MORRIS BRANDON PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Morris Brandon PTO General Meeting + Principal Coffee Talk
Wednesday, October 8, 2025
10:00 AM via Zoom

I. Welcome and PTO Overview
Presenters: Fran Cowart and Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Meeting Called to Order: 10:02 AM

Discussion: The PTO Co-Presidents introduced themselves and welcomed attendees to the first PTO General Meeting of the school year. They introduced the agenda for the meeting as well as the guest speaker, School Psychologist, Ms. Rosemary Glean. The PTO Co-Presidents informed participants where they can locate the meeting minutes on the Morris Brandon website.

II. Vote to Approve Minutes from April 2025 PTO General Meeting
Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: Approval of the April 2025 PTO General Meeting minutes.

Motion to Approve: Ashley Mathis
Second Motion to Approve: Ashlee Portis
Members Approving: All
Members Opposing: None
Minutes Approved: Yes

III. PTO Overview
Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: Morris Brandon has several groups supporting the educational, social, and well-being of our students including the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the Foundation (not-for-profit organization), and the GO Team (elected parents, teachers, and appointed community members). The current 2025-2026 PTO Board Members were announced.

IV. PTO Treasurer Report
Presenter: Tricia Ricketts, PTO Treasurer

Discussion: The treasurer's report revealed a budget surplus and projections for the current year. The last school year ended with a $33,000 budget surplus due to increased revenue from business partners and the Mom's Mahjong event. With the surplus, the PTO donated a portion to the school. The budget for the current school year was approved at the last PTO Board Meeting. Projected revenue is $183,000 and we are on track to achieve this goal. The current PTO cash balance is $91,000. The plan is to consolidate the PTA balance of $17,000 (following the approved dissolution) for a total of $108,000.

V. PTO Events and Calendar Subscription
Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: Upcoming events and ways to stay informed were highlighted.

Events passed include Open House, the Backyard Bash, 5th Grade Car Wash, Walk to School Day, Brandon at the Braves, the Fun Run, the Book Fair, and Monthly Teacher Appreciation. Upcoming events include Willy's Spirit Night at the Howell Mill location, Chick-Fil-A Spirit Night, the Jamboree Fall Festival, as well as the Kindergarten and 5th Grade Thanksgiving Feasts. There will be a Mom's Mahjong event on January 15, 2026 and the Read-A-Thon will begin on January 23, 2026. The BeeMail is a great source for this information.

Parents were encouraged to subscribe to the PTO Calendar, to join the Online Directory to receive BeeMail communications, to sign up to receive Remind texts, and to follow Morris Brandon PTO on social media.

Parents can sign up for the Corporate Rewards Program and support our Business Partners as a way to support Morris Brandon. It is not too late to sign up to be a business partner.

VI. Explanation of Change from PTA to PTO and Vote to Dissolve PTA
Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: The Co-Presidents discussed the school's transition from a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). They emphasized the benefits of operating independently such as cost-effectiveness and efficiency. All paperwork has been filed and approved by the Georgia Secretary of State as well as with the IRS. The school is now operating as an independent PTO. We will adhere to all the state and federal guidelines for a charitable organization. Once the PTA is dissolved, the remaining funds from the PTA bank account will be moved into the PTO bank account. The discussion ended with a vote to dissolve the PTA.

Motion to Dissolve the PTA: Ashley Mathis
Second Motion to Dissolve the PTA: Dana Giacone
Members Approving: All
Members Opposing: None
Motion Passed to Officially Dissolve the PTA: 10:15 AM

VII. Introduction of School Psychologist (Perfectionism & Growth Mindset)
Presenter: Rosemary Glean, Ed.S., L.P.C., School Psychologist

Discussion: Guest speaker, Rosemary Glean, presented on the topic of perfectionism and growth mindset and its impact on children. She discussed the complex nature of perfectionism, its definitions, and its impact on individuals. Perfectionistic children are complex and have unique characteristics. She highlighted that while perfectionism may be rewarded in society, it can lead to adverse consequences such as inflexibility and a lack of openness to new experiences. Ms. Glean presented perfectionism indicators in children including self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, and socially prescribed perfectionism. She shared personal anecdotes and research findings to illustrate these indicators including longing for safety/security, conditional self-worth, fear of failure, constantly under pressure, chronic self-evaluation, social comparison, absence of positive view of self, a tendency to engage in self-defeating behaviors, burnout and fatigue, and emotional perfectionism. She emphasized the important of recognizing these traits in children to provide appropriate support and interventions.

Ms. Glean additionally presented strategies to foster a growth mindset (vs. fixed mindset) and reduce perfectionism. She outlined ten real-life strategies that can be carried out in the home and/or at school, including (1) reframe mistakes as learning opportunities, (2) model imperfection, (3) celebrate effort, not just outcomes (4) "mistake of the day" ritual, (5) teach the word "yet," (6) small risk challenges, (7) use process-oriented questions, (8) create a "bravery board," (9) shift self-talk, and (10) parent modeling of self-kindness. Practicing mindfulness is a bonus strategy.

Ms. Glean opened the discussion up for questions. She provided additional resources and support for parents interested in further exploring these concepts.

VIII. Principal's Coffee Talk

Presenter: Jay Bland, Principal

Mr. Bland presented Morris Brandon's performance data and discussed the school's strategic plan to improve student outcomes. The conversation concluded with a review of the school's financial health, including new teacher hires and the importance of maintaining student enrollment to avoid potential budget issues and school closures.

Principal Bland presented a comprehensive review of Morris Brandon's performance data, focusing on the Georgia Milestones scores from 2024-2025. The school showed mixed results, with third grade achieving growth in proficiency while fourth and fifth grades remained stagnant. Principal Bland highlighted the need to improve outcomes for various student subgroups. He presented growth percentile data for students who tested the year prior, noting that 40-60 is typical/average growth, with 50-60 being higher and anything under 40 or 60 being lower. The school's overall ELA growth percentile was 55.4%, with math being slightly lower. The school is working on creating individual subgroup plans for students who need additional support. Principal Bland also discussed CCRPI targets, explaining that because the school performed well last year, their targets increased, and some subgroups such as our highest needs populations did not meet their targets. Furthermore, the principal highlighted Morris Brandon's strong showing in MAP scores and growth metrics. He discussed key performance indicators set by the district for 2030, including targets for third grade ELA proficiency and subgroup performance. Priorities are ranked and the plan is posted on the website. He encouraged parents to share their thoughts on the data and trends and appreciation for feedback and concerns.

The principal discussed the school's financial health, highlighting the hiring of two hourly intervention teachers, three (EE) exceptional education teachers, and a full-time non-instructional paraprofessional. He emphasized the importance of maintaining student enrollment.

Principal Bland addressed the Long Range Facilities Plan, noting that Morris Brandon is no longer included in the current round of discussions about combining dual campuses. He encouraged community support (i.e., volunteering on school tours, sharing school information with preschools) as well as positive messaging to attract families to the school. Public Meetings will be held on October 20, 2025 and November 10, 2025, virtual at noon and in-person at 6:00 PM at 130 Trinity Avenue.

Further, Principal Bland provided school contacts information, including administrative support emails.

IX. Closing Remarks and Reminders

Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: The PTO Co-Presidents thanked everyone for joining and participating in the meeting.

The next PTO General Meeting will be held on January 23, 2026.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:04 AM

Meeting Recording: The recording for this meeting can be accessed via the Morris Brandon website on the PTO page and/or via the link: PTO General Meeting October 2025 Recording with the passcode Y$7fGq%0.