

Poplar Tree Elementary
PTA Meeting Minutes March 9, 2016

IN ATTENDANCE:

Sharon Williams, Chris Ferragamo, Heather Ellison, Carolyn Caywood, Heather Phillips, Rebekah McDonald, Susan Lowry, Lisa Payne, Stacy Casey, Scott Thimons, Allison Dennenberg, Kara Balzano, Melissa Pippine, Jennifer Szchara, Christie Fecko, Wanda Radler

CALLED TO ORDER

Called to order: 10:05

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Review meeting minutes from February 10, 2016. Minutes were approved as written.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- Blended Learning presentation by Mr. Thimons, slides available on PTA website.

TECHNOLOGY REPORT – Blended Learning

- There is a push within FCPS to shift to a Blended Learning format, Poplar Tree will begin to implement. Video explains, Blended Learning is a mix of face-to-face and online learning. The online aspect is within a learning platform, that is a safe and secure environment accessible to teacher and students only. Allows teachers to more quickly assess students' current level and tailor classroom instruction to more specifically address individual needs.
- Parent Concerns:
 - o Screen Time – will this require an excessive amount of screen time for students? How will this increased screen time be balanced with the messages of increased physical activity and less screen time that we teach our children from a health perspective?
 - This method should only take as long as traditional paper homework, so there isn't that much additional screen time.
 - o Parental Monitoring – This will require more parental monitoring than traditional homework. When students are on a device, it is too easy for them to switch to things that are not school related.
 - The agendas not going away, so parents will be aware of assignments. Standard online safety measures apply here as well, don't allow kids to be on computers in their rooms, etc.
 - o Math Problems – Transcribing numbers from a screen, to a work paper, and back to a screen leaves a lot of room for errors. If classroom instruction is based on performance on online homework assignments, will that truly demonstrate an understanding of the

concepts being taught? (i.e. the student could end up in a lower instructional group in the classroom.)

- The teachers already have a good sense of student levels based on classroom performance. They won't be grouped solely based on homework.
- What about accessibility for homes with limited resources?
 - Cox and Comcast give families in need internet access for free; see Mrs. Williams with additional questions or requests.
 - Regarding equipment, Chantilly High School is submitting an application to be one of two Pryamids in the County to be selected for the 1:1 Digital Transformation Initiative (every student would get a device.) Part of the application is a parent survey which requires 85% participation. Please complete the survey so we have a chance to be selected. If we are not selected, county will still continue to roll-out at a later date. Providing all students with devices is not currently in the FCPS Budget.
- PTA Donation update, everything has been purchased and installed
- Parent suggestion: educate parents on internet safety

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- Box Tops ended Feb 26th, lowest number of submissions this year. Mrs. Gomez's class won. We're already ahead of budgeted income for Box Top collection this year, \$1100 budgeted, we've raised \$1800 so far.
- Movie night – Feb 26th, well attended, well behaved. Additional volunteers for monitoring students helped. Last movie night of the year scheduled for April 29th. We will collect food for the food bank again.
- Mobile Science Night – Mar 8th – well attended, went well.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fire and Ice

- Scheduled for April 8th
- From the two Sixth Grade classes, there are 39 players for four teams (two boys, two girls teams)
- 21 teachers will be playing
- Four team managers
- Seven cheerleaders from 5th and 6th grade
- This year, selling t-shirts for any interested students. (provided for participants)
- Received a donation of food from Giant at Greenbriar for the morning game at the school.
- Selling raffle tickets to shoot free throw (8 and under), 3-point (9-11yo), and half court (12 and up). Get prize and to shoot... if you make the shot you get additional prize. Flier coming home on Friday.
- Sign-up genius will go out week after spring break for selling tickets, concessions, door monitors, 50/50 raffle

Reflections

- Reflections is a year-long art contest that National PTA hosts. Eight Poplar Tree students participated, included entries in visual arts, writing, and photography.
- PTA hosts breakfast with participants and principals, names will be announced on News.
- Jennifer Szchara will advertise names and promote program for next year.
- Congratulations to:
 - o Elise Kim, 1st grade, for achieving Outstanding Interpretation (1st place) in the Primary Visual Arts category at the Fairfax County Level; Honorable Mention at the District Level
 - o Max Kim, 2nd grade, for achieving Outstanding Interpretation (1st place) in the Primary Literature category at the Fairfax County Level; Honorable Mention at the District Level
 - o Christina Alvarez, 6th grade, for achieving Award of Excellence (2nd place) in the Middle School Photography category at the Fairfax County Level
- These students have achieved a Certificate of Participation in the Reflections program.
 - o Lillianna McNerney, 3rd grade, Intermediate Visual Arts
 - o Amy Bippert, 5th grade, Intermediate Literature
 - o Ava Szachara, 1st grade, Primary Visual Arts
 - o Chloe Sy Lee, 1st grade, Primary Visual Arts
 - o Barsha Parajuli, 4th grade, Intermediate Literature

Custodian Appreciation Week – custodians received gift cards and notes made by the students

Spring Fling – still on calendar for May 7th – still need a chair. Goal is to have outside. Contact Chris.

Nominating Committee

- Nominations for PTA Board for 2016-17 School Year are:
 - o President – Melanie Read
 - o VP1 – Karrie Delaney
 - o VP2 – Rebekah McDonald
 - o Secretary – Kara Balzano
 - o Treasurer – Nischala Aamidala

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance:

Ending Balance: \$42,486.96

\$37,027.00 (50 transactions in last six weeks – funded staff and custodian appreciation, fall fundraiser prizes, pizza for movies with teachers (prize from Silent Auction at Fall Festival), mini grants, teacher fund)

NEW BUSINESS

25th anniversary Reading Incentive – Teachers to read 25 books out loud to class by April 21st. PTA will donate a birthday cake to all classes that complete goal. Estimate that we will need 10 sheet cakes at \$15 each for \$150-200 dollars. Executive committee voted via email and approved. (Will provide some alternative to students with allergies.)

Parent question: can we use Information Hub for PTA website (GBW and Colin Powell use – GBW does not recommend)? Looking to different platform, more secure to house other information. Allison Denenberg and Lisa Payne will research different programs. Incoming Board to consider directory and website to be included in next year's budget. Can we form a technology committee? Yes, will be made up of incoming Board and a few other interested people.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- March 16th – Science Fair
- April 1st - Talent Show, 6:00-8:30 (50+ acts)
- April 8th fire and ice
- April 13th - Next PTA Meeting, 7:00pm - The Secrets of Paying for College presentation
- April 14th Kindergarten Orientation
- April 20th Volunteer Luncheon
- April 21st – Spirit Night at Jason's Deli – 5:00-10:00
- April 29th – Final Movie Night

Adjourned:

11:15