

Symmes Elementary PTO General Meeting
Thursday, September 13, 2018

Call to Order/Introductions

Camilla Millar

- Facebook Live, please be respectful

Teacher Representative Report

Cathy Jones

- **All Grades:**
 - *Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity in providing the teachers with the “Back to School” reimbursement for classroom purchases. Your kindness is very much appreciated! Also, thank you for the generosity you showed in allocating money for classroom teachers to buy furniture to accommodate flexible seating and other classroom items. Finally, thank you for the “Back to School breakfast! The various treats were healthy and delicious!*
- **Second Grade:**
 - *Math: Starting Go Math, Chapter 2 on numbers up to 1000, regarding “place value”.*
 - *Reading: Good start to using reading strategies and builders by stamina/good independent reading behaviors...we are working on retelling (identifying character, setting, problem, events, and solutions) using the “5 Finger Retell” method.*
 - *Social Studies: Finishing unit on Citizenship. The. 4 B’s and citizens’ rights, responsibilities, and responsible behaviors.*
 - *Next up: Science. We will kick off the unit next Wed with a full day of weather fun!*
 - *Writing: We have finished writing our “Best Part of Me” class books. Copies will be sent home soon! Now, we are working on “small moment” writing. Instead of writing about a broad topic, such as “vacation” or “the beach”, we can focus on a small moment like “building my sand castle”. Our “Words Their Way” spelling program starts next week! Watch for your child’s differentiated list!*
- **Third Grade:**
 - *Third graders have been giving speeches about their likes, their families and favorite memories in Writing class. In math, we are reviewing addition and subtraction using the series Go Math (the same series that was used in second grade). In reading, the students are learning about increasing their reading stamina and setting goals for themselves. They are very excited to switch classes this year...two teachers.*
- **Fourth Grade:**
 - *In Language Arts, students are studying the components of realistic fiction and are applying those skills in writing realistic fiction stories.*
 - *In Math, through the use of the Go Math program, the students have been reviewing place value, reading and writing larger numbers, and estimating by rounding.*
 - *The current Social Studies unit includes, the reviewing of citizenship and responsibilities, geography skills, the abundance of natural resources that are present in Ohio, preparing presentations regarding the six Historic Indian tribes that lived in Ohio, and exploring the conflicts that led to the French and Indian War.*

Principal & Assistant Principal Report

Anne Van Kirk/Jessica Ralston

- *PBIS – school-wide program focused on changing and/or teaching behaviors with 4 or 5 praises for every 1 negative correction.*

- *This does not mean there are no consequences for students, but shifts the focus to positive reinforcement.*
- *Bee Bucks – teachers and staff award the tickets when they see students exhibiting positive behavior.*
 - *Quarterly lunches – teachers pick 2 students monthly who exhibit ongoing PBIS traits to enjoy lunch together*
 - *Ticket count = there were over 3,000 praises (tickets) accumulated in one week, which is an awesome visual way to notice all positive things that occurred.*
- *Teachers and staff are noticing climate change in the building and the improvements.*
- *Law enforcement presence – Officer Vicky*
 - *Officer Vicky comes into the school on a regular basis to familiarize herself with kids and meet them at lunch.*
 - *The purpose is to just make sure an officer is familiar with layout and presence in school in case of emergency.*
- *Pete the Cat author visit*
 - *Kindergarten students will be visiting the Symmes Library to meet Eric Litwin, author of the Pete the Cat series.*
 - *Students will have option to buy pre-signed book.*
- *Jen Shomo – attendance policy*
 - *State-wide attendance policy has switched from tracking days absent to hours.*
 - *2 categories of extended absences – excessive or habitual*
 - *These really only apply if there are more than 10 absences.*
 - *Symmes is now required to create intervention plan if absent hours exceed 10 cumulative days.*
 - *If you are planning an extended vacation or trip where you know your student will be absent for several days, please contact Jen to discuss your options for compliance with the new policy.*
 - *Please also make sure to fill out dismissal (communication) forms if you need to pick up your child early or they will be using an alternative method home.*
- *Anne also showed a short photo highlight slideshow of some of the events that have kicked off the school year.*

Technology in Sycamore Schools

Bill Fritz

- *Jennifer Green – Instructional Innovator for the district is also present.*
- *The technology team’s focus is on Kindergarteners (class of 2031). The belief is that a solid understanding of technology in the classroom begins early.*
- *Sycamore is “1 to 1” in every classroom, meaning every student has access to a device.*
 - *Grade levels:*
 - *K-4 - Every classroom teacher has a cart with 20-25 units that students may use while at school.*
 - *5th grade – Every student gets a new device in grade 5 with a 3 year manufacturer and accidental warranty. This is their own device to take to and from school.*
 - *8th grade and 10th grade– every student gets a new updated device.*

- *Future plans – over the next 2-3 years the district will be moving to a 4 year replacement cycle in grades 5 and 9 (beginning 2018-19).*
- **Current and future vision:**
 - **Synnovation Lab at the High School**
 - *Provides hands on creative ways to encourage design, experiment, build and invent as students engage in Science and Engineering. The emphasis is on collaborative learning and STEAM activities.*
 - **Symmes specific – the Media Center has Makerspace area. When our students have library (every 4 days) they incorporate these activities such as breakout boxes and Keva planks. When the materials are not in use for Library teachers can reserve the space for additional activities.**
 - **Large Format Displays**
 - *View Boards have been in classrooms for several years, but they are mounted to the wall.*
 - *The District will be rolling out large displays with touchscreens that are mobile, wireless and collaborative.*
 - *These will also be more cost effective over projectors. Symmes currently has one in Media Center*
 - **Digital Citizenship**
 - *Age appropriate modules are implemented for every grade level.*
 - *Topics include things such as student privacy, virtual reality, and digital footprints.*
 - *Steve Smith – A Wired family – provides useful information on tech safety at home.*
 - www.awiredfamily.org
 - *There are also student opportunities to work with tech staff to become student leaders in technology (classroom helpers, summer jobs, etc.)*
 - **Students with disabilities**
 - *Every student has access to devices. Tech leaders meet with Special Education teachers to determine what adaptive devices are needed and appropriate for individual students' needs.*
 - *Tulika Prasad (Symmes parent) – Autistic spectrum students tend to highly engage with tech and support. The technology leadership program would be an inclusive and awesome opportunity for these students to get involved.*
- **Final note – The Technology Department works with the Curriculum Development Committee to decide what tech implementation is appropriate by grade level. Eventually there will be standards from the State, but as of now it is a developing process. Currently when teachers want to try something new or need help implementing a new device our Instructional Innovator, Jennifer Green, is available to help in the classroom. The goal is always to integrate the tech with the curriculum being taught in the classroom.**

President Report

Camilla Millar

- Thank you for your membership! <https://www.sycamoreschools.org/Page/3048>
 - *Magnets with important phone number reminders will be coming home to paid members*
- Directory will be taken care of by the district and put up on Blackboard/Parent Portal (details to follow)

- Open Chairs: Wellness Warriors, Art Room, Music Room, Media Center, School Supplies (Feb-Aug 2018), Bridge Books, Dodge Ball (Spring Fundraiser), Carnival: General Chair, Sponsorship, BidNBuy Co-chair, Games Co-Chair, Prizes Co-chair
- Sign up as a volunteer online: <https://www.sycamoreschools.org/Page/3051>

Treasurer's Report

Ashley Werthaiser

- Budget Report and approval
 - *PTO offered classroom teachers \$200 and support staff \$100 each for fall gifting.*
 - *Please complete reimbursement forms if you are spending money on PTO projects.*
 - *PTO goal is to bring in \$80,000 this year.*
 - *Motion to approve the budget was made and 2nded.*

VP Family Involvement

Megan Haring

- Family Fun Night Sept. 27, chair: Megan Day, Jenny Krieger

VP Ways and Means

LaToya Goshen/ Gerri Woods

- School Supplies Recap
- City Saver Fundraiser
 - *Online sales are starting to come in and students are registering*
 - *City Saver books are available with coupons for other cities and we still get the credit if out-of-state friends and family are interested in purchasing.*
- Cookie Sale Kick-Off: Sept. 28, chair: Jackie Ogden
- Free Money (seriously!): Kroger card and Amazon Smiles
 - Go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com
 - select location. On next page, choose "enroll"
 - if you have an account, then log in... if not, create an account (bottom of 2nd column)
 - find "community rewards" and select Symmes Elementary PTO as your organization
 - If at some point you need an organization number... ours is 81716
 - Amazon donates .5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Symmes. Shop on amazon as usual (works with Amazon prime). The only catch is that you must shop through the Amazon Smile site (it is the exact same shopping experience). Bookmark <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1340714> and use it to make your purchases.
- Cash for Trash (Box Tops, Campbell's labels, Tyson labels)
 - Earn money for Symmes by simply doing a little clipping! These products all offer cash incentives to our school when we send in their labels. You can send in box tops at any time via backpack mail...each teacher has a box outside their room for collection. Also, watch for further information about classroom collection contests!

VP Student Programs

Tulika Prasad

- Symmes Steppers: Lauren Gall, Bekah Erck, Jane Kahle, Sara O'Hara, co-chairs
 - *Steppers just started yesterday, and we are shooting for 100% participation.*
 - *There is always room for more volunteers, please contact one the chairs listed above if interested.*
- Symmes Spotlight: Sunny Pitt, Tulika Prasad, co-chairs
 - *Sunny Pitt and Jaime Magee are the co-chairs this year.*
 - *Link to SignUp Genius will be shared in the next Circular.*
- Spelling Bee 4th grade spelling bee: October 18, Ash Goel, chair
- Vision screenings
 - *Scheduled for Oct 23rd, 24th and 26th – Jane Kahle will be organizing again this year but needs volunteers. No training is required.*

Recording Secretary

Leigh Grause

- Symmes Circular

Corresponding Secretary

Michelle Martin

- Symmes Ambassadors: Jackie Ogden, Chair
 - *Help Night and Homework Night were big successes.*
 - *We still have need for volunteer translators, specifically Uzbek.*
 - *Next meeting is scheduled for Sept 24 @ 7:00 – MAP testing will be the topic.*
- Room Parents Meeting: September 27 @ 10 am, Margo Rapp, Chair
- Staff Appreciation: Brittany Haines, Christy Panuccio, Co-Chair
 - *Teacher/staff breakfast scheduled next week*
 - *Culinary Committee – we would like to organize committee for bakers, cooks, and/or shoppers that would be willing to help prepare for staff meals. Please contact Brittany or Christy if interested.*
- PTO Parking Space Drawing/ Facebook Giveaway Drawing
 - *Hanger prize winner – Jackie Ogden*
 - *PTO Parking Space – Patricia Kaczanowski*
- SAC meeting – Margo Rapp
 - *Upcoming meeting – please share Symmes updates with Margo so that she can share them at the SAC meeting with school reps, administrators and the community. Please also let her know if you have any specific questions or problems you would like her to discuss.*
 - *The Eagle Scouts completed their training on our Nature Trail – Steve Reinke is the Nature Trail contact person.*

Adjournment