

UPPER ST. CLAIR PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES & PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL REPORT– OCTOBER 5, 2016

PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

October 5, 2016

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda/Minutes

The agenda/minutes were approved as presented.

Statement of the Treasurer

- **The USC Parent Teacher Council's General Fund** had an opening cash balance on September 1, 2016 of \$10,508.11
 - Receipts this month totaled \$990.00
 - Disbursements totaled \$100.00
 - This leaves us with an ending cash balance of \$11,398.11 as of October 1, 2016.

Reports

- Executive Committee
 - President, Beth Huzjak
 - Thank you to Kristie Proud and Baker for hosting our meeting and thanks to everyone else for donating your time to attend.
 - 1st Vice President, Daphna Gans
 - Reminder that the first Open Mike of the 2016-2017 school year is scheduled for Wednesday, November 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Boyce. Please visit the district website for the online form to submit questions for Dr. O'Toole.
 - 2nd Vice President, Dr. Patrick O'Toole
 - It's been a very smooth Back to School transition. There have been many improvements to the Back to School process as a result of feedback. Thank you to Tina Vojtko and the PTC for the continuous feedback loop and open lines of communication.
 - Curriculum changes meeting is scheduled for January 2017.
 - Positive feedback has been received regarding the Boyce Innovation Hub and the new Commons at the High School.
 - Looking at a November date for a community input meeting regarding the capital expenditures projects for the district.
 - Thank you for the donation to the Mary Catherine Murphy Schierberl Scholarship, Clarion University Foundation.
 - Received a thoughtful thank you note from the Moon Township bus drivers who were invited to partake in the delicious food from the Welcoming Committee New Family dinner.
 - Board Advisor, Holly Spina – no report
 - School Board Director, Amy Billerbeck (Member)
 - Commendations:
 - At the most recent Board of School Directors meeting, Dr. O'Toole and the Board recognized Beverly Nemeth, bus driver, for her years of dedication and service to the school district and to the children. Ms. Nemeth retired in August 2016.
 - Dr. Timothy M. Wagner, associate principal for program planning and innovation at Upper St. Clair High School, has been named an Emerging Leader by the Pennsylvania

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. The PASCD Emerging Leaders program recognizes and prepares young, promising educators to influence education programs, policy and practice at the state level. Emerging Leaders are enrolled in the program for two years and receive mentoring and professional development opportunities.

- High School science teacher Dr. Colin A. Syme was one of 200 teachers selected to attend the Society Research Teachers Conference from Sept. 30 – Oct. 2, 2016, in Washington, D.C.
- Twelve Upper St. Clair High School seniors were recently named Semifinalists in the 2017 National Merit Scholarship Program.
- Authorized the Bond Council to refinance bonds coming due which resulted in a \$750,000 savings.
- The ad-hoc committee for capital expenditure projects gave a report to the full Board and recommended the architect move forward with the specifications for the job and detailing the costs.
- The Board completed a self-assessment with the assistance of a facilitator from the state. The results were extremely positive. The one area of weakness noted was in the area of advocating for public education in the state of Pennsylvania. This will be an area to work on in the future. The strong positive results reaffirm our high functioning school district.
- The Board meets on a quarterly basis for a breakfast. The purpose of the quarterly breakfast is to allow the Board to have an opportunity to explore some less familiar or new aspect of the school district (such as newer facilities or a new aspect to the curriculum). At the upcoming October quarterly breakfast, the Board will have the opportunity to explore the Boyce Innovation Hub and the new Commons at the High School.

Unit Presidents

Baker – Kristie Proud

- Boo Bash – October 14, 2016
- Yankee Candle and Kidstuff coupon book fundraiser is finishing up this week
- Chic-Fil-A Spirit Night is tonight, October 5, 2016
- Baker Elementary and Baker PTO Outreach Fall Fundraiser for Charity-Baker is conducting a fundraiser during the month of October. It is our hope that this will become an annual event supporting various causes connected directly to the Baker School Family. This year's charities:
 - The Teresa Fox Memorial Scholarship - The Teresa Fox Memorial Scholarship was set up in honor of Ms. Teresa Fox, a long-time Baker teacher who we still remember and celebrate after her death last year; and
 - St. Jude Children's Research Hospital - Anna Fera, a Baker fourth grade student, is current receiving treatment at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
 - To celebrate our students giving back, Baker will hold its first (hopefully annual) Fall Crawl. The Fall Crawl will be held on October 28 at 1:00 p.m. This is during our harvest day parade and students will walk from Baker School down the path to the south to the fire station on Morton Road. They will enjoy apple cider and water and return for their harvest day parties.
 - Baker will be taking donations throughout the month and we will also have a booth at the boo bash!

Eisenhower – Jill Hicks

- We are very excited to once again participate in Jump Rope for Heart. This year's event will be held on October 10th in our gym. Eisenhower students have asked family and friends to sponsor them while they jump rope during their designated time during the school day. All proceeds will go to the American Heart Association. Our last Jump Rope for Heart event raised more than \$9,000 and we are looking to match, if not exceed that number this year.
- The Eisenhower is right around the corner and we are very busy finalizing event details and preparations. This year's Howler will be held on Friday, October 21st. One of the highlights of the event is our silent auction. Both local businesses and Eisenhower families have been incredibly generous in donating items for the auction including signed sports memorabilia, Pittsburgh sporting event tickets, spa treatments, jewelry, gift certificates

for Pittsburgh outings and much, much more. In addition to the silent auction, we're adding some new games this year -- including the "pig game" which the PTC used during Community Day. We're looking forward to another successful event!

- The proceeds that we make from the event affords our PTO the opportunity to pay for all of the school's assemblies, field trips, school supplies and much more. In fact, we will use proceeds made from our event to fund upcoming assemblies including Sadecky's Puppets, which is a puppet show for children that delivers an anti-bullying message.
- Our 3rd Grade Breakfast will be on October 18 and Eisenhower is ramping up for our Harvest Party and parade that will take place on October 28th. Each classroom will enjoy games and crafts to celebrate the fall season and students also parade around the school in their Halloween costumes. It's always a huge hit amongst the students AND staff!

Streams – Leria Miles

- October is a busy month at Streams! While we are preparing for the biggest fundraiser of the year, Stravaganza, we are also excited about our spirit wear sale, book swap, Halloween candy collection outreach efforts and the kick off for our after-school programs which will begin with an afterschool 4 week 4snapology session
- Two highlights come to mind this month in the way of what is new this month at Streams. The first is centered around our new school counselor Leslie Smirniw. Her most recent efforts to enhance the support for student teacher and parents at Streams has come in the way of a cafeteria shake up! Streams has run the lunch schedule in different ways but the most anticipated change is when the fourth-grade students finally get the long-awaited chance to sit where they want instead of at tables assigned to grades. While the idea of this is great, students eventually fall into the routine of sitting in the same spot with the same friends. What teachers, and parents, and even some cafeteria aides have noticed is that classes who come first leave early and friends are driven to move elsewhere and classes who come last end up with some students eating alone because the end of lunch has come and most of the tables have emptied. So, it was Dr. Miller and Mrs. Smirniw that came up with a way to, one, give students that first feel at walking out into the cafeteria and truly having to make a choice as to where to sit, and two, allow for a chance for everyone to experience that opportunity for decision making. We have now implemented a quarterly rotation of fourth grade lunch times by classroom. It is the hope that with this shake-up, students will get to know more friends and get a chance to use that lunch time as an opportunity to re-invigorate themselves!
- The next highlight has been the way in which, new volunteer Kerstin Mayr has stepped up to spearhead the Stravaganza fundraiser. Kerstin has brought to Streams her experience as a business woman with Sabika Jewelry Line and has turned our fundraiser into one that we can now track returns on for each year that it is held. She has helped us to move all sign-ups online, track charitable donations online, and has made it possible for us to use data analysis to compare profits from ticket sales and food sales. Overall, her leadership has helped us to bring in more donations from the community than we have in the past and we are very grateful for her stepping up to the plate!!
- Looking ahead at Streams, our next PTO meeting is on October 11, 2016 and we are happy to have Amy Billerbeck come and be our guest speaker!

Boyce – Stacey Cobb

- Open House took place on Thurs, September 22nd. The Apples for Students, Memory Book, Box Tops, Deer Valley and Stravaganza committees were a presence at the event. Thank you to those who came to help get the word out! The Open House had great reviews and was a wonderful success!
- The Teacher Appreciation Breakfast was on Friday, September 23rd. The food was amazing - thank you to those who donated everything from egg casseroles to honey baked hams! The attendance was awesome - I think everyone came through at one point or another for coffee, food and company. The committee also had a basket of goodies to choose from for teachers and staff to take for energy when they headed back to class! Thank you to Tracey Ruffner, Melissa Stalder, Ruth Rush and Jeanne McNamara for organizing!
- The Deer Valley Fundraiser, which has been running since September 21st, ends today - get those orders in now! Thank you to Brenda Tomsheck for her hard work!
- The next PTO Meeting is Wednesday, October 12th at 9:30am in the LGI. Mrs. Husak, the Librarian, will be speaking from 9:45am-10:10am about the Little Bits and Scratch Clubs.

- There will be an Orchestra Meet and Greet at 9am before the general PTO meeting on the 12th.
- The Fall Book Fair is getting ready to roll! The event will run from November 7th - November 11th, including from 9:30am - 11:30am on November 8th during the voting. In addition, there will be an online portion that runs from November 3rd to the 16th.

Fort Couch – Melanie Lenthall

- The Fort Couch first PTSO General Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 20th and was very highly attended. For the second time following the PTSO meeting, we had a special presentation by our Counselor Mr. Palmer and a guest speaker Mr. Mike Burch titled “Bryan’s Choice”. Mr. Burch’s son passed away of a heroin over-dose several years back. Bryan was a graduate of USC. For the past several years, this presentation has become a part of the 8th grade Guidance Curriculum and is delivered to the 8th graders in Guidance Class every Spring. Mr. Palmer wanted “to offer this presentation to parents so that they can see “in person” this powerful, emotional message.” The parents in attendance were very moved and appreciated this presentation.
- Hemina KrishnaBachia and Brenda Tomsheck were installed. So we are now a complete executive board.
- Our first social of the year took place Thursday September 8th. Our numbers for volunteers was low. Hopefully we will have better numbers next time due to no other evening conflicts within the district.
- We have our second social next Thursday, October 13th.
- Open house at Fort Couch was September 29th. Well attended.
- Our members voted on adding a new committee called Sharing & Caring to provide a service to families in need if requested working in conjunction with our guidance department.
- The Fall Spirit wear store will go on line October 17th and run for 2 weeks.
- Fort on the Field will be October 14th. Fort Couch middle school students are invited to march with the USC High School marching band. Great event for students wanting to see what it is like. Dinner is served beforehand with a raffle and then the FC student is paired with a “band buddy” to shadow them for the evening.
- Spirit Night at Chick-Fil-A is scheduled for October 20th. We are hoping to have the cow come in again at lunchtime to encourage participation.
- Our second PTSO meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 18th. This meeting will be followed by an open mic with Mr. Demar. Parents may come to both or just the open mic if they so choose.

High School PTSO – Sally Ondrejko

- Our first meeting was September 21st. Each month the high school principal, Dr. Lou Angelo, arranges for a different group of students to share about their particular activity or organization. Last month we heard students from both Partners in PE and Partners in Shop at USC. They talked about these two programs which connect special education students in gym class and in the job skills workshop known as Shop at USC with non special-ed students as a learning experience for both. Melissa Garvin from Student Support Services followed with a brief description of her duties, which was a perfect pairing with the student presentations.
- In addition, the group of Super Mentors (former Junior Mentors who are now seniors and who have earned a position as mentors/leaders for this year’s Junior Mentors) visited to announce a new community service and community –building event. The event, known as Mini-thon and patterned after the Penn State Thon event, raises money for families of kids with cancer. Mini-thons occur at elementary through high schools and are coordinated by the Four Diamonds organization with which Penn State works for its Thon. USC’s Mini-thon will be April 21, 2017 and will be 12 hours long: 6-9 p.m. for the whole community and 9 p.m. – 6 a.m. for only high school students. The kick-off will occur in late November. There will be many fundraising events leading up to the big event in April. Stay tuned for information.
- Listening to all of these students speak is truly a heartwarming and inspiring experience.
- Café 321, the re-purposing of the former Commons Area next to the Nutrition Center, is now open. It features more, and more comfortable, seating, as well as activities to help students unwind during their free mods.
- School police are now using mountain bikes to aid their ability to patrol the high school campus.
- We are blessed by another feature of the high school -- the monthly Principal’s Advisory Council (PAC) meetings which usually occur the week after our PTSO meeting. All parents are welcome to attend. Originally, the meetings were an open forum with the principal to enable parents to bring up general issues and for there to be discussions about those issues. Parents benefit by having their questions answered and the principal benefits by learning about current issues of concern to parents. Dr. Angelo alternates between the open forum format and a designated theme with a presentation.

- Our next meeting is Wednesday, October 19th. Please join us.

Standing Committees

Arts in USC – Rachelle Engel – No report

Directory – Brooke Tarcson

- The Family Verification Email was sent to all families that OPTED IN during Back to School Online on September 20th around 8:15pm. As of today, October 5th the verification window has closed. The printed directories will be ordered by the end of the week and be available by the end of October. Each school will handle distribution of their printed directories.
- This was the best year yet for the directory! The school district was AWESOME in assisting our efforts to make people aware of the process and speed up Back to School Online. We are almost 2 months ahead of schedule compared to last year!
- Here are the rough totals for each unit's membership. A more official spreadsheet will be shared with each unit president soon containing all information about purchases.
- I've included last year's totals so we can compare to current year's totals in **BOLD**
 - Eisenhower: 37 **63**
 - Baker: 30 **30**
 - Streams: 21 **33**
 - Boyce: 20 **30**
 - Fort Couch: 19 **42**
 - High School: 67 **91**
- **Total Directories sold online: 510 compared to 470 last year.**
- We all win when families complete Back to School Online quickly!

GATE – Lisa Clark – General Meeting is Tuesday, October 11 at Boyce LGI at 9:30 am.

Internet Communications – Brooke Tarcson

- High School business
 - The High School Student Council is participating in the Model Cleaner Coats for Kids Coat Drive from October 10th - December 10th. We are in a competition with 4 other school's to see who can collect the most coats for Pittsburgh's less fortunate. Model Cleaners will award a grand prize of \$1000 to the winning school. \$500 to second place. Student Council would use the money to purchase a new Panther Mascot for the school. Please help us with our goal!
 - The USC HS will have two bins within the school for donations. We are hoping to have one placed near the entrance to the high school so it is accessible to the general public. Many social media post, tweets, and emails will be sent with information. Call Brooke Tarcson with any questions. 412-833-1600 ext. 2264

Open Mike – Daphna Gans

- November 9 at 7 pm in the auditorium at Boyce.

Outreach – Chrissy Sileo / Kathy Teresi

- We will lead off this year with Dr. O'Toole hosting a second Casual for a Cause Day for district staff. The event has been moved to the fall which is ideal for educating our staff on the project prior to the individual school fundraisers. The date is looking to be Monday, November 7 — the day before election day. Chrissy and I are working with Mary Ann Stabile on flyers and collection bags for the buildings. Thanks to Dr. O'Toole for the great support!
- We received the following note from a teacher from Kelly School regarding the donation of the lost and found items:
 - "Hi ladies. I just wanted to let you know that the bags of clothes you have for our school were laid out on tables during our open house yesterday. The parents were so excited to allow their child to pick out some things that they wanted. Every item went! So thank you so much for giving the clothes!"

- We are still receiving positive feedback and getting finalized plans from the units on support for this year's goal. Chrissy and I are very excited to have been invited to meet with student council at the high school in the coming weeks to finalize plans there. We will continue to give updates as the events happen at each unit!
- Thanks to everyone for supporting the Turner and Kelly Schools this year through The Education Partnership. Please contact us directly if you have any questions or ideas!

PIE – Tracy Barnett – No report

Spelling Bee – Colette LeKachman

- To get things rolling, the Spelling Bee Committee held its annual kick-off meeting in September. All five schools have been registered to participate in the Scripps Western PA Regional Bee to be held at Robert Morris University on Saturday, March 11, 2017. The champion of each USC school will have the opportunity to participate in this Regional Bee. The USC spelling bee calendar is as follows:

Baker:

January 9: Spelling Bee
January 12: Snow Date

Eisenhower:

January 26: Spelling Bee
January 27: Snow Date

Streams:

January 10: Practice Session 1
January 17: Practice Session 2
January 23: Spelling Bee
January 26: Snow Date

Boyce:

January 30: Spelling Bee
February 1: Snow Date

Fort Couch:

January 18: Spelling Bee
January 20: Snow Date

More information will be posted to the website in October.

STEAM – Suzanne Wynne

- The pilot program at Baldwin Library is concluding this weekend. It's been an invaluable experience.
- Working with Dr. Judith Belazo. Looking at the Code.org curriculum as well as MIT's Scratch for possible approaches to this club.
- Working with the schools to identify a four-week window to run the club program.
- Tim Wagner is helping to come up with high school volunteers.
- Looking at 1 club per elementary school each with a maximum of 15 participants, 2 high school volunteers and 1 parent volunteer. If this year is a success, we could build scale next year.
- Still considering Axios as a possible third party to outsource the facilitation of the club meetings. They would provide instructors. The charge would be \$36.70 per participant.
- Look for new Facebook page, the Upper St. Clair STEAM Education Alliance, for postings about various STEAM activities occurring in USC.

Welcoming Committee—Stacie de la Parra

- Continuing to look for a new committee chair. Please let Beth Huzjak know if you might be interested.

Reporting Organizations

Community Foundation – Leanne Adamo

- Oktoberfest is scheduled for October 15th at Saint Thomas More. Please come out to support the Community Foundation. This is their most significant fundraiser of the year.

Odyssey of the Mind – Alison Hess

- We had a record number of registrations - A few registrations are still coming in, but as of [today](#), we have 140 students from all six USC schools participating. That will give us an unprecedented number of teams - 21 in total!
- Our official kickoff to the season is [this Thursday](#) in the LGI at Boyce Middle School [from 7:00-9:00 pm](#). Let the creativity begin!

Youth Steering – Amy Billerbeck

- No report

Old Business

- New PTC Committee - Sharing & Caring
 - The PTC voted unanimously to create this new committee. The PTC website has been appropriately updated to reflect this new standing committee.
 - Please contact Leria Miles if you know of a family in need who could benefit from and is receptive to involvement by the committee.
 - For clarification, this committee is not a funding committee but rather an information disseminating committee to get the word out to the community.

New Business

- USC PTC Twitter acct - [@ptc_usc](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacey Friday

***The Next USC PTC Meeting
November 2, 2016
Eisenhower***