

Symmes Elementary PTO General Agenda 11/9/2017

Call to Order

Camilla Millar

Approval of October General Meeting Minutes

- *Motion to approve, seconded and approved previous minutes.*

Teacher Representative Report

Cathy Jones

- *Thank You's*
 - o *Wonderful conference night dinner and desserts*
 - o *Soap and treats in the staff bathrooms*
 - o *Book Fair*
- *Kindergarten*
 - o *Students loved the Halloween celebration and parade*
- *First Grade*
 - o *Working on non-fiction, reading and writing*
 - o *Solving math problems with different strategies*
 - o *Nature trail – adopting and recording in tree journals*
 - o *Social studies – learning about people from past and present*
- *Third Grade*
 - o *Museum field trip today (11/9)*
 - o *Studying the scientific method*
 - o *Cultural feast and crest project (11/21)*
- *Fourth Grade*
 - o *Writing persuasive essays and starting opinion writing*
 - o *Math – 2 digit by 2 digit multiplication*
 - o *Thanksgiving brunch (11/21)*
 - o *Agricultural day field trip was canceled at Symmes Park due to scheduling changes – Cathy to suggest alternate trip to Ft. Ancient.*
- *All grades are looking forward to Symmes Cultural Heritage Night*

Principal & Assistant Principal Report

Anne Van Kirk &
Jessica Ralston

- *Concluded parent teacher conferences*
 - o *Anne will be sending letters to those parents unable to attend*
- *Expecting large Friday crowd for Muffins with Moms*
- *Week after Thanksgiving break will be CoGat testing*
 - o *Group ability test (puzzles, analogies, timed tasks, no academic questions)*
 - o *Week after that will be MAP testing*

★ Review of General Survey

- *146 responses to date*
 - o *Majority of the survey categories had large percentages of positive responses*
- *Highlighted stats:*
 - o *Feedback on communication on individual students*
 - *Most parents prefer email or text*
 - o *10% of people believe homework is excessive*

- 18% are unsure if MAP scores are helpful and if they fully understand the results
- 30% are unsure if MAP testing accurately reflects child's abilities
- 92% feel students are prepared for the next upcoming school year
- 99% understand Peacebuilders Pledge
- Highlighted comments:
 - Likes about our school
 - The staff and administration
 - culture/environment/community
 - diversity
 - events/activities/programs
 - communication
 - parent involvement
 - Dislikes
 - Academics (would like more time for science, social studies and specials)
 - intervention
 - more technology
 - special education support
 - not enough time for recess
 - Events/PTO
 - Desire for special needs group
 - Divide between too many events and not enough events
 - Parking
 - Asking for too much money
 - Limited involvement for working parents
 - Communication
 - Too much paper sent home
 - Culture/Environment
 - Too much praise
 - Confusing building layout
 - More male teachers
 - Homework
 - Too many online logins and work sites

★ Discussion of Testing (Jessica Ralston)

- MAP test is a computer adaptive test
 - Questions get harder/easier based on correct responses
 - Taken 3 times a year (fall, winter, spring)
 - Students in grades 1-8 take the test
 - Reading Section – includes topics such as phonics, vocabulary, writing and literary response
 - Math Section – includes topics such as problem solving, data analysis and algebra
 - RIT scores (Rasch Unit) – are meant to show growth over time (similar to a height chart)
 - scores are the same regardless of student age
 - Student Report
 - Shows score comparison between district, national and individual child
 - Also projects a growth score
- Gifted identification
 - Must have two 95th percentile or higher scores in a 12 month period and a CoGat score of 128 or higher
 - CoGat administered in 2nd and 4th grades

- Gifted pull-out education services start in 3rd grade
 - Intervention
 - Benchmark meetings are held 3 times per year
 - They begin with students with test scores in the 50th percentile or lower
 - Intervention services are provided during periods of 'no new instruction' (i.e. when teachers aren't teaching new material)
 - Based on individual student need
 - Progress monitor

SAC Report and Introduction

Margo Rap (Symmes SAC Rep)

- Sycamore Advisory Commission Representative
- What is the Commission?
 - Representative group across the school district, board members superintendent and city councils
 - Meet once a month at district board office
 - Anyone from community can attend (but may not vote)
 - Focus areas for school district improvements
 - Examples include how to attract more diverse teachers, link alumni, and work with special needs families
- How can we help?
 - Share the projects we are working on that are unique at Symmes (ex. Symmes Ambassadors program)

VP Family Involvement

LaToya Goshen

- ★ Muffins with Moms, last day tomorrow, Friday, 11/10
- ★ Book Club, contact Patricia Barros.
 - Patricia is willing to do evening winter club if there is interest
 - Still chance to join this current session, the club is only on chapter 2
- ★ 4th Grade Winter Concert, December 12
- ★ Cultural Celebration January 26. Lots of help needed! Please consider signing up! Everyone has some kind of cultural background!
- ★ Family Assistance
 - Clothing Drive
 - 7 families with 7 outfits per person from donations
 - Thank you for the support!

VP Ways and Means

Kenna Wahlquist &
Patricia Barros

- ★ Thank you to Jackie Ogden for chairing cookie dough fundraiser
- ★ Book fair a success!
- ★ Monthly Great Gatherings
 - See SignUp Genius for current offerings
- ★ Carnival Committee
 - Help is needed to call businesses to donate. Commitment is to contact 5 businesses between now and the beginning of February. Names will be assigned to you. Great for those with a little time in the evenings or on weekends!

VP Student Programs

Alison Peterman

- ★ Symmes Steppers
- ★ Symmes Stars
 - *Easy and fun way to help out, kids welcome*
- ★ Spelling Bee
- ★ Wellness Committee
 - *Not currently functioning, Julie Ferron is looking for a Wellness Rep to attend district meetings*
 - *Contact Alison if interested*

Treasurer's Report

Ashley Werthaiser

- ★ Budget Report
- ★ Cookie Dough Sales were down slightly from projected budget based on prior year's sales
- ★ PTO membership dues are slightly less than projected
 - *Increased membership deposit from last minute contributions*
- ★ Hassle-Free Fundraiser donations are more than budgeted
 - *Balances out slight decline in cookie dough sales*
- ★ General Vote for gifts for supplementary staff members in December in lieu of the Appreciation Committee collecting money
 - *Vote to accept is unanimous*

Recording Secretary

Leigh Grause

- ★ Nature Trail clean-up day
 - *Day was a success and the trail is looking beautiful for everyone to enjoy.*
- ★ Yearbook-please send your photos to Kim Hueil (khueil@icloud.com) - include names of students with your photos please.

Corresponding Secretary

Linda Mackey

- ★ A big thank you to our PTO members
- ★ Symmes Ambassadors
 - *Any parent is invited to attend Ambassadors programs*
 - *Next event - Looking Beyond the Diagnosis – information for families with special needs is schedule for 11/29 at 7 pm in the MPR.*

President Report

Camilla Millar

- ★ October Highlights
 - *Fall parade & Math Night*
- ★ John Mercurio looking for input on town hall meetings,
mercurioj@sycamoreschools.org
 - *Focusing effort on increasing transparency with finances and school board operations*
- ★ Discussion of how to reach more volunteers and include more families of parents who cannot attend meetings or volunteer during the day
 - *Request for ideas on ways to better include working families*
 - *Email Camilla*
- ★ No Meeting in December due to busy holidays
- ★ Nominating Committee will be forming in January
 - *Puts PTO board in place for next year*
- ★ PTO Parking Space Drawing
 - *Winner - Jackie Ogden*

★ Old Business / New Business / Adjournment

Camilla Millar

- *Symmes Players*
 - *Kim Hueil is liaison to Mary Wynn (producer) this year*
 - *Play will be announced next week*
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