

## Minutes of December 13, 2016 Swanson Middle School PTA Meeting

- PTA President Update – Madelon Brennan
  - Minutes approved for November meeting
  - Update on the Anchor
  - Directories have been delivered; online version is on the PTA site
  - Fall grants program awards have been announced; we have given more than \$15,000 in grants this year
  - Lebanese Taverna fundraiser on Thursday
  
- Principal Update – Bridget Loft: “What’s Happening at Swanson”
  - Barbara Hartman conveyed teacher and staff thanks for awards
  - Concert series – for band and chorus – are wrapping up this week
  - Friday will be the Ellis Island simulation
  - Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup> is the last day of school – no late bus that day; remember that January 2<sup>nd</sup> is a holiday
  
- Presentations on Yorktown AP Scholars Program; Arlington Tech; and Washington Lee IB Program
  - Ken Rybarck gave a presentation on Arlington Tech, which his son is currently attending as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader
    - He discussed the lower homework levels and the project based learning format
    - STEM program that emphasizes student-teacher collaboration; very hands-on with experiential learning format
    - Not an AP program, but does offer some dual enrollment classes with community college; students can still take AP exams following dual enrollment classes
    - Diploma from “home” high school; if you live in Yorktown district, for example, diploma will be from Yorktown (Arlington Tech is a “program” like HB Woodlawn); extracurricular program access is also through home high school
    - Must have a C average to apply; 40 students this year; expect to add 100 more to the incoming class
  - Laura Porter presented on the AP Scholars Program at Yorktown
    - Started 4 years ago as a complement to programs for struggling students with a program for high achievers
    - Must have a B average to participate
    - Assigned mentor beginning of freshman year
    - Enrichment activities including PSAT/SAT prep support; college and career specialists; special interest project at end of junior year
    - 32 AP classes currently offered at Yorktown; 100 students in each grade level in the program (400 altogether)
    - Application includes meeting grade level requirements and submission of an essay; no upper limit on the number of students admitted to the program as long as requirements are met and essay meets standards

- 3 Current IB students from Washington-Lee presented on the IB program at the school
  - Emphasizes a different type of learning style – much more Socratic with focus on analysis vs. “multiple choice learning”
  - Requires taking AP government in 10<sup>th</sup> grade
  - IB program requires 3 SL classes (one year courses) and 3 HL classes (two year classes), for a minimum total of 6 IB-specific courses
  - Wide variety of options available
  - Extended essay is due senior year; 4,000 words for a research-based project
  - Significant emphasis on writing in the program
  - Service project – 50 hours; tremendous support offered through a variety of resources, including teachers and IB program staff
  
- Questions & answers throughout; program adjourned.