focus.

Old Business - None

New Business

- Lyn Benonis reported that on January 14, 2017, the high school will be hosting a FIRST Tech Challenge robotics event. She invited all to attend and cheer on the teams and asked that we spread the word to others who may be interested to attend. The qualifying matches begin at 11AM.
- Dr. O'Toole shared that high school students were assigned the project to design the new Baker playground, a project currently in the development stages as covered by Kristie Proud during her report.
- Beth Huzjak reminded everyone that the next PTC general meeting will be held at Boyce on February 1, 2017. Those who attend will be invited to participate in a tour of the new Innovation Hub.
- Dr. Miller shared that the families and staff at Streams are teaming up again for the 13th annual *CHILDREN FOR CHILDREN* event on February 16, 2017. This year, contributions raised during the event will benefit *Anna's Army* and *Connecting Children with Champions*.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:21 am
Respectfully Submitted,
Stacey Friday

The Next USC PTC Meeting
February 1, 2017
Boyce