

**PTA General Meeting Notes
October 10, 2013
Mantua Elementary School**

The president called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M.

Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: Jennifer Epley, Teresa LeMair, Carolyn Stephan, Julie Middleton

School Representatives: Jan-Marie Fernandez, Tina Tingler and Amy Alley

General Membership: Karen Cheng, Megan Wells, Austin Wells, Todd Cranford, Shannon Murphy, Lori Prendergast, Karen Hasson, Jessica Lucas- Judy, Lesley Kowalski, S. Polenaran

Vote: The Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and adopted by the membership.

President's Report (Jennifer Epley): She wanted to let everyone know that the date for November's meeting has changed to November 1st.

Treasurer's Report (Carolyn Stephan): The PTA funded field trips and teacher development to the school per the original budget. Registration for basketball and after school programs is underway, but not yet completed. Carolyn researched the tax issue brought up at the last meeting and determined that the PTA, a non-profit organization, is not required to collect taxes in Virginia.

Principals' Report: Mrs. Fernandez said she was thrilled to be here tonight instead of being stuck at the airport as she was for the last 6 hours.

Janet Sottolano, our teacher-PTA liaison, was not able to be here tonight due to a family commitment. She wanted me to announce that the Food Drive will be the first week of November. She is working with SACC on this project. The goal is to collect 3500 pounds of food which would beat the 3000 pounds collected last year. Mrs. Sottolano also wanted to convey appreciation for the funds provided to teachers for classroom supplies.

Our two Back to School Nights were well attended. The annual Spirit Parade will be October 31st. Red Ribbon Week will be from Monday, October 28th–Friday, November 1st. On Monday November 4th and Tuesday November 5th school will be closed for teacher work days and parent/teacher conferences.

We are getting closer to starting the computer part of the Activate Program. The PE exercises have started and teachers have had training.

We wanted to publicly express our sympathies to Kathleen Leonard whose husband passed away on September 28th after a major heart attack. We are hoping she will be coming back in about 2 weeks. Mrs. Leonard's family has requested that donations be made to the University of Maryland Track Team where her husband, Bud Leonard, attended. The funds will go for track scholarships.

We have Thanksgiving Lunches coming up on November 20th for K-3rd and 21st for 4th-6th grades. The 5th grade over-night trip to Camp Highroad will be November 7th and 8th.

Cogat testing for 2nd graders will take place October 15th-25th. This test will be given to all 2nd graders, students who haven't had a test, or students taking a one-time re-test.

Someone in the audience asked about the status of the new 3rd Grade Teacher. Mrs. Fernandez said that she hasn't found an appropriate candidate for the position yet and is working to hire a long-term substitute. We are hoping that Pam Promisel will help us out.

Report of First Vice-President for Programs (Teresa LeMair): The Basketball program currently has 230 players signed up. The registration deadline is tomorrow, October 11th.

The Chess Club for 5th and 6th graders will meet on Tuesdays; Mr. Malc has not yet decided when the first meeting will be. Mantua's first Family Fun Night will be on October 18th. Theme is Pokeman and games.

Teresa has received very positive feedback on the new Drama Club program. There are 45 kids enrolled in grades 3rd-6th. Rebecca, the Director, is great! Kristen Driscoll is the parent liaison. The show this year is "Keeper of the Tales" which has been edited to be appropriate for our kids.

Kids Care Club will meet for the first time on 17th of October. Subsequently, KCC will meet every 3rd Thursday of the month. The Talent Show will be January 25, 2014.

Academic Competitions are being facilitated by Lesley Kowalsky. The deadline for setting up teams is Friday, November 1st. If teams are meeting at Mantua, all students must attend Mantua Elementary or live within Mantua boundaries. If meetings are held outside of school, any kids can participate on a team.

Chat n Chew- 80 students enrolled this year. The librarians are helping to choose the books. Kids will meet in their groups during lunch.

Karen Hassan is the liaison to the Mentor Works program at the school. Mantua serves 40-50 Mentees each year. Students meet with their Mentors one time per week. The school Guidance Counselors wanted to express their thanks for PTA support of the program.

In addition, the PTA is still looking for a Parent Education Liaison to work with the Guidance Counselors. Margaret Scheele served in this capacity for many years. The Guidance Counselors have scheduled their first Parent Education Coffee on Thursday, October 24th. The topic for this session is Bullying.

Shannon Murphy gave the report on the Enrichment Program. This fall there are 15 classes available from 13 different vendors. 243 students enrolled and no classes had to be canceled. There was a wait list for the video game design class, but we were able to add a second class. Flag Football and Hip Hop sent another teacher so that we could increase enrollment. We are still dealing with some outstanding issues of logistics and space with the school administration. Mrs. Fernandez mentioned that there is a greatly increased administrative responsibility in doing these enrichment programs. She is a big supporter of the enrichment program, but due to space constraints and staff involvement, the program can't get bigger than it is. In addition, we need to establish a system for canceling classes if needed.

Raccoon Runners (Lori P. gave the report)- 42 girls are participating in this Fall's program. The program started two weeks ago and we have an incredible bunch of girls. We meet Monday and Wednesdays at 8 a.m. We exercise and the girls listen to a lesson about physical and mental health. The girls will be participating in a 5k race in Old Town Fairfax which benefits firefighters on November 3rd. Entry fee is \$25.

Reflections Program (Lori P. gave report)- The PTA has started advertising for the program. The submission deadline is November 1st. Our winning submissions need to be turned into the Fairfax PTA by November 7th.

Report of Second Vice-President for Fundraising & Membership (Meri Farling absent- report given by Jennifer Epley):

- [Box Tops Competition- October 18th is deadline (put box tops in ziplock with classroom teacher's name on it)
- [Thanks to everyone who came to the first Restaurant Fundraising night at Noodles and Company in Merrifield. We had a good turnout.
- [Monica Brenner is working on advertisements for the PTA Directory
- [Run for Rocky- Still plenty of time to get the pledges in for the run. We are

having drawings on Friday for MP3 players. Evan Rafferty won the first MP3 player last week. Two Kindle Fires will be raffled off on the day of the race- each child that collects \$100 or more will be entered in the raffle. Thanks to our sponsors, Anne and Sarah Harrington at Long & Foster Realty. Kids and families will be running 1.5 miles which is 10 laps around the field.

- [Lori Prendergast is here to discuss this year's yearbook. Cover Contest is open only to 6th Graders and ends October 25th. The theme is Science Fiction- with a motto of "The Future is Now" or "Looking Towards the Future". The cover should be done in paint or photographs.

We have to change the size of the yearbook from a size 6 paper to a size 7 paper this year. We also would like to propose getting a hard cover instead of a soft cover. We can continue to offer the yearbook for \$25 for the larger size with a soft glossy cover. Or, we can switch to a hard cover which would cost \$28. Those in attendance at the meeting voted for the cover.

- [Hard Cover vote: 4
- [Glossy Soft Cover: 7; staying with Glossy cover

Membership

Shannon Murphy gave the report on membership status to date. In total as of October 10, 2013, we have 370 families that have become PTA members. That is more than half of the families that attend Mantua. This is a fantastic number of members for the PTA.

Old Business:

New Business: Two issues were brought up:

1. Is there a better auditorium for the Talent Show? One of the main issues is that it costs money to use other facilities and the Talent Show runs with a very small budget.
2. Is it possible to move the budget talk to the end of the PTA meeting so that people who have to leave early can hear about PTA programs? It was discussed that the budget discussion does not last long and is an important part of our meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.