

TES PTA AGENDA

General Meeting
November 4, 2013

I Call to Order

II Approval of the October Meeting Minutes - this was second

A motion to approve October minutes was made and passed.

III Mrs. Hubbard's Presentation on Empowering Readers

Mrs. Hubbard joined the meeting to fill the group in on the Empowering Writers program that the PTA funded last year. Empowering Writers is a research based writing program used to offer consistent writing instruction. The website is empoweringwriters.com. Previously, the teachers were finding that they were spending too much time making connections between grade levels. This program offers a plan that uses a common vocabulary, along with other things, that will enable continued momentum in reading from year to year.

Mrs. Hubbard expressed gratitude for the PTA's support. They have fully trained 27 teachers and those who are not yet trained have access to video support and to the trainers. The implementation occurs over three years, and by the end of the three years, everyone should be fully up and running. The program includes teaching guides, road maps, grade level guides, classroom posters sets, and more.

Mrs. Hubbard found that every grade level is using this program at least 1-2 times a week. The trained teachers have offered positive feedback.

Mrs. Hubbard referred the group to the parents' corner on the website empoweringwriters.com/teacherscorner/parents-corner/.

A parent noted that some teachers have sent the vocabulary home and it was helpful. Mrs. Hubbard was going to see if the other teachers can also send that information home.

Anyone with questions should contact Sarah Hubbard at sfhubard@henrico.k12.va.us

IV Principal report – Mrs. Ford

Mrs. Ford reported that they have collected all of the crosswalk data for the traffic study and have turned it in to the resource police officer. The officer says it looks good, but Mrs. Ford doesn't know if it is compelling enough our desired changes. After speaking with Elaine, Mrs. Ford thinks that the PTA need to revive the old STOP committee related to traffic safety. She is going to ask to some county folks and the resource officer to participate to find out what sort of changes are feasible. For instance, if the PTA wants to propose changing traffic pattern, the county needs to sign off on the impact as well.

At the last PTA meeting, a parent asked about creating a partnership with

another Henrico Elementary school and Fair Oaks Elementary has agreed to a partnership. It is located between Sandston and Highland Springs. The principal is very excited and she is okay with the name of the school being public. The Fair Oaks principal also sees it as great opportunity for our kids to work with their kids. For now, it is about collecting coats. Their immediate need is coats and maybe food. Mrs. Ford mentioned that when kids leave for holidays, they are missing the food from the school. The PTA would also like to donate the Tuckahoe lost and found coats. A reminder will be sent out to take a last look and then the items will be donated since they could be used now. Someone can wash the items before they are sent. Holly Vinson is the lost and found chairperson, she can put a reminder in Signals.

The school will be going with a “kindness counts” theme over December – it will involve really cute things related to the Grinch and getting kids’ hearts to grow. Kids will earn hearts by doing kind things.

Mrs. Ford indicated that Ken Cuccinelli will be at the Tuckahoe voting location so there will be some security presence on Election Day.

V. Teacher report – Mrs. Archer

Mrs. Archer thanked everyone for the big treats and mentioned that everyone was looking forward to the lunch tomorrow. Also, she expressed her thanks for all of the books that the teachers received from the book fair.

VI. Report of Officers

Treasurer’s Report - Melissa

The membership money is still sitting in the bank account, and related money will go out soon. The book fair amount looks to be around \$1,859. Not all of the duathlon expenses are in, so that number is not final. After school enrichment made \$1,000. The directory money has not gone out yet.

Treasurer Elect’s Report - Beth

Veterans Day online registration is currently open. Please let Beth know if there are any committees that would like to do online payments and/or registrations for an upcoming event or activity.

President Elect’s Report - Angela

No report.

Corresponding Secretary’s Report – Jennifer

Jennifer provided a few gifts and notes for people with surgery. She sent some thank you notes around the room, but not all of them, as some of them are confidential in nature. She is going to send out a reminder to the room moms to describe the function of the Corresponding Secretary.

Facebook – In the past month, there were 27 posts. The highest viewed picture

was the Walk to School picture, followed by Family Night and then our PTA meeting. There are 321 likes and 88% female and 12% male followers.

Parliamentarian - Laura

Laura presented a draft list of standing rules. The by-laws don't cover all of the things that need to be covered, so these rules are additional items that will transition from year to year. Some things are related to the expanded internet world, such as pictures and sharing of email of addresses. The PTA will discuss the draft rules tonight and vote at a later time.

1. No pictures of any TES student(s) will be published online by the PTA. This rule allows parents to have control over their child(ren)'s online presence. The group was in agreement that this is an appropriate rule to vote on at a later time.
2. The PTA will not allow advertising on its website or any online publication, however, the PTA can acknowledge the support of a company through those means. For example, if a company/organization allows the PTA to use a space or offers donated goods, the PTA can publicly thank that company/organization without contact information. This rule clarifies the bylaws for our use. The group was in agreement that this is an appropriate rule to vote on at a later time.
3. Parent and student contact information will not be shared for commercial purposes, nor will the PTA act on behalf of a commercial venture to access our parents.

Part of this came out of the Virginia PTA's request for all members' email addresses this year. There was a state vote to provide more data on members than has been provided in the past – including personal information, email address, etc. This was voted in by the Virginia PTA. Not all schools collected all of the information, so the Virginia PTA said they would take whatever information that could be provided. The information isn't being provided to the VA PTA yet, as this potential use of information wasn't disclosed and there was no option to opt out of providing this information. The Virginia PTA is supposedly not going to use this information this year. They said they are just collecting it for data and that they need it because it is in their by-laws now. Another reason provided was that they said sometimes they get calls from people wanting to know if they are members and they don't have the information to answer this question. A parent suggested to request that the Virginia PTA say in writing why they need this information. While the Virginia PTA has said they wouldn't use it this year, they haven't made promises about future years.

The group agrees that this standing rule would be appropriate to vote on at a later time.

4. Only the President, the President elect, and the treasurer will have access to the PTA's online banking or electronic transactions. This coincides with the positions that have check signing privileges.

The group agrees that this standing rule would be appropriate to vote on at a later time.

5. The PTA requires all parents/guardians to personally sign out and pick up students who have stayed for a PTA-sponsored after school activity. No student will be allowed to sign himself/herself out and walk home. This rule ensures the safekeeping of students under the supervision of the PTA.

Also up for discussion – the option of whether a student can sign themselves out to walk home, if the parent and/or the principal approves.

This rule is about whether students should be allowed to sign themselves out after ASE or other PTA programs, as it is a safety concern. The rules should be clearer around this issue. Option A is what has typically been done – having each child being signed out by a parent. Option B proposes that kids can sign themselves out after activities, but this option would have to be previously approved by adult and maybe the school. Both options have parent support, so Laura wanted to get some opinions.

There is some support for letting them to walk, since they are allowed to walk home after school. However, there is a liability issue and they maybe need to obtain more details about any potential liability. Mrs. Ford might not be around after school, and once school is out of session, some additional safety issues may exist.

Because these things are PTA events, the group did not think Mrs. Ford should have to pre-approve the kids option to walk home, especially since she may not even be available during PTA activities, in case of after school meetings. Suggestions were made to consider looking into the liability issue, whether the Virginia PTA says anything about this issue, or what other schools do. Another parent suggested that maybe it's not worth the time to invest in researching and to just keep our regular sign out process. If a child doesn't get home, there would be no one to call because the school would be closed. Generally, people felt that it would be hard to get around any liability issues, and the current sign-out system seems to be working, so there was agreement that kids should continue to be signed out for after school activities. There are fewer students walking at the later time, fewer grownups out at bus stops, the office would be closed, and there would not be much information about a child's whereabouts as they would have immediately after school. The principal might be in meetings and not accessible.

Laura is going to update the wording, including and update for children carpooling, and the rules will be voted on at a later time. Everyone should send Laura an email with any other considerations.

President's Report - Elaine

Elaine thanked everyone so much for all of the support. She pointed out that this is the end of the super busy season.

VII Committee Reports

- ASE

This is the last week of After School Enrichment (Nov. 6). Thanks to all who volunteered to help make it a successful session! The winter ASE session will begin Feb. 5th. Angela will be stepping out to resume more President Elect responsibilities and Abby Frederick will be taking over ASE.

- Annual Fund

The annual fund amount hasn't changed much since last month. Some money (\$333) was received from the school supplies supplier. This service is intended to be a parent convenience but does provide a small amount of income. Laura is working on the donation documentation that people use for their taxes.

- Book Fair

The Fall book fair raised more than \$1,800.00 for the PTA. In addition, the angel fund provided a book for nearly 20 students who qualified for this program. Their books were purchased tax free and with the educator discount provided by bbg. The kids were full of gratitude.

The total income was only about \$200 off of last fall's fair. Friday night was slow - most likely due to the fact that family night was held outdoors and the fact that the back doors were locked due to the bees. However, there was a steady stream of purchases all day Thursday and Friday. Had Friday night brought as many sales as it usually does, sales from last year would have easily been surpassed.

Thanks go out to all the teachers who brought their classes downstairs to preview the book fair. Many parents shopped with their child's wish list! Thanks to the volunteers - new and old! The book fair committees hopes that everyone found something wonderful to read! Please feel free to contact Claire Newton directly with any feedback you'd like to share.

- Buildings and Grounds:

Fall Clean-up Day was 10/26 and it was a great success. There was an impressive turnout from TES families and IB students, and they completed every task they had planned to tackle. Mrs. Ford organized the workers in the in the Pow Wow Patch - piling the lumber neatly for future use, cleaning out debris and old branches, cleaning the shed and relocating the rabbit hutch. It is ready for further renovation that will come later this school year complements of the Thomas Jefferson Garden Club and their collaboration with TES dad, Keith Whipple. The rest of the grounds were spruced up as well, with over 100 bulbs planted and new mulch spread all along the front of the school, around the horseshoe and in Peter Rabbit's Garden.

- Calendar and Directory – no report (directories were sent home in the backpacks previously)

- Chess

Chess Club is going strong and is in the middle of the fall session.

They are in the process of forming a Chess Team and plan on competing November 23 at the Maggie Walker Fall Scholastic Tournament.

The students are excited, as for most of them, this will be their first tournament experience.

In the next few weeks, they will speak with Coach Callaham regarding plans for the spring session.

- Community Service

The new partnership with the East End elementary school was discussed earlier in the meeting, along the principal's report. Everyone is very excited about this endeavor.

- Drama Club

Drama club is up and running....off to a great start.

- Duathlon

The Duathlon was Sunday, November 3, and they had 200 teams with almost 400 participants. There was positive feedback from those who attended. Many thanks to all of our sponsors and participants for a great event! Our total raised will be reported at the December PTA meeting, but the move from event to fundraiser seemed to go well.

- Family Night

There was an amazing turnout for Family Night with 560 people who prepaid for the event and approx 30 people who "walked in" and ate. Unfortunately, Carytown Burgers and Fries was not prepared for a crowd this size and did not have at least 100 meals ready by 5pm, as promised. They got off to a late start due to the bee relocation situation which resulted in over an hour wait for food. Thanks go to Mary Downing Parker, who hopped in the truck to speed things up. They were able to serve their last customer by 8pm. Carytown Burgers and Fries were only paid for the meals they served. Refunds were offered and issued to those who requested one and there is also a credit of \$599 left for those who prepaid and did not receive meals(no shows or left without requesting a refund). Some of the families who left early have generously requested that their refund be donated to the PTA. There is a list of no show names at tonight's meeting if refund requests are not received by Friday, the rest will be donated to the PTA.

On a positive note, the families who were able to wait it out enjoyed a beautiful night, met lots of new friends in line, and the kids had a blast playing outside while their parents waited patiently. The Gelati Celesti truck was well equipped and said they would love to come back to Tuckahoe for another event. The committee received a ton of great feedback about holding the event outside opposed to inside. They think this would be a great opportunity to change the event to a Family Picnic next year in mid to late September. Generally, everyone agreed it might be nice to have the event without a cost, with the ice cream truck as an option.

- First Grade Musical- Dec. 16th daytime and 17th evening

The committee has enough volunteers for the first grade musical- yea! Next step will be getting in touch with the music teacher to find out what they are doing! Elaine will help the committee obtain the notebook that will help them.

- Holiday Kids Corner –

They sent out a sign up genius – even though they have lots of responses on the sheets that were sent out, they are going to keep signups on line. They are working on some rebranding – HKC is Holiday Kids Corner. They are trying to create a log and make the event more meaningful. Jennifer is going to send a facebook entry to ensure that everyone knows that HKC is the Holiday Kids Corner. There will still be a worksheet prior to the event that will try to help the kids with budgeting for the event.

Elaine explained that there are two committees - one committee does crafting and the other does everything related to the day of the event. The crafting is going well. Meg is working on a lot of “day of” work.

- Hospitality

There is a teachers’ luncheon for November 5th. Alfreda is coordinating the lunch that the PTA is providing. Everyone eats in the library because the cafeteria will be closed.

- Lego

Heather offered a big thank you to everyone for the hard work. Tuckahoe's Lego season is over. Both teams both actually made it to the tournament and it was a lot of work but the children had a good time. Nine schools participated and one of the Tuckahoe teams won a judges’ award and ranked third. It was a lot for everyone just to get through all of the work and the parents helped a lot. The Lego team is on a very condensed timeframe. The problem was announced late August. If you are interested, try to go see one of the next few weekends. Anyone can pop in and see the competitions. There is no competition in the spring. You can participate as a 9 year old, and they are mostly 3rd grade for junior Legos. This year, there were 20 kids on 2 teams of 10.

- Newcomers

The newcomers committee is in the process of figuring out how they might approach the next school year. They are revisiting so that they are ready for the spring, since kindergarten registration is in April.

- Reflections

Thanks to all TES students and families who submitted artwork for the Reflections Art competition. The submissions deadline was October 17th and 45 entries in 6 categories were received. The entries are being categorized and sent to various artists in the community for judging. They hope the judging will be complete by Nov 7th and winners will be announced in the November 11th Signals and morning announcements that week. All of the art work will be hanging in the hallway outside the library by November 15th. There have been several new volunteers involved and the help is appreciated. The first place TES winners in each category will go on to the District level competition.

- SCA/Spirit Nights

The TES Spirit Day at the UR Football game was a lot of fun. Ninety tickets were sold for a total of \$450 to the PTA. Christie is interested in people's feedback as to whether this is something that should be offered next year given the busyness of October. Generally, people thought that it was a nice event, although it did compete with a lot of other activities, including the PTA event the same morning. Also, since it was a kids' club game, some people went but did not sit with Tuckahoe, as the Kids club games are reduced price and in a different section. Everyone agreed that they were grateful for the opportunity, and those who went had a great time. Elaine will get with Christie to discuss.

- SEATS

October was an exciting activity filled month for SEATS with the following programs taking place:

October 15th – Station 8 Firemen visit to Kindergarten

- Fire safety, family escape plan, calling 911, knowing address & ph. #, staying low/don't hide etc. Also toured fire truck and checked out all the equipment.

October 16th & 18th – Officer Cable, Henrico County Police – Kindergarten

- He talked about community helpers, how to recognize a police officer and other helpers and shared a book about strangers.

October 18th - Pat O'Bannon – Elected member of the Henrico County Board of Supervisors, Tuckahoe District – 5th grade. Mrs. O'Bannon spoke about the history of Virginia government and more specifically about how Henrico County is governed.

October 22nd & 23rd – Author DyAnne DiSalvo visited the 5th grade

Teacher feedback: "I really enjoyed DyAnne's visit and I think my students greatly benefited from it. I liked that it was an actual workshop and not just an author talking about his or her book. I appreciated how she really pushed the students, especially the ones that don't like to write, to add more detail. Writing about a personal experience definitely tied into the curriculum as well. Money well spent! Thank you!"

October 24th – Virginia Historical Society – 4th grade program: Pocahontas & the Powhatan Indians

October 29th – Author Elisa Carbone – Blood on the River – 4th grade

Parent feedback: "I was at school late yesterday, and the teachers were raving about Elisa Carbone!" The students also loved this visit and can't wait to finish the book. She is definitely an author the group would like to have back.

October 30th – Author Carol Lemons – Matisse and the Boy Who Loved to Draw – 1st grade

Carol talked about the process of writing and the relationship between the author and the illustrator. Then she read the book and taught about Matisse.

She brought painted paper in the Matisse style for the kids to use for cutting shapes and making bookmarks. It was a combination history, creative writing, and art lesson.

November Events:

November 19th – 2nd & 3rd grades Skype w/ author Dan Gutman

Dan has written 109 books including My Weird School Daze Series and My Weirder School

My Weird Writing Tips (HarperCollins, 2013)

I was astonished at the horrible grammar and spelling I was seeing in emails I received from kids. So I decided to do something about it. This book teaches very basic writing techniques, helps kids write their own stories, and reinforces the writing lessons that teachers try to give their students every day. The twist is that the "story" is told in the style of a My Weird School book, so it's not simply educational--it's silly and fun too.

Also, a big thanks goes to Jennifer Pounders for posting our SEATS activity recaps on the Facebook page for everyone to see.

- Signals

To be in Monday's edition, email tessignals@gmail.com by 5 pm on Wednesday for the following Monday morning.

- Square One Art

Under Mrs. Ranson's thoughtful guidance and keen eye for detail, the students completed their pictures on the art sheets provided by Square 1 Art. Mrs. Hatcher was very kind and printed off labels with the children's names, grades and teachers, which made the process much easier to label and identify each child's work. The art was packed up and sent back to Square 1 Art, using the original Square 1 Art box that the worksheets, advertising materials and fundraising materials came in back in August. Square 1 Art supplies the UPS form and the committee mailed the box, with 729 pieces of artwork from 32 class folders, on October 17th from Staples on Parham Road. Square 1 Art sent an email acknowledging receipt of the box. They will be sending the personalized order packets (organized by class) to TES and should arrive on November 5th.

Enclosed in each packet will be the custom catalogue and a free set of stickers with ordering instructions. Parents will be encouraged to order online because it makes the process much more efficient. Mrs. Watkins has told me she will display a Square 1 Art reminder on the outside school marquis from the 6th until the 19th, the deadline when all orders must be placed. There will also be an email with reminders to the room parents to send to all the parents and they will be posting a reminder in Signals and as a Facebook status update. So far, everything is running smoothly.

- Spirit Wear

Everything is going well. There was some discussion about possibly adding little garden flags.

- Veteran's Day Assembly

They are in the thick of planning for vet day. They are decorating from 10-12 on Friday . They still could use a hand or two if anyone is free. Veterans Day is Monday at 8:15 for k-2 and 9:30 for 3-5.

- Volunteers – no report

- Walk to School

People really liked the band. The students who came on the buses also went back to the blacktop. Two potential changes for next year are to have teachers with signs so that the kids can check in with their teacher to watch the band. Also, they may want to let the parents that the band will play for 20 minutes and students would need to locate their teacher on the blacktop in case parents were expecting their children to be able to enter the school at 7:20.

VIII New Business.

Previously, new business had included traffic safety, a walking school bus and watch dogs. Traffic safety was discussed in the principal's report. The walking school bus and watch dogs were not discussed this evening. No other new business was presented.

IX Meeting Adjourned.