

## **PTA General Meeting, 7pm, 2/11/2019**

Members in attendance (20): Laura Jennings, S, Kathryn Farmer, Carrie Lewis, Trey Billips, Jennifer Pulliam, Andrew Pulliam, Seubson Soisuvann, David Gordon, Brandi Gordon, Brad Kinder, Staci Rijal, Dustina Bittner, Michelle Hart, Bryn Baisley, Nicole Durity, Sandy Marks

Trey Billips opened the meeting at 7:01pm

### **Exec Committee Reports**

- **Bylaws - Motion to approve the PTA 2018-19 bylaws. Motion approved.**
  
- **President**
  - Thank you to all who participated in all of the December fundraiser and community events and all who have worked hard on committees to date.
  
- **Treasurer**
  - Company matching for Fall appeal donations.
  - We give \$1000 per grade to pay for field trips. Mostly Kennedy Center trips (2nd trips).
  - We are funding an assembly for Black history month.
  - \$4400 awarded in mini grants to teachers or teaching teams. 12 applications, 8 were fully funded. 3 were partially funded.
  - Hosted a potluck for teacher conferences last Thursday.
  - Waiting on Barnes&Noble check from December's fundraiser (for the Giving Tree programs). We fell short on this compared to last year.
    - Question: Is the decreased amount due to decreased traffic or they changed how much we receive?
      - We think that they changed % of what we receive. Also, it seemed that at check-out the cashiers weren't really giving credit to the purchases that were supposed to go towards CBES.
      - We may need to cut our losses and change fundraisers next year.
  - \$2300 to install the benches out front. Tons of positive feedback.
  - Carrie is always available at [cbptatreasuer@gmail.com](mailto:cbptatreasuer@gmail.com) if you have questions.
  
- **Secretary**
  - Motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2019 meeting. Motion approved.

### **Principal's Report**

- 100th day of school is this Wed. Encouraging students to celebrate.
- Board game drive for the indoor recesses, thank you for your donations!
- Next year's ACPS budget impact on CBES:
  - New Kindergarten section (a smaller class)

- Adding a 1st grade classroom
- Adding a 4th grade classroom
- Adding a new member of the office staff (3rd secretary)
- No reductions in our budget, so we are not losing anyone.
- No plans to increase capacity in Cafeteria, library, parking lot.
- HVAC is still delayed, but we may get a reassessment over the summer.
- Thank you to the PTA for help during the Furlough; for the new benches outside the front of the school; and for the Principals' appreciation week gifts.
- Questions:
  - Are you predicting the enrollment will go up this year?
    - We are predicted to go up about 34 students
    - Next year we may add one more classroom and our enrollment should level out
  - So what about cafeteria and parking with increased population? Cafeteria is loud.
    - Unfortunately there is not a lot of room to expand the cafeteria. So we have to be creative, moving tables around and adding tables. There are acoustic options and seating options that can make it better. We will keep looking those.
    - There was a study budgeted in the CIP to expand it, but it fell off because there is no way to really physically expand it.
    - In comparison to other ES cafeterias, it actually isn't that bad.

### **Middle School Principals' Presentation**

- MScott Berkowitz from **Jefferson Houston**:
  - Visit Jefferson Houston :
    - You can tour: February 13, March 13, and April 16: 7:50-11:30 - You can shadow a student. Contact Ms. Price, Barrett's counselor, and she will coordinate for you. But if you just show up that will be ok.
    - Open House and Elective fair: March 14 at 6pm
    - Walk through Wednesdays: Feb 6, Feb 13, March 20 9:00-10:30am
  - This is MScott Berkowitz's first year as Principal at JH, formerly a teacher there before it went K-8.
  - Fully authorized IB (International Baccalaureate Programmes) both at Primary and Middle Years Programs. Developing international mindedness in our students.
    - Important part of IB is the IB Learner profile: knowledgeable, risk-takers, reflective, caring, principled. communications, balanced, thinkers, open-mindedness, inquirers. Consistent through grades K-8

- Not fully accredited. Accredited with conditions. JH has achievement gaps in Math, some achievement gaps in English, Very straight forward about this, but are working to address it. Have significant work to do.
  - Improvement strategies: Rich math tasks, guided reading, interventions, specially designed instruction (SDI). Better communication within the staff and staff to families.
- A day in the life of Middle grades:
  - Seven 50 min periods, including lunch
  - Spanish for all - HS credit available
  - Electives - PE, Tech, Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Dance, AVID (advancement via individual determination - great program: has tutoring, organizational skills, support skills), Art
  - After school clubs, safety patrols, jazz band, intramural sports, monthly PBIS events, 3rd-8th grades 1-1 laptop initiative, TAG services and acceleration, builders club (part of the Kiwanis club of Alexandria), SGA, school newspaper, gay-straight alliance. We allow them to do what they want to do and advocate for.
- Questions:
  - How do you manage all the vast age range in the school?
    - Can be challenging, but it also gives great opportunities. Older kids come down and help the younger kids in the morning. Allows siblings to be in the same school for a much longer period of time. The middle schoolers are in their own part of the building, but they move through the school in an appropriate manner. We bring the little kids up to show how responsible the big kids are.
  - IB - Any plans to connect the IB program to Highschool?
    - Talk to Dr. Hutchings about that.
  - Are there honors courses besides TAG: yes - science, history
  - Class size comparison: some classes tend to be a bit bigger. Honors tends to be bigger (26-28 is the max). Some classes are as small as 10. It just depends and we are looking at where we might need to add teachers.
  - How is the HVAC system?
    - Not fixed yet. Some temporary blowers in the Kindergarten classrooms. It is on the school board's radar. There is a plan to fix it, hopefully this summer. Facilities responds with a spot cooler/heater when needed.
  - Plans for the different sub-groups in the achievement gaps?
    - There has been a lot of change really quickly in the demographics due to gentrification.
    - So we have to train our teachers to differentiate student needs and address them.

- **George Washington Middle School** - Jesse Mazur (5th year as principal) Built in 1936, originally intended to be a high school.
  - 1506 students (big school), 566 sixth graders.
    - Getting an additional math teacher (essential)
  - Student body: 42% white, 34% latino, 17% african american, 7% other
  - Full state accreditation in SOL tested areas (may change as the state accreditation changes, we do have challenges in our gap groups)
  - Each grade level occupies its own space, elective wing is the 2nd floor. Sixth graders are on the 3rd floor and travel for electives, lunch and PE. Takes 2 weeks to a month to get the lay of the land.
  - Organized in Grade levels by teams. 1 academic principal per grade (travel with the grade all three years), 2 school counselors (travels with the grade all three years), 4 teams per grade.
    - 2 deans of students: 1 is student life, 1 is building safety/drills.
  - Role of the professional guidance counselor (most important person as far as parents are concerned) in the event you need additional support:
    - POC regarding academic advising and course selection
    - Support the academic, personal, social, emotional development of the whole child
    - Provide individual and group counseling
    - Serve as the child's advocate
  - Selecting classes:
    - 7 classes every day with different teachers (47 minutes long with 4 minutes passing time)
    - 8:30am - 3:15pm
    - Middle school is the time to start taking academic risks. If your student has a passion, this is the time to follow it. Believes that all students should take at least one honors class to take a risk.
    - 5 required courses: Language Arts, Math, Science, social studies, health/PE
      - Honors classes: TAG kids are clustered within these classes.
    - 2 Electives: Art, Speech/Drama, Technology (one is wood working based, the other is computer based programming class), Make it your business (entrepreneurial, starts as keyboarding but at the end you are managing a garage band), Family and Consumer Science (financial literacy to cooking). Band, Orchestra, Choir.
    - Year long world languages: Spanish, French, Latin, German, Chinese. Kids can go to Germany, China. Can go to a Latin convention. French class connects French culture to food. Spanish - working on figuring out a special event for these classes (there are 5 teachers). Taking a language can get you a high-school credit.
  - Visit GW:
    - Walkthrough Tuesdays: Feb 12, April 9 (leave the kids at home)

- Elective Fair on Feb 12th at 6pm. You get to experience and hear about electives from the students
  - Students should be meeting with their 5th grade counselor to select courses for 6th grade.
- TAG services (34% TAG):
  - Rising 6th graders in math with take Advanced Math Concepts 7.
  - Rising 6th graders in TAG in English, Science or Social Studies will enroll in Honors courses and be clustered with other TAG students
  - TAG students receive a DEP (differential education plan) each quarter for each subject.
- GW has other experiences:
  - National History Day, Science Fair, Oratory club, review the TAG blog.
  - Intramural sports - 3 seasons
  - Extracurriculars - a ton (newspaper, plays, National Junior honors society, latinas leading tomorrow, etc). Driven by the students.
- Questions:
  - What is the projected enrollment increase?
    - Projecting 506 for the 6th grade class for 2019-20. This year it was over at 566.
  - Plans for implementing/overhauling teaching plans/instruction?
    - Looking at ways to not have two separate tracks (honors and gen ed).
    - Whole school cluster group modeling, a very innovative program: looking at a student longitudinally, what are the characteristics as a learner, etc. Then they get clustered. They are all capable of learning and working together. It would be a tremendous pivot from what we currently do.
    - We do have AVID, working really well. Supports 1st generation college going students. Looking to expand it.
  - When do you think you'll be implementing the overhaul talked about above.
    - Not sure, getting closer every year. We have the logistical side down. Now it's time to focus on instruction. Will be a function of working with central office.
  - 34% identified as TAG: How does that work, how are you able to really differentiate kids who really need the service?
    - In the current model, no one is being optimally served.
  - What is the criteria to get into Honors classes?
    - Any student who wants to take it can. It is open Honors.
    - Students with disabilities in the honors environment are often TAG identified.
    - Seth Kennard: vast majority of CBES students go into the honors classes.

- Classes taken that earn high school credit feed into the HS gpa?
  - Yes, they do.

**Next meeting: March 4, 2019 @ 8am - This is a MORNING MEETING**

Please email Trey Billips regarding any PTA issues (not Seth Kennard) or things you'd like to see in meetings, things we should be talking about: [cbptapresident@gmail.com](mailto:cbptapresident@gmail.com) Or contact any member of the board: <https://www.cbpta.org/meet-the-team>