

**UPPER ST. CLAIR PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES & PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL REPORT–
September 7, 2016**

PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

September 7, 2016

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 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 June 1, 2016 of \$10,376.31.
 - Receipts totaled \$0.00.
 - Disbursements totaled \$0.00.
 - This leaves us with an ending cash balance of \$10,376.31 as of September 1, 2016.

Reports

- **Executive Committee**

President, Beth Huzjak

- Thank you everyone, for donating your time and for being here.
- Thank you everyone for participating in the contribution for Dr. O'Toole's mother's scholarship fund (Mary Catherine Murphy Schierberl Scholarship, Clarion University Foundation).

1st Vice President, Daphna Gans

- 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.

2nd Vice President, Dr. Sharon Suritsky on behalf of Dr. Patrick O'Toole

- Big changes this year in terms of secretarial staff as a result of retirements at Streams, Boyce and in the technology department at Central office.
- Very excited about the new Innovation Hub space at Boyce and the opportunity to partner with the Steelcase Education Center over the next two years.
- Happy to report it has been a great, quiet start to the new school year.
- The Open House schedule starts this week beginning on Thursday evening at the elementary schools.
- The New Family Dinner is scheduled for this Friday, September 9, at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Nutrition Center. It is a great opportunity for new families to meet the administrators and members of the PTO/PTA/PTSO.
- Congratulations to Dr. Timothy Wagner who has been named an Emerging Leader by the Pennsylvania Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. As an Emerging Leader, Dr. Wagner will be enrolled in the program for two years and receive mentoring and professional development opportunities.

Board Advisor, Holly Spina

- Thanks everyone for a smooth transition to a new school year.

- **School Board Director**, Amy Billerbeck (Member)

- Over the summer, the school board passed the annual budget. We have a balanced budget. There was an increase in state funding though not as large as we had hoped. The state passed their budget too, ahead of their prior year timing.
- The High School turf was successfully replaced over the summer. It was a large project and an expensive project and it was completed without incident. The new turf has an 8-10 year life.
- We had great summer programming for kids including the Leadership Academy and Engineering Camp.
- The ad-hoc committee for capital projects met once over the summer. Progress continues to be made. The committee is now at the stage of looking for outside input from members of the community, parents, PTO members, etc. Please keep an eye out for announcements coming in the next few weeks regarding a meeting to solicit such input. Projects being considered include:
 - The stadium – the press box, restrooms (to make them handicap compliant), and the ticket booth
 - The swimming pool - to make it at least a 6-lane pool but more likely an 8-lane pool which would require a relocation of the pool.
 - Boyce field – building a restroom
- Amy offered that she would be pleased to attend PTO/PTA/PTSO meetings at the individual schools.

▪ Unit Presidents

Baker – Kristie Proud

- New Initiative – Baker Playground Renovation
 - The playground is over 20 years old and the functionality and accessibility has worn.
 - This will be a multi-year project through fundraising and sponsorship
- New this year to Baker – Kindergarten Coffee – This is a casual get together to meet other Baker parents of Kindergartners. Hosted by a Kindergarten parent in their home and a visit from our principal, Dr. McClintock-Comeaux. Sept. 15th at 9:30 a.m.
- Baker Outreach Food Drive – in honor of National Hunger Action Month – This is a collection of pantry items benefiting SHIM's Food Pantry. Classrooms will win a special activity if they fill 6 grocery bags. Sept. 19-23rd
- Annual Baker Boo Bash – Friday, Oct. 14th

Eisenhower – Jill Hicks

- Eisenhower started this school year off with a bang! We hosted our annual Welcome Breakfast in mid-August for families who are new to the district as well as incoming kindergarten families. The breakfast serves as a wonderful opportunity for children to meet their classmates. Families were treated to delicious breakfast treats and then were given a tour of the school to familiarize themselves with the building. In all, about 100 people attended the event.
- Eisenhower PTO also treated the entire staff to a luncheon on their first day back to school. Teachers and staff always enjoy this and say it's a great way for them to start off the school year.
- Our fall Book Fair is underway! It will run from Tuesday, September 6-8th. The Book Fair is always a big hit among our students and families because parents can join their child during their designated shopping time to help pick out their books. It also is a great time for families to buy books for the classrooms and for parents, it's an opportunity to get a head start on educational gifts for the holidays.
- We are looking forward to our Open House on Thursday, September 8th. Similar to other schools, Open House will provide families the opportunity to learn about their child's school curriculum and what an average day at Eisenhower looks like.
- Looking ahead in September, our 4th grade will have their annual breakfast. The theme is USC Pride. Students and their families are encouraged to dress in their USC gear or in USC colors as they enjoy breakfast with their classmates the morning of September 20th.
- Our fall picture day will be on Thursday, September 29th and the PTO is well underway with planning for next month's fundraiser, The Eisenhower. We are already getting awesome donations from local businesses and families to donate to our auction and our committees are busy finalizing details for our

big night!

Streams – Leria Miles

- Streams has gotten off to a great start this year. We really got to see what our parent volunteers were made of within the first week of school. With over forty new families welcomed at our welcome breakfast, and opening a new Kindergarten classroom, our numbers are up and we have seen growth on all levels.
- We are turning 50 this year and we have grown so much that even the playground area had received an expansion. Thanks to generous parent fundraising efforts and donations, we were able to bring to life an idea proposed by former students in the way of upgrading our playground structures. 11 Dads and 1 Mom got together on the first weekend of the school year and dug holes and tightened nuts and bolts and were able to successfully complete the installation of the structures. Even Dr. Miller had a chance to get into the work and with all hands on deck it was done in about six hours.
- The students are looking forward to using it hopefully by the beginning of next week. With the recent additions to the playground, we are preparing for an official ribbon cutting ceremony so stay tuned for details...
- Within the PTO, we have seen a “changing of the guard” in many ways. Some of our veteran PTO volunteers have moved on to middle school with their youngest child. Many of them served us on the PTO in several different capacities. Since then they have passed the torch on and beginning in May at the volunteer luncheon, we encouraged parent who had never volunteered before to step up to the challenge. We held our PTO 101 meeting last Friday and were able to fill in some gaps for committee chairs with parents of younger Streams children. This puts us off to a great start!
- We are now looking ahead towards the upcoming Open House, Motoko Japan Assembly, and Olweus Bullying Prevention Assembly this month!

Boyce – Katy Loomis

- Family Welcome Day took place Tuesday, August 16th. It was very well attended and provided a great opportunity for students to submit their activity fees and PTO memberships. We would like to thank Mr. O’Rourke and Tina Vojtko for helping to make this a successful event! Tina was instrumental in helping families with navigating the various school web sites etc.
- Boyce has started the year with off with many awesome improvements, both inside and outside the building. Mr. O’Rourke is very excited about these improvements, including an expanded recess area, updated and improved courtyard, and new art display areas. Of course, as mentioned previously, the Innovation Hub has also created a buzz of excitement among the students and staff. Please see the USC Today article in November for pictures and details.
- The Boyce PTO General Meeting is on September 12th and will have Matt Henderson, the STEAM Design Instructor, as a special guest at 9:45. He will be giving a tour of the new Innovation Hub.
- The Deer Valley Trash Bag Fundraiser will roll out on September 21st. Please watch for order forms coming home with the students.
- Boyce Open House is September 22nd from 7-9pm.
- Boyce PTO will hold the Staff Appreciation Breakfast on Friday, September 23rd.

Fort Couch – Melanie Lenthall

- The Fort Couch PTSO General Meeting will be held Tuesday, September 20th.
- We will install our VP Hemina KrishnaBachia and Secretary Brenda Tomsheck due to their absence last spring for Deer Valley.
- Following this meeting we will once again have the special presentation by our counselor Mr. Palmer and guest speaker Mr. Mike Burch titled “Bryan’s Choice”. Mr. Burch’s son passed away from a heroin over-dose in 2004. 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 again “to offer this presentation to parents so they can see “in person” this powerful, emotional message.”

- With regards to our committees, we have had some volunteers step down but fortunately and thankfully they were filled quickly.
- Our New Family Orientation was held August 16th. Thirty new families were invited.
- Welcome Staff Breakfast was held on August 26th and was very much appreciated by the staff.
- Our first social will be this Thursday, September 8th. We are still in need of chaperones.
- Open house at Fort Couch is September 29th.
- Fall Spirit Wear will open on line in early October to ensure we have orders ready before Thanksgiving for the upcoming holidays.

High School PTSO – Sally Ondrejko

- One of our big activities is already finished—the Senior Cruise, which is usually in mid- to late-September, occurred on Sunday, August 28th. 250 of 369 members of the senior class boarded the Gateway Clipper for the evening. Yes, it was the night we had bad storms, but apparently they were less severe in Pittsburgh, so the cruise was uninterrupted. Other than not being able to be on the top deck, things went smoothly.
- Each Fall class schedules are an issue as conflicts are worked out and the giant jigsaw puzzle that is the schedule is completed. This year the issues were intensified by the reduced size of the counseling department. One counselor is on leave after his wife gave birth to triplets, and one position remains open after a resignation last February, although last week a day-to-day substitute was hired. Things are slowly getting on track.
- Fall sports are in full swing, and several teams are off to strong starts. Go Panthers!
- Today, the senior class is starting the voting process for Homecoming King & Queen. The Homecoming football game will be Friday, September 23rd, while the dance will be the following night. Helping to find chaperones for this event is our next big task.
- High School Open House is on Thursday, September 15. It is a wonderful opportunity to see your students' teachers and put faces with the names. It is also very humbling to travel between the classrooms, navigating the somewhat confusing layout, between the bells in an effort not to be late for the next class.
- The annual Marching Band Festival is on Saturday, September 17, at 7:30. Please join the high school band and several bands from other schools for a night of music!
- Our first general meeting of the year will be Wednesday, September 21st. The first Principal's Advisory Council (PAC) Meeting will be Thursday, September 29th.

Standing Committees

Arts in USC – Rachelle Engel

- We are meeting Thursday to discuss plans for the coming year. We will look and see what worked last year and what we need to do to improve in various areas. We are excited for what the year ahead has in store for the Arts in USC! Please have unit presidents email me their unit Arts chairs so we can keep them in the loop with upcoming Arts events.

Directory – Brooke Tarcson

- The Directory verification email will be sent out to all families in the next two weeks.
- Tina Vojtko at Central Office has done a tremendous job of promoting Back to School Online along with the Directory. I can't thank her enough for helping my dream of having the directory available in September to become a reality!!
- The verification process will be open for 10 days, during that time parents can also purchase PTA/PTO/PTSO memberships and printed Directories for \$10. Once parents or guardians verify their information through the email, they will have immediate access to the Free Online directory and app (which we highly recommend using).
- My best guess is that the printed directory will arrive in mid-October, a full TWO MONTHS earlier than the previous two years.
- I will provide each unit president with a list of who bought memberships and directories. The directory committee will have a day in mid-October where unit presidents can pick up their school's directories for distribution. Labels with each child's name, grade, and home room teacher will also be included. From that point, it will be up to the units to facilitate distribution.
- Finally Lisa Henricks will issue checks to each unit for membership. All this should happen mid-October.

- The Directory Committee is now a full time employee and will be stepping down after this year! If Brooke Tarcson can do this job...anyone can! (with the help of Kristen Bonomo...who is also stepping down). Please consider chairing!

GATE – Lisa Clark – No report

Internet Communications – Brooke Tarcson - No report

Open Mike – Daphna Gans

- The first Open Mike of the 2016-2017 school year is scheduled for Wednesday, November 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the Boyce auditorium.

Outreach – Chrissy Sileo / Kathy Teresi

- Washed and donated 22 bags worth of unclaimed lost-and-found clothes from Baker, Boyce and Fort Couch to the Kelly School.
- The Education Partnership
 - Met with Amanda McQuillan and discussed the need to have a hands-on component to our participation with this charity through building kits or visiting the Education Partnership.
 - Mr. Gremba is planning a 6th grade field trip to the Education Partnership to make kits.
- Dress down day is in the works for this fall to raise money.
- Making progress with individual schools regarding outreach support for 2016-2017. Eisenhower and Streams have already committed funds. The High School has placed the fundraising in the hands of student council.

PIE – Tracy Barnett

- Had a coffee for interested parents. Attendance was light with five parents attending.
- Looking at ways to attract more parents.
 - Considering a name change for the committee to be more representative of the cause for the group.
 - Considering having featured speakers present at meetings in order to attract more parent involvement and interest.

Spelling Bee – Colette LeKachman – No report

STEAM – Suzanne Wynne

- I talked with the Elementary Science Curriculum Lead (Pam Dillie) this summer to ensure her support of our efforts. She was very excited about this program and helped me brainstorm ideas for it's success.
- This week I talked with the owner/director of Axios Coding about using Scratch (instead of Scratch Jr.) to introduce USC 4th graders to the wonders computer science. She said that she's decided to pivot her offerings and create a Scratch based 4-week class. She will be testing driving this format at the Mt. Lebanon Library in October. As a result of this shift, I think partnering with Axios to provide our 4th grade after-school club in the Spring would be beneficial for the following reasons:
 - 1) Scratch-based projects structured in an educational approach that is similar to the project curriculum that MIT/Harvard's Scratched.com recommends.
 - 2) 2 trained educators per club
 - 3) Consistent experience across clubs/schools
 - 4) Substitute educators provided in case of illness
 - 5) Affordable: In a full class 15 students, this course will cost \$36.67 per student.
- This said, we will still need PTO/PTA volunteers to be at the schools while the clubs run. To this end, I will be introducing the program via flier and collecting volunteer contact information at all three elementary open houses this Thursday.
- This fall, I will work with elementary PTO/PTA presidents and school administrators to determine the best 4-week window and days of the week to host these club. I will also continue to work with Axios to ensure the 4-week course curriculum they are developing cover the fundamental computer science concepts I expect.
- One question going forward: Would you like this program to offer financial assistance to students who participate in the free/reduced lunch program? If so, I will work with school staff and PTO/PTA members to create this program feature in time for our spring launch.
- If you think of anything that would enhance this program this year, please do not hesitate to call me.

Welcoming Committee—Stacie de la Parra

- New Family Dinner is scheduled for Friday, September 9, at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Nutrition Center. 120 families were invited. The families are invited to attend the football game following the dinner.

Reporting Organizations

Community Foundation – Leanne Adamo

- Book Club – the next meeting is on September 8 at 11:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. to discuss *The Little Red Chairs*. The next meeting will be on November 10.
- Golf Invitational – September 26th at St. Clair Country Club
- USC Panthers Stadium Blankets continue to be for sale.

Odyssey of the Mind – Alison Hess

- Odyssey of the Mind registration has begun! We already have a larger enrollment than this time last year, and we're looking forward to an amazing season.
- Visit www.uscootm.com for all of the registration details. Or attend one of our What Is OM? Sessions September 13th at 9:30am or 6:30pm.
- Odyssey of the Mind is open to all students Kindergarten through 12th grade. Teams of 7 students in similar grades are formed and asked to complete two types of problems using creativity and innovation.
- Registration ends on September 23rd.

Youth Steering – Amy Billerbeck

- The committee meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month, September through June, at 7:00 p.m., in the USC Community & Recreation Center. The Youth Steering Committee meetings are open to all residents.
- Bryan's Choice will be presented at the October meeting.
- The committee is in need of new members. If interested, please contact Amy.

Old Business

- Facebook page – Please visit our Facebook page. Please feel free to use the page to post information regarding upcoming committee events or other committee related items.

New Business

- New PTC Committee – Sharing & Caring
 - PTC is proposing the creation of a new Sharing & Caring Committee with the following purpose:
In an effort to foster a sense of sharing and caring within the school district, committee members will act, when requested, to offer assistance to families within the school district experiencing a time of crisis, hardship or need.
- Parent Portal – a question was raised as to whether the online report cards could be maintained in the student's online account permanently. Currently, the reports are available for a limited time only. In addition, a request was made to add the student ID to the account page. Dr. Suritsky agreed to look into these suggestions/requests.
- Dr. Suritsky responded to questions regarding the progress of filling open positions at the High School in the counseling and music departments.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacey Friday

***The Next USC PTC Meeting
October 5, 2016
Baker***