

Thurgood Marshall PTA General Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2013

6:30 - 8:30pm

In attendance (in order of sign-in) - Sharmila Williams, Ben Kim, Tania Westby, Kurt Edelman, Annette Sherr, Karen Pinkard (sp?), Amy Vore, Casey Sommers, Tasha Irvine, Brindy Bundesmann, Scott Engan, Erin Baebler, Katy Ransom, Hazel Rideout, Lauri Nakamoto, Agen Schmitz, Alle Hall, Wendy Eckert, David Shelton, Angie Jenkins, Donna Dugan, Jinna Kim, Ralina Joseph, Carolyn Pugh, Mica Dibuz, Ann Easton, Amy Harper, Jeannie Revello, Kathryn Saxer, Karen Zeribi (sp?), Natalie Zheng, Jill Raynor Holderoft, Stacy Mcc (sp?), Ann Mc-Curdy, Jenny Sabora, Julia Janak, Sade Brown, Dana Cogswell, Stacey Joanovic

Welcome/Introductions

PTA Co-President Sharmila Williams opened with a big welcome to the attendees and a reminder to check the weekly Pup Press for a schedule of PTA general meetings going forward. Sharmila introduced herself, her Co-President Tasha Irvine, and offered an explanation of what the TM PTA does, with an emphasis on community building and fundraising. Relevant to fundraising, she described the important PTA function of funding certain staff members such as Merilee and Ken, two of the evening's guest speakers. With the description of PTA sponsored events was a brilliant slideshow courtesy of TM parent Ben Kim, highlighting past concerts, a pancake breakfast with art walk and a 5th grade legacy project, to name just a few.

In an effort to highlight further what TM PTA funds do, two TM specialists were introduced:

TM Music Specialist Ken Pendergrass gave some current year program stats - there are 169 instrumental music students this year and 109 choir students at TM. Ken Pendergrass began teaching in 2002. He has a background in band with a graduate degree in choral conducting. Many schools have instrumental music programs - with a single teacher shared among several schools. TM is unique in that Ken is the full-time music program instructor and he gets to teach both general music to the students as well as the optional instrumental music program. Ken's objective is to get students on an instrument for two years, through 4th and 5th grade, and he feels they will usually continue on with that instrument in middle school. He is happy to share his love for music through teaching.

Specialist Merilee Hudson described her job as TM Librarian - she is a very critical resource at a school with such a heavy emphasis on reading, and one of her many important roles is to connect kids and books. She also helps with communication literacy programs which enables kids to use technology to research various topics. A parent asked how kids are matched with appropriate reading material - Merilee explained that students are matched with appropriate books with a guided reading program (see attached yellow hand-out). She also runs the Global Reading Challenge - pulling 4th and 5th grade kids school-wide to read books together and compete against other students in other schools, both locally and beyond. She will also run TM Student Council this year for 4th and 5th grade kids. She really enjoys bringing kids together across all grade levels and programs.

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

Regular meeting agenda resumed. Minutes from 5/15 were approved.

Treasurer's Report - Brindy Bundesmann

Brindy went through the approved budget for the 2013/2014 school year and the proposed changes to the budget. Changes for budget were approved. See attached hand-out.

Fundraising Update - Casey Sommers

Exciting news! We have already raised \$26K, more than we raised through the entire month of September last year. This year, there will be three big pushes rather than a continuous year-long push. Casey explained that other than the Amazon and PCC give-backs and the TM Box-Top program, the Annual Fund is the ONLY way TM raises money - no auction, no gift wrap. Any amount received is greatly appreciated - please consider sending in a contribution in the TM Annual Fund

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envelope that went home with kids in the first week PTA packets so we can keep up the great momentum. This year's theme is ultimate frisbee - we look forward to seeing that frisbee fly through the foyer as our contributions continue to come in.

Events Report - Scott Engan

Grade level potlucks past and present are a fabulous way to meet your student's classmates and families. Look for reminder flyers that will go home with your child from school. This week's potlucks are the Kindergarten/1st Grade on Wednesday and the 3rd Grade will take place on Thursday. Also upcoming are the Fall Dance and Pancake Breakfast, to take place in November and December, respectively. In addition to already-established events, any event suggestions are very welcome and appreciated. See Scott Engan if you have additional event ideas!

Volunteer Report - Wendy Eckert

Some upcoming events that require additional volunteers are - Shoes That Fit with TM Nurse Molly Chin on 9/26 and 9/27 and the Vision and Hearing Screenings that take place in the TM library on 10/8 and 10/9. Pup Press distribution needs one or two people once a week for an hour on Thursdays for hard copy Pup Press distribution. Fall Dance is looking for a chair as well! Please see Wendy Eckert if you are able to help with any of these events. A big thanks to those of you who have already signed up!

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.

APP/AC Report - Sharmila Williams gave report in Jennie Wyatt's absence

Join the list serve for e-mail updates! Lots of discussion about boundary changes etc.. impacting programs like APP. Community meetings start taking place next Monday in various communities. October 1st meeting is at Hamilton Middle School. Bob Vaughn has retired, Steven Martin is current interim head of Advanced Learning.

Principal's Report - Julie Breidenbach

Student number 500 arrived today, 501 will arrive on Friday! TM is a full house. Neighborhood assignment plan allows kids to opt-back to neighborhood school if option school didn't work out, hence the growth at this late date. Julie gave a transportation update - buses are improving daily, but do let Julie know if something other than tardiness is taking place on your student's bus. MSP scores from last year for 4th and 5th grade students are in the mail. MAP testing starts next week. As MAP is not used as part of teacher evaluations, this is most likely the last year for MAP.

Regarding curriculum, we are heading into our second year with Envision math. We are familiar with content standards, next focus will be on practice standards. This is a year for fine-tuning what students have been learning thus far and practice using mathematical instruments appropriately. Kids will be doing more problem solving this year.

Lots of routines and rules to follow at TM - it helps with a school of this size and it also gives the kids some structure and predictability. Fire drills are less common now - we are doing three lockdowns and two shelter-in place-drills rather than just the straightforward fire drill as it is less likely that we will deal with a fire and more likely that we deal with a minor emergency of a different type.

Julie discussed news from an earlier SPS board meeting - because of tremendous student body growth, a proposed change is to open a West Seattle APP program, potentially at Fairmont Park, a school that will be re-opened next year. It would be an OPTIONAL program - students from West Seattle may also choose to remain at TM. Kids in West Seattle do spend as long as two hours on the bus each day - so this may be a welcome opportunity to some. Julie is talking to someone from the district on the various options and making sure that all West Seattle families have a voice in what is being discussed. Julie will keep the PTA up to date - news is also available at the SPS website.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.