

# DRAFT

Thurgood Marshall PTA  
General Meeting Minutes  
November 21st, 6:30 - 8:30pm

In attendance (in order of sign-in) - Katy Ransom, Kurt Edelman, Dawna Dennis, Molly Harris, Jennifer Wilder, Audrey Querns, Mark Lovre, Julia Janak, Karen Pinkard, Christine Shigaki, Tasha Irvine, Ben Kim, Greg Miller, Casey Sommers, Diane Bushley, Scott Engan, Jeanne Thompson, Lauri Nakamoto, Jill Raynor Holdcroft, Steve Ball, Brindy Bundesmann, Natalie Zheng, Alle Hall, Willemijn de Clercq, Amy Vore, Tatiana Gellein, Laura Gellein, Laurie Milodragovich, Sharmila Williams, Julie Breidenbach

## Welcome/Introductions

PTA Co-President Sharmila Williams opened with a welcome to the attendees and a discussion of the agenda, including informal presentations from Counselor Meghan Kaloper and Assistant Principal Christine Helm.

This is Meghan's second year at TM. She graduated from SU and has spent time in other schools, as a counselor as well as a preschool teaching assistant. Meghan uses the Second Step Curriculum as well as the Positive Discipline Program. She also facilitates such programs as Conflict Mediation, Recess Mentorship and the Kindness Club. Meghan supports the kids of TM in a number of ways - individual counseling, small group counseling and classroom guidance and skill practice. Meghan has a vast support network - feel free to contact Meghan anytime. She can be found in office 120, phone number 252.2808 and email address is mrharris@seattleschools.org. Meghan is in her office Tuesday thru Thursday.

Christine Helm has been in education for 12 years. She used to be in banking and project management on the east coast. She felt that she was in the wrong profession - so she sought a job in a "helping" field. Her first day on the job as a 2nd grade in Harlem was 9/11. Thus began her diverse and interesting teaching career, focusing on grades K thru 3rd both in NY and in Seattle. She is a big fan of Readers and Writers Workshop and in general, professional development and instruction. She decided that making staff happy in a school is an incredibly important job. She has also spent time as a principal in Magnolia at Lawton Elementary and an assistant principal at Whittier in Ballard. She is very happy to be at TM. She finds it a very positive, supportive environment. She also enjoys the sense of urgency that she finds at TM. NYC helped her discover that. Christine oversees the Kindergarten through 3rd Grade staff, students and families. She values instructional leadership and emotional health - and is excited to be at Thurgood Marshall.

A special thanks to Meghan and Christine for taking time out of their evenings to speak to the parents of TM!

Regular meeting agenda resumed...

Minutes from 9/17 were approved.

## Co-Presidents' Report - Tasha Irvine

Tasha discussed the various issues of the last month such as boundary changes, completion of the student directory, the electronic Pup Press and the Fall Dance, to name a few. Some upcoming events are the Scholastic Book Fair in the first week of December, the Pancake Breakfast and a new set of enrichment classes. Guest speakers for remaining PTA meetings include Amy Lang, Stephan Blanford from SPS, and Kim Estes from Savvy Parents/Safe Kids Workshops.

Mark Lovre and Audrey Querns gave a Pancake Breakfast Report. The breakfast takes place on Saturday, December 14th. It is a very fun event. In addition to the breakfast, there will be an art walk to display the fabulous work Becky Martin has been doing with the kids.

If you are interested in helping with the book fair, the breakfast and/or the art walk, please contact Wendy Eckert at wseckert@yahoo.com.

## Treasurer's Report - Brindy Bundesmann

Brindy discussed what the PTA opportunity grants have funded thus far. At this point, 3100 of the 10k dollars has been spent on a new rug, some cursive workbooks and a fun author guest speaker, to name just a few items.

## Fundraising Update - Casey Sommers

The annual fund has raised 56k thus far toward 130k goal. After Thanksgiving, a letter will go home for a December push, including a 10k challenge match. Casey is hoping to raise 130k by march 1st, when spending decisions for next year need to be made. We are at 20% participation currently - our goal is 60% participation.

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#### APP/AC Report - Jeanne Thompson

Jeanne is the chair of the APP Advisory Committee. Some of the major points of the recent 11/20 meeting are as follows - the proposed Wing Luke/Aki Kurose pathway is off the table for now. They are going forward with Fairmont Park as the West Seattle optional school to house the BLENDED APP/Spectrum program. Fairmount Park will reopen in 2014. For additional information about changes see <http://www.seattleschools.org/modules/cms/pages.phtml?pageid=294923> Jeanne isn't convinced any other plans that were on the table originally are not going to be brought up again - it isn't clear. The guaranteed pathway of TM to WMS to Garfield is still in effect.

#### Community Report - Ben Kim

Several community events took place last year - and plenty more to come this year. This is an opportunity to get to know both the TM family and the local community as well as have lots of fun while doing a good service. See Ben Kim if you have ideas for future projects or if you would like to be involved as a community project volunteer.

#### Principal's Report - Julie Breidenbach

Julie began by thanking Ben Kim for repainting all the parking lot zoning in front of the school. Regarding district news, Julie thinks our biggest challenge in the district is that those making the decisions are not educators. The final decisions are very different from the first proposed list, thankfully. Julie has reservations about a stand alone APP program in the north end. Julie feels strongly that programs interact. This is our second year with the new math program with an emphasis on practice standards (vs content standards) and is providing actual math skills that are necessary - such as precision when appropriate. It is about application of standards, problem solving and defending answers. Julie thinks it has been a relatively smooth year thus far. She is happy to have Christine on board. Some other great new staff members joined TM this year, such as Gomez and Egelhoff - the great teaching staff at TM supports these new teachers and helps them be strong as well. It is possible that we will need an additional portable next year if we do grow a bit more next year. Julie would like to see the General Ed program grow a bit.

Meeting adjourned at 8 pm.