

Swanson Middle School PTA Membership Minutes

October 13, 2015

PTA President Noah Simon welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. We reviewed minutes from the previous meeting and voted accept the minutes as written.

The agenda for the meeting will include:

1. Review 2015-16 PTA Budget
2. Principal's Update
3. Presentation from Laura Porter, Assistant Principal at Yorktown and supervisor of the Yorktown AP Scholars Program.
4. Presentation from Washington-Lee IB students

1. The 2015-16 PTA budget is very similar to last year. Noah Simon remarked that the budget is fluid and we may need to adjust it as the year moves on. He noted the significant changes:
 - Increase on Dollars for Scholars. We hope to earn more this year.
 - Increase the budget on " Grants- Educational Teacher & Staff" [Line 34] from 6,000 to 7,500.
 - Challenge Racism – APS will pay for this program this year so we reduce the overall budget by \$ 5,000. We will keep \$500 in the Challenge Racism budget for miscellaneous costs.
 - A motion was made to pass the 2015-16 budget. Passed the budget
 - One note regarding the Swanson directory – This year we will be offering an online version in addition to a print directory.
2. Principals Update:
 - Ms. Loft introduced Barb Hartman (team teacher lead/liaison). Barb thanked the PTA for stocking the teacher's lounge.
 - Ms. Loft thanked the PTA for successful book fair. There were 55 parents volunteers and we are still reviewing exact dollar amounts but looks good. Librarians also extended their thanks
 - Important upcoming dates/events:
 - Yearbook and dance crew haunted house on October 23rd
 - Music Department Masquerade Party (Band / orchestra /chorus event booster) on November 6th .
 - November 9th end of quarter
 - Annual multicultural night – November 18 - food and performances by students which are representative of their cultures.
 - Ms. Loft addresses the recent stranger danger situations as she reported in the APS talk messages. The incidents were quickly shared to the school officials by the students and we immediately increased patrols in the areas where the incidents occurred. It is believed to be

- two separate incidents. She encouraged students to walk with a buddy if they can. If they feel uncomfortable, go into a near-by business, go back to school or don't be afraid to call 911.
- Capacity Planning Update
 - Committee had their second committee meeting last week.
 - Significant need to increase cafeteria space. We are looking to allocate some of the relocatables to be extra cafeteria space (Admirals Mess).
 - Configuration of the 20 relocatables – Review the [capacity planning website](#) from the website
 - Next meeting: Security will be the focus and we will discuss buzzers and cameras and covered walkways.
 - APS Risk management representative is coming.
 - New Middle School Board work session meeting was on October 6th. [Presentation is on the website](#)
 - 3. Noah Simon welcomed Laura Porter – Assistant Principal at Yorktown and supervisor of the [Yorktown AP Scholars Program](#). She presented on the Scholars Program.
 - Why do we have the Yorktown AP Scholars program?
 - i. The Yorktown AP Scholars Program is an opportunity designed for students who are academically capable, curious, and motivated. The program provides college level course work that is aligned to the National Advanced Placement Program.
 - The program has 10-15 mentors to discuss concerns kids have going into HS.
 - i. Example: She has people coming into talk to juniors about what their timeline should look like for applying to college
 - Enrichment activities: Public Speaking
 - Students can design their own schedules
 - For completing the program , each students receives a letter to their college in recognition of them being part of this program
 - Pre-requisites:
 - i. Participate in Intensified Grade 9 coursework
 - ii. Complete 6 or more AP courses in Grades 10 - 12
 - iii. Attend enrichment activities, minimum of two a year
 - iv. Complete special project and brief reflection paper
 - v. Meet quarterly with advisor
 - vi. Maintain B or better in all classes
 - Question: What is the difference between this program and IB @ W-L
 - i. She recognized this idea that students are stressed and we are trying to create a support network. Try not to plan too much afterschool because students are busy. Mentors have office hours.
 - Question: Please explain what AP means now to a college admissions office?
 - i. Colleges want to see that students are taking the most rigorous program that the school offers. We reviewed a list of AP classes offered at Yorktown

- Question: What events do you have during the year?
 - i. Sample Calendar – 4 events
 1. 2 check-in meetings and mentors view grades throughout the year
 2. Science activities
 3. Engineering activity
 - How to apply
 - i. Question: When should kids apply? Students apply in 8th grade. Deadline for this year is February 19 2016. Anyone that applies will get in if they meet the criteria. Sophomore year is the cut off for entering the program. There is no credit for the program but they receive a letter for college.
2. Noah Simon introduced three students from Washington-Lee High school that are in the International Baccalaureate program. He noted that the W-L Principal has a goal that every student take at least ONE AP class and 99% have done that. The students discussed their experience in the IB program.
- IB Overview: <http://www.apsva.us/domain/2179>
 - Exams are taken at the end of your junior year.
 - These are college level courses recognized by colleges. The AP (Advanced Placement) courses are face-paced whereas IB courses are two-year courses and very in-depth
 - The final exams cover 2 years of content.
 - You must receive a score of 24 to get the IB diploma.
 - There is a significant amount of writing and discussions in IB courses.
 - IB programs requires you to take a variety of classes.
 - Three requirements that separate AP from IB:
 - i. 150 Community service hours
 - ii. Extended essay – if you are doing the diploma program (any topic you want)
 - iii. TOK – Theory of Knowledge – The class helps you learn about how you learn. An analytical class about how people think.
 - Diploma options
 - i. Advanced Studies Diploma
 - ii. IB Diploma
 - iii. Standard diploma and enhanced diploma.
 - Most students pass their exams
 - There is a partial IB = minimum of 3 IB classes.
 - Transfers can only take partial IB. There is a lottery for transfers into that what to do the IB program.
 - What is the profile of a student that would be a good fit?
 - i. Better preparation for college.
 - ii. International college options
 - iii. Focus on a particular subject
 - IB night Tuesday Dec 1st

We hope to see you all back at future meetings. If there is no more new business the meeting is adjourned. The meeting concluded at 8:05pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Madelon Brennan, Recording Secretary