

UPPER ST. CLAIR PTA COUNCIL

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES & PTA COUNCIL REPORT– FEB. 4, 2015

PTA COUNCIL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

February 4, 2015

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 PTA Council's General Fund** had a beginning cash balance on January 1, 2015 of \$12,489.13 of which \$2,486.51 is the Directory reserve.
 - Receipts this month totaled \$961.00 for:
 - Membership dues from Baker, Eisenhower, Boyce
 - Disbursements totaled \$57.79 for:
 - Gate meeting
- This leaves us with an ending cash balance of \$ 13,392.34 as of February 1, 2015.

Reports

- Executive Committee
 - President, Brooke Tarcson
 - Thank you to Boyce for hosting this month's general meeting. It is wonderful that so many people came today. Thank you to the School Board for digging your heels in and providing the best for our kids and schools. You continue to make them great for right now as well as for the future.
 - 1st Vice President, Holly Spina
 - Well said, Brooke.
 - 2nd Vice President, Dr. Patrick O'Toole
 - Clearance issue is a big one for all.
 - Act 153 has been thrust upon us all by the State legislature. We are responding to laws given to us, and the turn around time and roll out is not ideal.
 - It is important to make sure that all the people working with our kids do not have records, therefore we need to get background checks. Unfortunately, the State gave us no time or funding for implementation.
 - Guidelines for implementing this process and defining a "volunteer" vs. a "visitor" are currently a work in progress. The Administration and the Board is working with legal counsel on this. If someone has never volunteered in the schools, he/she must get their clearances before they are able to volunteer. If someone has volunteered before, he/she may continue to volunteer for this school year but has until July 1, 2015 to obtain their clearances. On the District website there are details outlining the specifics of the clearances necessary, who needs them and how to obtain them.
 - Waiting on an update from Harrisburg on further clarification.
 - Deer Valley 2015 (30th anniversary of DV) is an issue as related to the Act 153 implementation. Still trying to figure that out.
 - Staff and volunteers will need to renew clearances every 3 years. Teachers pay for it and the unions do not like to add this financial burden to their members. Volunteers are responsible for paying for their clearances as well.
 - Members of CO are going to have to share the responsibility of the paperwork and follow up that will occur with tracking these clearances going forward.
 - Urge you to reach out to State Representatives Maher and Smith regarding this issue and any concerns you may have.

- Congratulations to the STEM team of Upper St. Clair High School students who have been named Best in Nation in the 2014-2015 “Verizon Innovative App Challenge.” Their App, “A Look Inside”, takes you inside a device to learn about the inner workings of anything from a blender to a tablet. The team won \$15,000 towards STEM education at USC, Samsung Galaxy tablets for each team member, and the opportunity to work alongside MIT Master Trainers. The team will also attend a national technology conference this summer.
 - Thank you to Amy Pfender, principal of Boyce, for all her work towards moving to a 3 teacher team at Boyce. She has worked hard to gain support from teachers and parents, and to successfully implement the new teaming model,
 - Regarding the change of the HS administration, Angelo, Beck and Musimello are all handling the transition well. It is a good opportunity to review the best fits, processes and options for the HS administration going forward.
 - Strategic Plan meeting dates are March 2nd and March 23rd.
 - The pension still remains a concern, as we have \$750,000 in pension costs, supporting 550 people and making up 25% of the budget.
- School Board Director , Amy Billerbeck (Member)
 - Many students recognized by the Board this month for achievements.
 - The 2104 Montage won First Place in the American Scholastic Association Contest.
 - Bailey Fialkovich, a sophomore at the High School, has been selected to represent the United States in January 2016 at The Cup, a fastpitch softball tournament held in the Netherlands.
 - Congratulations are extended to the 16 Fort Couch students who competed at the regional CalcuSolve Competition annual event held at Duquesne University on November 20th. Several students ended the competition with a perfect score and participated in the final tie breaker round.
 - Helen Sobocinski was recognized by Dr. O’Toole and the Board for her years of dedication to the students of the School District. Ms. Sobocinski has been a Teacher Aide at Eisenhower Elementary School since August 2005 and retired in December 2014.
 - The Board goals have been fully approved. The categories of tag lines will go out in the annual report.
 - The Board will be applying for an exception to Act 1 to help pay for pension and special education costs.
 - The Board has approved curriculum “Fast Track” recommendations. This can be challenging to the budget, but is life changing to the learning of the kids.
 - The Board got to visit the High School FAB Lab and SHOP@USC. The FAB Lab and SHOP@USC are also working with the Lifeskills class, allowing opportunities for students of all different skill levels to maximize their potential. The FAB Lab is working towards becoming an MIT Certified FAB Lab.

Unit Presidents

- Baker – Karly Cianflone
 - PTA purchasing a new sound system for Baker—will allow students to help with stage crew/sound during assemblies, plays, etc.
 - New after school activities—golf, Snapology—Minecraft and Lego Friends
 - Variety Show will be earlier than usual—Friday before Spring Break.
 - Starting to look for new officers for next year
- Eisenhower – Gail Groninger
 - Eisenhower hosted its 4th Grade Spelling Bee on January 12th. The top 5 finishers were:
 - 1st Place: Deborah Chu -- will go on to the regional competition on Saturday, March 14th at Robert Morris University.
 - 2nd Place: Jillian Fishell
 - 3rd Place: Alexander Todd
 - 4th Place: Rebecca Lang
 - 5th Place: Carter McClintock-Comeaux

- On January 23rd we hosted our Annual Bingo Night at the High School. Over 125 people came out to play! Pizza and snacks are served and prizes are awarded.
- For the 4th year, the Outreach Committee is partnering with the DoubleTree Hotel and their Teaching Kids to Care program with an annual food drive. Classrooms have the opportunity to donate non-perishable food items to “stuff” the DoubleTree shuttle bus. The classroom that donates the most will receive a prize! Students The food is collected and donated to the South Hills Interfaith Ministries. The food drive will run from 2/2 – 2/27.
- Our annual Valentine’s Ice Cream Social is on Thursday, February 12th.
- Eisenhower Extras is being offered during the month of February. The following activities are being offered: Golf, Yoga, Basketball, Pottery and Snapology.
- **Upcoming events:**
 - 2/5 – 1st Level Social – Wild World of Animals
 - 2/11 – Eisenhower PTA Meeting
 - 2/24 – 2nd Level Breakfast
- Streams – Ann Rhodes
 - Started the month with our Spelling Bee (Monday Feb 2) and have our family Bingo night on Friday Feb 6. Also hosting a bowling event on February 16 (no school that day!)
 - Had a great talk given by our Reading Resource teacher – Mrs Quinn at the last PTA meeting.
 - Biggest event of the month is Children-for-Children auction happening Thursday, February 19. Our 11th annual charity fundraiser that is child-driven and child-focused. In the past few years, we have raised between \$7000 and \$9000 for various charities.
- Boyce – Vicki Strain
 - The winner of our Spelling Bee was Daniel Wang. He will be going on to the Regional Spelling Bee downtown in March.
 - We had our second Staff Appreciation event on January 16th. It was a soup luncheon and seemed to be enjoyed by all.
 - R4AR, our main PTA fundraiser was a success! We raised over \$3,000. Our winning teams were for the 5th grade Team Eagle and 6th grade Team Fire. They will each get a movie day in the auditorium. I have received many positive comments on this and how great it is to encourage the kids to get off of their electronics. I hope that this will gain momentum and be a part of Boyce for many years to come.
 - As part of our Outreach Program and in conjunction with the Guidance Department, Valentine Grams will be sold for 50.cents from the 2nd thru 10th in the front foyer every morning. All money raised will go to the Education Partnership.
 - Our second Box Tops collection is going on now through the 26th.
 - Our next meeting will be on February 11th.
 - Random Act of Kindness is a breakfast event and will be on February 17th.
- Fort Couch – Joyce Burton
 - Winners of the Reach Out Fundraiser were announced. Team 1 won and will go on a field trip to Ice Castle on February 20th. Team 5 was the second place winner and will also go to Ice Castle for part of the day. Team 4 came in third and will receive a special treat.
 - The Valentine’s Day Dance, which could be the most anticipated event of the year, will take place on Thursday, February 12. Student council will decorate and the PTA will provide valentine related treats for the students. There will be a DJ and line dancing. In years past it has been heavily attended and almost all of them will dress up in dresses and nice shirts. (Volunteers are needed.)
 - Also to celebrate Valentine’s Day, FC PTA will be selling carnations and/or Sweet Tart conversation hearts for \$1.00. The “Sweet Message” and gift will be delivered on February 12, the morning of the dance. There will be a “Sweet Message” link on the FC PTA website page.
 - The next general council meeting will be hosted at Fort Couch on March 4.

Standing Committees

Arts in Education – Dana Gnad/Lori Lapham

- Reflections-

- Congratulations to the 3 Baker students, 7 Boyce students, and 2 Fort Couch students who are going to the PA State level of competition. Good luck!

Directory – Committee

- We have signed a 2 year contract with A to Z.

Reporting Organizations

High School PTSO – Kristy Lee

- Dr. Ghilani resigned from his position as Principal to take a position as deputy superintendent at Montour School District. Although we were surprised at the departure, we congratulate him and wish him the best of luck in his step forward in his career.
- The transition has been very smooth with Lou Angelo (former assistant principal) taking over as acting principal at the high school. Lou shares the same passion for education as Dr. Ghilani and we are certain that he will do a great job in his new position. Miss Tungate, English curriculum leader, has stepped in and taken over Dr. Angelo's former duties as assistant principal.
- The second wave of Keystone exams began on January 7th.
- Preparation for the musical production of "Kiss Me Kate" is ramping up and will begin showing on March 6th.
- The Sadie Hawkins dance is this weekend (February 7th). We still need chaperones! If you are interested, please contact me!

Community Foundation – Leanne Adamo

- Blankets are available for purchasing.
- CF 's Book Club will be discussing The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins on Thursday, March 12 at the CRC @11am -12:30 and 7-8:30pm. Hope to see you then!

Youth Steering – Amy Billerbeck

- Working with Together in Parenting (TIP), we are hosting a "Straight Talk" on the topic of "Overcoming Anxiety: How to Help Your Family Cope". Please join us on Wednesday February 11 at 7-8:30 pm at the CRC. Presenting will be Christina Hostutler from *Outreach-Teen & Family Services, Inc*

Old Business - None

New Business –

- Founders Day will be postponed to May.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachelle Engel

***Next PTA Council Meeting
March 4, 2015
Fort Couch Middle School***