

PTA General Meeting

March 8, 2012

Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Present at the meeting were:

**Executive Board:** Lesley Kowalski, Jennifer Epley, Shannon Murphy, Sandy Spector, Lori Recher

**School Representatives:** Jan-Marie Fernandez, Tina Tingler, Janet Sottolano

**General Membership:** Christie Choi, Stacey Bromberg, Kathy Phillips

The Minutes from the February meeting were reviewed and approved.

**President's Report:** Lesley mentioned that Mrs. Loach's classroom newsletter thanked the PTA for the classroom devices that were purchased with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary gift. Mr. Malc's meeting was moved to April due to the Basketball games going on tonight. We have not yet heard about Monica's grant application or the one for the Chat n Chew program. March's important dates are listed on the bottom of the agenda. Our Destination Imagination and Odyssey of the Mind Teams are moving on to the next level this month.

The Greenhawks Basketball game is scheduled for April 27 at 6:30. Mantua's faculty team will be playing the Greenhawks. The game will be at Woodson, and is open to the public. A Pep Rally will be held that Friday afternoon at Mantua. Advance ticket sales will be \$4 for kid over 4, and \$8 for adults. At the door, tickets will be \$5 for kids over 4, and \$10 adults. We will include a family cap of approximately \$35. There will be concessions sold the night of the game.

**Treasurer's Report:** We received a check for \$385 from Baja fresh for Restaurant Night. On the expense side - there is \$500 charge for the basketball game with the GreenHawks. The Mantua Basketball program is going to the next level. The teams picked one person from each team, to form a new team, to compete in the tournament. PTA paid some of the expense for this tournament (\$800). The kids paid for their t-shirts.

**Principals' Report:** There is a man in community, [Mr. Deirtrick], that is working with the school system regarding the collection pools. These collecting pools are relative to the Chesapeake Bay run off. When the modular units went in, we were required to have these pools. They are required to have a lot of vegetation

for filtering. Mr. Deirtrick is trying to get anyone who is interested in gardening to work with him to make them more effective, and has asked that the PTA help get the message out. We will forward to Christine Clifford, and Lesley will follow up.

The school has been practicing emergency drills (lockdown, tornado, etc.) The Italian team performed a puppet show for the students. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade went to Frost Middle School. Basketball finals are going on as we speak. The 5th graders finished both portions of the writing test. Ms. Sottolano's class will be doing an online version as a test of the system - those results will not be counted. Ecart starts next week. WIDA testing is completed. Colonial Day for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade is next Friday.

The Woodson Art Show is March 22. This includes art from all Woodson pyramid schools. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade is going to the Newseum tomorrow. Many of the k-2 classes went to George Mason to see a performance of Charlottes Web. Spring Break is early this year - April 2-6, and there is an additional Teacher Workday on April 9th. Jan-Marie reported that the warm weather is effecting the students discipline. The Family Life and Human Growth unit is underway. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade will be getting a shorter version - this is the first year that the unit is being extended to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. On March 23, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be having a discussion with Dr. Clarence Jones on Safe and Drug Free Zones.

Jan-Marie reported on the importance of the use of technology among the student body. There has been an marked increase of incidences of cyber bullying. The Administration is not in charge of a child's use (FaceBook, blogs, email, etc.) outside of school unless it is brought to school or there is a safety issue. If another child or the school is mentioned then Jan-Marie or another administrator *must* get involved. There are two main issues of concern - inappropriate items being written about another student, or mentions of thoughts of self-harm or suicide. The school has had conversations with the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, and are setting up opportunities for parents. This could include small meetings with families that don't speak English. The Administration is spending days reporting to the School District, to contact search engines to remove content.

Picture Day is scheduled for April 18<sup>th</sup>. Secretary Appreciation Week starts April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Shannon raised the question on the continuation of the combined 1-2 classes. Jan-Marie is hopeful that we will know soon. Staff planning for next year will start the beginning of April/May. We have a large number of retirements this year, the largest ever. There are [potentially] 15-20 positions to be filled.

**Report of First Vice-President for Community Outreach:** Lesley gave Lori's report. The spring Girls on the Run program is starting up. The Drama closet still needs to be cleaned out.

**Report of Second Vice-Presidents for Membership and Fundraising:** Jennifer reported that yearbooks are still for sale. On April 31 the price goes up. The Auction is finished. All items have been picked up. Thank you to the staff in the office for all of their help. The Auction was very successful - next month's meeting will have

the final tally. Carnival is coming up on March 24<sup>th</sup>. We have gotten sponsorships from Judy Wonus (for the cinch bags), and Judy Dane/Long and Foster (for the Moon Bounces). We still need volunteers for the classroom-run booths. All volunteering is being scheduled through Sign Up Genius. We need additional help Friday afternoon setting up the booths, as well as Saturday afternoon taking everything down. We're looking for 8 volunteers for each day.

The SCA is helping with the Greenhawks advertising for the game.

Christie reported that Ms. Boyd's class won the Box Tops contest. There were also small prizes awarded to the top 10 classes. She is planning in setting up a table at Carnival to have small prizes for any child that brings in 20 labels. Heritage Night is coming up - May 3rd. She is currently working on the flyer for Tuesday folders.

In line with Jan-Marie's discussion on cyber bullying, Christie mentioned that she received an email from a parent of a 5<sup>th</sup> grader. The parent reported that another child made a racial remark to his son during a basketball game. This was done during a game, and was not heard by the referees. It would have gone unnoticed if the child didn't come forward. The parents involved had a good conversation. This was forwarded to Jan-Marie and the basketball coaches. Christie communicated (via email) to all parents in the Community Building Network. Another parent came forward as well. Christie will follow up with the parents. This is the time to really to talk to all of our kids and review.

**Old Business:** Janet S. reported that the Book Drive ended last week. Over 3000 books were boxed by 5<sup>th</sup> graders and the SCA! Teachers also donated a lot of books. All were taken to a book depository that distributes books to schools and shelters through out the year. The SCA now has a goal to do this every year. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be making items for the Children's Hospital.

**New Business:** Lori Prendergast will be heading up the Nominating Committee.

**The Fungi Award:** This month's winner is Kathy Phillips for all of her work on the Chat n Chew program. Thank you Kathy!!

Meeting adjourned at 8:03.