

**UPPER ST. CLAIR PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES & PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL REPORT–
October 7, 2015**

PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

October 7, 2015

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 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 a opening cash balance on September 1, 2015 of \$4,754.05.

- Receipts this month totaled \$5.04 for:
 - Transfer from PayPal Account from directory prior year
- Disbursements totaled \$10.00 for:
 - Checking account fee \$10.00

This leaves us with an ending cash balance of \$ 4,749.09 as of October 1, 2015.

Reports

- Executive Committee
 - President, Holly Spina
 - Thank you the Boyce PTO and Mrs. Pfender for hosting the meeting this month.
 - 1st Vice President, Beth Huzjak
 - Welcome to everyone.
 - 2nd Vice President, Dr. Patrick O'Toole
 - Baker recently received the Blue Ribbon award. Proud of the staff who have worked so hard to have earned this honor. All the schools have earned this award, some more than once. 8 years ago the process changed to be named a Blue Ribbon school: you need to be invited, and there are categories.
 - The high school had a big evacuation drill today. The students were evacuated to Westminster Church. Lots of planning went into this, and involved the USC Fire and Police departments, the township, closing down roads. The drill went well, there were no issues, and the kids were good.
 - PSSAs—A communication piece was sent out to the district families addressing the significant dip in test scores statewide and nationwide.
 - We have 34 National Merit Scholars this year. It is the most we have ever had, and possibly the highest in the region. Twice as many as Butler.
 - The Board is looking at addressing some unfinished business with the physical plants of the following:
 - HS-- stadium renovated, football field turf replaced, swimming pool renovated
 - Streams-- parking lot redone.
 - Boyce-- gym floor issue, and the restrooms.
 - Bidding will occur in the winter to secure better pricing. In order to secure private donations, we need to present a defined project.
 - The Strategic Planning Committee is finishing up and the final meeting will be October 19 to show the action plan and timeline each initiative is taking.
 - October 16 the Hall of Fame honorees will be presented.
 - Parent Teacher conferences are coming up.
 - Ellie Stoehr is retiring next year. She is a critical person on our team whose expertise and skills are utilized in many areas including student data, matters regarding nurses, special education,. counselors, student needs.
 - Board Advisor, Brooke Tarcson

- Present. No report.
- School Board Director, Amy Billerbeck (Member)
 - A lot of good things happening in the district!
 - Student representatives, Ally Ryave (jr.) and Dan Quiroga (sr.), have been chosen and it's nice to see them at the board meetings.
 - Chloe Kondrich, a seventh grade student at Fort Couch MS, received the Pittsburgh Business Times Health Care Hero Award and was recognized for her advocacy work in passing Chloe's Law – The Down Syndrome Prenatal Education Act. .
 - USC School Board voted to not make their PSERS payment to the state that was due this fall since the state has failed to approve the budget.
 - Theresa Fox passed away. A moment of silence was held in her honor.
 - The PTAs/PTOs/PTSOs gifted over \$100,000 to the school district last year. Thank you to all who worked to make that happen.

Unit Presidents

Baker – Kristy Polochak

- Week of September 21 Baker gives back food drive donated 837 pounds of food to SHIM
- Yankee candle sale ending
- Friday October 9 Baker Boo Bash
 - Added this year : Adult silent auction
 - Just a few of the items to bid on include Disney World tickets, Nemacolin Woodlands Resort getaway, and Carnegie Museum family membership
 Also new this year : sports spectacular in gymnasium and photo booth
- October 12-23 Spirit wear sale
- October 30 Harvest party
- Baker was among 335 schools nationally to earn a 2015 National Blue Ribbon Award

Eisenhower – Amy Garces

- October is one of the busiest months at Eisenhower.
- We started the month with our Fall Picture day, which was a smiling success and our Spirit Wear kickoff.
- This week we will have our October general meeting, at which Dr. Judy Bulazo will speak about the upcoming report card changes.
- The biggest event of the year, the EisenHowler, happens on Friday Oct. 9th, turning the hallways into a Harvest carnival. Dinner, a Silent Auction, Kids' Raffle baskets, and a chance to support our Outreach programs are all part of the fun!
- The month continues with our "Pittsburgh Pride" themed 3rd Level breakfast on the 13th and our Harvest party and Parade on the 30th.
- An exciting, new Outreach event is coming this month at Eisenhower! Our first annual "Pledge a Player" Run/Walk takes place on Oct. 21st, with the goal of raising the funds necessary to sponsor each member of the Miracle League for the 2016 season. The cost for each Miracle League player is \$35. Our students will race/walk around five laps of our track for the goal pledge amount of \$7 per lap. Representatives from Casey's Clubhouse, the Miracle League of the South Hills, and Doubletree Hotels will be on hand to cheer our runners on and maybe get in some laps of their own. Wish us Luck!!

Streams – Alissa Mammana

- Kindergarten Open Mike --October 8th
- 4th Grade Open Mike --October 15th
- 4th Grade Special Level Night --October 22nd-Tim Hartman actor/storyteller
- Bus Safety Week and Red Ribbon Week October 18th-various activities planned
- After school activity Bricks4kidz to begin this week for 3rd and 4th graders
- Outreach is collecting crayola markers that do not work and they will be repurposed into burning fuel.
- Halloween Costume Drive going on now
- Last year 250 costumes were collected from all the USC elementary schools. Costumes were distributed in the Hill District through FOCUS North America
- Harvest Parties and parade-October 30th

- Halloween Candy Drive --Candy will go to the Red Door program associated with St. Mary of Mercy located in downtown Pgh they provide a bag lunch to more than 100 people per day

Boyce – Brenda Tomscheck

- The Deer Valley fundraiser ran from September 16th thru the 30th. Boyce students sold over 2,000 rolls of 100% recycled plastic garbage bags, totaling almost \$28,000 worth of sales. This comes to about \$12,918 in student profit towards their Deer Valley trips.
- The Boyce Book Fair was held Sept 22nd thru 25th with total sales of @ \$7,500.
- Monday, October 12th is a Boyce Spirit Night at Chick Fil-A from 4:30-7:30.
- The Boyce Chess Club is going to start on Wednesday, Oct. 28th and will meet for 6 Wednesdays after school in the LGI. A local chess instructor, Eric Berthoud, will provide instruction and supervise competitive games of chess, it's open to 32 students.
- Our next General PTO meeting will be held Wednesday, October 14th at 9:30am at Boyce.

Fort Couch – Daphna Gans

- The Fort Couch first PTSO General Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 15th and was very highly attended. 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. 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.” Parents’ feedback indicated that indeed this was a powerful presentation.
- Our first social of the year took place Thursday September 3rd and was very highly attended. We have our second social next Thursday, October 15. Finding volunteers with clearances is continuing to be an issue.
- Fall Spirit wear took place as well as our first Spirit Night at Chick-Fil-A. The Spirit Night was a big success raising more money than ever.
- Open house at Fort Couch was October 1st, very well attended with a strong presentation by Mr. Wilson re the 1:1 leaning initiative and the accessibility of the work to parents.
- Our second PTSO meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 20th. Given the success of the guest presentation following last meeting, we agreed to have Mrs. Madia, the school counselor, present on the 8th grade Career Units.
- Our next Spirit Night is next week on Wednesday October 19th, at Chipotle, please come support FC!

High School PTSO – Melissa Epler

- Disaster/evacuation drill took place today at the HS
- Thespian Club Cabaret this Saturday October 10
- Chorus POPS concert October 13
- Homecoming football game and dance – October 16-17.
- Fall Play (Tartuffe) runs 10/21-10/25
- Phillip Beard, a local author will be coming to the HS November. His latest book is about the Pirates in the 70s.

Standing Committees

Arts in Education –

- The High School students will have the opportunity to compete in the Congressional Art Competition.
- The Fort Couch students will be participating in the Scholastic Arts and Writing competitions.
- The Boyce students will be involved in the Pennsylvania American Watershed art contest.
- Elementary students K-4 will be competing district wide in the “Tell Me A Story” competition, blending art and literacy. The art teachers and librarians (schools and township) are partnering with Arts in USC to help make this competition a success.

Directory – Committee

- Holding pattern until families have all filled out the Back to School Online.

- PayPal is up and running. The verification letter is ready to go. Training from A to Z is all set.

GATE – Lisa Clark

- On September 25th we had our first GATE meeting of the year. Our topic for this meeting was the elementary school SWEP (School Wide Enrichment Program) Program. Our speaker was Barb Helmecki, Gifted Coordinator at Baker Elementary. We also heard from Melissa Garvin, Supervisor of Special Education, about programming across schools, staffing, identification and enrichment opportunities. We had approximately 28 people in attendance and there was lively discussion around topics such as, enrichment, math acceleration, testing, and PSSA scores. There continues to be considerable interest in middle school math and math acceleration/enrichment as a discussion topic. I will consider this interest in planning topics for this year. Please look for an e-alert to announce future meetings.
- In addition, I am going to update and redistribute the GATE Holiday Gift Guide so I am seeking suggestions on games, books, trinkets, camps, etc. that would make a good addition to the guide. I originally compiled this guide with the help of our teachers, administrators and members, so I am once again calling on everyone to offer up suggestions which can be emailed to me at clark1692@verizon.net.

Internet Communications

- No report.

Partners in Education – Tracy Barnett

- Melissa Garvin attended the meeting.
- Family Next Door – a documentary / movie about a local family with special needs

Spelling Bee – Beena Reddy

- Working on Spelling Bee dates in each school. Contacting school principals and unit chairs.

Open Mike – Beth Huzjak

- The Boyce theater has been reserved for November 2nd at 7:00pm for the 1st Open Mike. The topic will be “The State of the District”, and will cover several relevant and timely topics for an open dialogue. Questions are welcome.

Outreach – Chrissy Sileo / Kathy Teresi

- There has been much forward progress on Council’s efforts to support the Kelly and Turner Schools beginning with sponsorship through The Education Partnership. Plans are beginning to form at each building.
 - Baker will be conducting a coin drive in November in support of the initiative. Current plans include an assembly by The Education Partnership. Baker’s outreach chair is planning to contact Amanda regarding opportunities for service by the Baker Leadership Clubs.
 - Eisenhower will be fundraising at the Eisenhower, as well as through a coin drive, staff days and other opportunities throughout the year toward their goal. Eisenhower will also be offering students service opportunities including packing holiday kits.
 - Boyce has already begun its fundraising with students contributing their change at their bookfair, raising over \$128. Proceeds from Boyce’s annual Valentine Grams will also benefit the Council Outreach project. Fort Couch plans to hold a coin drive in February with a possible tie in to Valentine’s Day, as well.
 - The High School PTSO is on board and currently working through establishing their timeline and club partner.
 - Streams is currently considering how participation could work within their outreach calendar.
 - Council Executive Board is working hard with Holly Spina showing up at multiple events for water sales and Brooke Tarcson launching the umbrella sale with profits benefiting the fund.

Reporting Organizations

Community Foundation – Leanne Adamo

- Blankets are available for purchasing.
- The CF Book Club will take place on November 12 at 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Both meeting times are at the CRC. Contact Beth Erlanger with questions.

berlanger@verizon.net. Our book selection is The Girl in the Spiders Web by David Lagercrantz.

Odyssey of the Mind – Allison Hess

- 6 teams have started for the year.

Youth Steering – Amy Billerbeck

- Brians' Choice will be shown at the CRC next Wednesday October 14 at 7 pm. Parents and older students are encouraged to see this movie about heroin addiction.
- Saturday night is the Fall Blast event for middle schoolers at the CRC. 5th -8th grade students who live in USC are welcome to attend. \$10 per child.

Old Business

- Units please turn in your paperwork.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachelle Engel

***The Next USC PTC Council Meeting
November 4, 2015
Fort Couch Middle School***