

MKPC PTA General Meeting
December 2, 2014 at Montgomery Knolls
(Approved 3/10/15)

Attendance:

PTA Board Members and School Administrators in attendance:

Nickie Haine, PTA President (presided over meeting)
Leah Ossi, PTA Treasurer
Kate O'Connor, PTA Secretary
Madeleine Santiago, PTA Vice President
Bertram Generlette, MKES

In addition, 41 parents and staff members attended the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 7:09pm.

Handouts:

- “General PTA Meeting Agenda, December 2, 2014”
- “December 2, 2014 PTA General Meeting: Committee Reports”
- “MKPC-PTA: Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual, July through November 2014”
- MKPC PTA Listserv Guidelines
- “Reading Rockets: Tips for parents of ___ Graders” (Ms. Van had a series of Reading Rockets tips sheets available for various elementary grades.)

Welcome & Introductions (Nickie Haine)

Approval of Minutes:

Members approved the minutes from the MKPC PTA General Meeting held on October 7, 2014.

Committee and Administration Reports:

Reports of Officers:

- Treasurer’s Report:
 - Two new additions to budget: Science Fair for both schools and Geo Bowl at Pine Crest.
 - Jonah Rainey is organizing Science Fair and looking for volunteers to help plan. See him after the meeting so he can capture your contact information.
 - Attendees were given a chance to review the revised PTA budget.
 - Motion to approve revised budget raised and seconded.
 - Revised budget was approved by unanimous vote.
- President’s Report:
 - Nickie Haine offered appreciation for the work parents are doing in the classroom, for the PTA, and throughout the schools.
 - Mid-year PTA will issue a feedback form so parents have an opportunity to let PTA leaders know what parents think is working, what they’d like to see more of, etc.

- Advocacy: Parents welcome to join Lily Villones (Blair cluster rep) and Jill GrosPierre & Lisa Finkelstein (MCCPTA reps) in representing the needs of the MK/PC community at the county and state level.
- Membership Report: See “December 2, 2014 Committee Reports” handout.
- Volunteers Report: See “December 2, 2014 Committee Reports” handout.

Principals’ Reports:

- **MKES:**
 - InView Testing (one factor in GT screening) begins on Monday December 8th for all 2nd grades. Helps determine what kind of accelerated and enriched program for which students are eligible in 3rd grade.
 - STEM Day on Friday, December 12th. All classes will be involved in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math activities throughout the day.
 - Ms. Brady (2nd grade teacher who is organizing STEM Day) needs help:
 - Wednesday, 12/3 after school at 3:30
 - Thursday, 12/4 after school at 3:30
 - Friday, December 12 (STEM Day itself) – Each classroom teacher will need a parent assistant. Contact your child’s teacher directly if you’d like to help.
 - Make-up day for pictures: Tuesday, December 9th.
 - After School Clubs:
 - Registration information will be going out in Thursday folders.
 - Winter session of Clubs will start after winter break.
 - Some new Clubs (including Theater) planned for the Spring session.
 - Nina, current Linkages director, is leaving MKES/PCES and has taken a job a non-profit. Sample Linkages project – Giving Tree, sponsored by MKES staff.
- **PCES:** Ms. Houston says thanks to PTA for the wonderful dinner for staff during conference week.

Committee Reports:

Handout was provided detailing the committee reports, rather than spending meeting time on each committee. Refer to this document for details on FunRun, Spirit Wear, Fundraising, Science Fair, Geo Bowl, Directory, etc.

- **Cluster Rep (Lily Villones):** Lily Villones explained what the Blair Cluster is and the role of the Blair Cluster Coordinator. Three coordinators represent the cluster at the state level. Each of the schools in the Blair Cluster (elementary and middle schools that feed into Blair HS, plus Blair itself) has a Blair Cluster rep. Lily Villones is the MK/PC PTA Blair Cluster rep.
 - October 23 Meet & Greet with Board of Education and MCC PTA: PC parent Juan Del Cid attended the meeting with Lily and other MKPC PTA representatives. Speaking to the assembly, he described pressing concerns at PC, including loss of the technology teacher at PC & dedicated technology instruction at MKES, as well as the need for a translator at PCES. Juan encouraged all parents to be more involved in meetings and in their child’s education. Lily emphasized that hearing directly from parents makes a huge difference.
 - Next hearing is in January, focusing on Operations. Lily encourages parents to attend these hearings. Other clusters have a large presence at the hearings, flashing posters, etc. We need to step up our presence at the county level.

- A capacity study of 13 down county schools (including MKES / PCES) is currently underway, examining how prepared schools are to handle growth in enrollment. MKES has space for only one more class. PCES is already over-capacity. The study is investigating whether there needs to be another school, or whether there need to be additions and/or portables at existing schools.

New Business:

- Listserv Guidelines: Email went out detailing the MKPC PTA ListServ guidelines, typical of most email groups. Lisa Middleton and Becca Wilson are moderators. Printed copies of the Guidelines available at the PTA Meeting. Guidelines will also be posted online periodically.
- Health & Safety Committee:
 - New committee this year.
 - MKES parent is investigating what's going on at lunch and recess to identify needs, see what's working well, and see how parents can help. Other topics this committee might explore: pathways to portables, bicycle safety (for kids riding to school), healthy eating, etc. Looking for parents who are willing to investigate issues of health and safety and develop plans for positive change.
- Pizza Bingo: January 23, 6:30 – 8:00pm at Eastern Middle School. Still need volunteers to gather prize donations.
- Book Swap: Lisa Pfeifer introduced the Book Swap to parents at the meeting. Children given the opportunity each Thursday morning to select a book, which they can either keep or swap for another book during a later week.
- Green Kids: With help of an Audubon grant (\$500 for in-class materials and \$500 toward field trips), teachers are planning new science-related programs. PTA also contributes.
 - Kindergarten: Papermaking and recycling (February)
 - 1st Grade: Salad Science (April-May)
 - 2nd Grade: Composting and Worms (Feb / March)

PTA Meeting Program: “How Our Children Learn to Love Reading”

Presented by Holly Van, MKES Media Specialist

How does MKES promote Literacy and Literature Appreciation?

- Open Book Check-Out each morning, Monday – Thursday
- Weekly book exchange, with entire class
- Book Swap (run by parent volunteers)
- Online content available through MKES and PCES websites. See Media Program Pages to access author and reading program pages.
- Black Eyed Susan Book Award – students vote on their favorite of the nominated books.
 - Black-Eyed Susan Link is on Media page of website. Great source for lists of quality literature for different age groups.
- MKES Author Series: Four authors will be visiting MKES to meet with students and do smaller workshops with individual grades / classes.
- MKES Reading Incentive Program: Online program coming in March.
- Literature Appreciation as part of the curriculum.

How to Motivate Reluctant Readers:

- Reluctance may stem from difficulty reading
- Rather than give instructions (“read faster, read slower”), model good reading and have them read the passage back to you.
- Ms. Van provided various strategies for working with struggling readers.

- Allow children to choose their books.
- Rather than quiz children on what they've read; talk about it. Have a conversation about what you've read.
- Read everything.

Reading lists for various age-groups / reading levels:

- You can view suggested reading lists from Ms. Van's presentation on the PTA website, at: <http://www.mkpcpta.org/files/BookListsLoveReading.pdf>.

Tablets:

- Students are now using the tablets in the classrooms to access content.
- Parents invited to check out the tablets after the close of the meeting.

Meeting ended at 8:08pm.

Minutes submitted by Kate O'Connor, MKPC PTA Secretary