

PTA Board Meeting Notes

February 15, 2013

Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 9:34 am. Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: Lesley Kowalski, Carolyn Stephan, Jennifer Epley, Shannon Murphy

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

General Membership: John Thomas, Dawn Thomas, Lori Recher, Monica Cameron, Tracy Stickley, Kathy Phillips, Mike Kane, Amy Halstead, Margaret Scheele

The minutes from the January meeting were reviewed and approved.

President's Report: Leslie started off by thanking those attending the meeting in spite of the conflict with Colonial Day. Thank you to Julie for running the Citizenship Essay Contest for the 6th graders. We had approximately 5-6 entries. Thank you to those going to the Fairfax High-Lanier Middle School Boundary Study meetings. We will have representatives at each of the three meetings: February 19, 20 and 26. Frost and Woodson are both part of the discussion. Kathy Phillips noted that they posted the 3 possible scenarios last night. They can be found on the FPCS website, and are fairly detailed. Woodson and Frost will both get new students through the redistricting. Thank you to Page Rushing, our Carnival Booth Coordinator, who has also volunteered to update and manage the PTA webpage next year. We are currently in the middle of documenting web usage, and welcome all input.

School Board Representative Patty Reed will be coming to the April PTA meeting, which is a morning meeting. Monica gave an update on the plans for the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award monies. We were awarded \$2000 that we will be using to enhance our Parent Resource Library. This is being coordinated with ESOL, Human Relations, Principal Fernandez, and our librarians. There have been a lot of good ideas for resources, including picture/visual dictionaries (for languages), as well as Spanish bilingual books. These can be used to help our ESOL community, but also can also be used to learn another language. Other options being considered are: family math kits, music, educational games, and DVD series on American Scenes, which would be used to help familiarize students with different traditional "American" school experiences. A question was raised on whether this was going to require additional shelf space in the library. Jan-Marie responded that we are waiting until next year, when the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program is out of our school. There is a room off of the library that would be freed up that could be used as an office. It may be possible to put some computers in there, to turn into a parent room.

Treasurer's Report: The Auction is almost closed out, coming in over \$10,000. We budgeted \$10k. The Talent Show came in at \$1530, and was budgeted at \$1500. The After School Enrichment programs are expected to break even. The Student Directory budget was \$1400, and current expenses are \$1397. The Basketball program expenses will continue for a little while. We are planning on buying a Money Counter for next year's events.

Principals' Report: Jan Marie thanked everyone for honoring the administration last week. And thank you to Tina, who took over as MC of the Talent Show, which Jan-Marie had to miss due to illness.

The school completed the required lock down practice in January. The Evacuation Drill will be sometime in the spring when the weather is warmer. For that drill the children are taken off property to Colesbury Court. They have to be lined up, and everyone accounted for. The Deaf after school program will start March 21 and run for 6 weeks. April 18 is Heritage and Literacy Night(s). This is a new date, as there was a conflict with Frost Family Fun Night.

Amy reported on the school wide testing. CogATs scores have gone home. Nagliere results should be in the mail. Some students had to participate in makeup testing. It will be another month for those results. We are finishing up with WETA. ESOL testing, which includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking, is almost finished. On March 12 and 14 the 5th grade will be taking the writing portion of the SOLs. This will be done online, unless there is a student that requires paper and pencil. The rest of the SOLs are in May/beginning of June:

May

- 13 - **5th Grade** Science
- 14 - **3rd Grade** Reading, part 1
- 15 - **3rd Grade** Reading, part 2
- 16 - **6th Grade** Reading
- 17 - **4th Grade** Reading
- 20 - **3rd Grade** Science
- 21 - **5th Grade** Reading
- 22 - **4th Grade** Social Studies
- 23 - **6th Grade** Math (all 6th graders)
- 24 - **3rd Grade** Social Studies
- 29 - **5th Grade** Math (all 5th graders)
- 30 - **4th Grade** Math
- 31 - **3rd Grade** Math

June

- 3 - **6th Grade** US History

Makeup tests will be given throughout the process.

A question was raised about the IOWA scores. Those should be coming soon, and will be mailed from the school. Amy will check on those.

Tina reported that the 4th grade is having Colonial Day today. Kathy asked if we are back to having an outside program this year? There is a new company (with many of the same workers) that has been contracted, thanks to a grant secured by Sarah Massucci, our 5th grade TC teacher. It may be possible to apply for the grant again.

Mr. Collins is working on the creating the Mantua team for the April 12th faculty basketball game against Camelot. We will need some parent volunteers for ticket sales, etc.

Report of First Co-Vice-Presidents for Community Outreach: Kathleen reported on our first-ever Valentine's Dance, which is tonight. It is open to all grades, and will be held in the Cafeteria. Meri Farling is handling the decorations. March 1st is Lego Night. Margaret reported that on February 7th there was an informal Frost information event for rising 7th graders, held in the library here at Mantua. It was put on by guidance councilors from both Frost and Luther Jackson middle schools. It was well attended, and there will be another meeting on Feb. 27th. On Feb. 21st there will be a more formal event at Frost. Monica will find out if Frost is doing the Jump Start program again.

The competitions for both Odyssey of the Mind and Destination Imagination are coming up within the next month.

In late January, approximately 20 students participated in the Fairfax Invitational Math competition against 34 other *middle* school teams.

Report of Second Vice-President for Membership: There were no updates to report.

Report of Second Vice-President for Fundraising: Jennifer thanked the Auction chair people for a great job. Yearbook prices went up on Feb 1st. We are still in need of group photos for some of the classes. The Carnival is March 16th. There will be no baskets this year. We're going back to the raffle instead. The Carnival reps are having a poster contest among the students so that classroom Carnival coordinators are no longer responsible for that. Our Carnival theme this year is The Future's So Bright. The Box Tops collection competition ends today. The Amazon link is still available on the PTA website. The last restaurant night at Baja Fresh was well attended. Our next restaurant night will be in April at Chick-fil-A. There were some complaints about canceling the Sally Foster fundraiser. We may reinstate it in the fall, but online only. We may also do Laps for Learning as a new fundraiser.

A reminder was given that students are coming too early to school. Teachers are having meetings before school, so there is no one monitoring the halls. There is a concern that the office does not know who is in the school for evacuations, etc. There are students coming in as early as 8:15. This is a safety issue, and we need to get the word out. The appropriate drop off time is no earlier than 8:45. Patrols can come a little early, as well as Good Morning Mantua participants

Report of the Volunteer Coordinator: There were no updates to report.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business: Monica asked about the future of the Italian program since Woodson doesn't include Italian. Frost had a problem keeping Italian teachers. As a result many students switched over to Spanish. Jan-Marie just met with the head of modern languages (world languages), and the principals at Frost and Woodson. They are trying to figure out how we can continue the process through middle and high school. A teacher that Mantua and Frost shared had a baby and chose to work closer to home. The next teacher hired decided not to continue. We have been trying to hire an Italian teacher that is *from* Italy and the process is taking a long time. Woodson needs to see that there is a group of students that want to continue. The question was asked should you risk taking Italian at Frost hoping that there would be classes at Woodson. Wouldn't it be easier to put in a Spanish program at Mantua, so that it's easier to hire teachers and the program is seamless through to high school? Jan-Marie explained that it doesn't work like that. The system is committed to Italian. If there was an attempt to switch to Spanish, it could be used as an excuse to end the program entirely. The only way to keep an Italian program at Woodson is to keep students enrolled through middle school, to show that there is an interest.

Leslie mentioned that even though it's only February, it's never too early to think about PTA volunteer positions for next year.

The meeting adjourned at 10:38.