

O'Hara Elementary PTO Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 9:21 am (delayed start due to construction traffic). Approximately 45 people were in attendance, including all 2016-2017 PTO Officers.

O'Hara Administration Update (Dr. McNamara)

- Dr. McNamara and Mr. Winkler came out of retirement to assist O'Hara. Both have ties to the school district and have dedicated their lives to public education.
- A new principal, Kristy Batis has been hired. She is currently on maternity leave and has a planned start date of October 31st.
- A new vice principal, Stephen Edwards, has also been hired. His start date is still TBD and will be determined by his release date from South Fayette SD, where he is currently a 4th grade teacher.
- The interim principals are not making major changes, but are assisting in the implementation of changes discussed at the close of the 2015-2016 school year, including:
 - Side door entry for before and after school care (a safety measure)
 - Change in drop off time to 8:40 am
 - This change relates to a contractual issue. Teachers will now have a full 40 minutes for planning prior to students arriving.
 - Several parents expressed concern over the change in drop off time, particularly for working parents who relied on the 8:30 drop off.
 - Dr. McNamara stressed that the changes are being made with the best interest of students and teachers in mind.

Welcome & Introductions (Dana Rofey and Carrie Work)

- The PTO has two new co-presidents, Dana Rofey and Carrie Work.
- Tonja Condron is the current treasurer. Her term is up at the end of this year. Anyone interested in serving as Treasurer beginning next school year should contact Tonja at tonjacondron@gmail.com.
- The PTO has new website, accessible at www.oharapto.org. Parents are encouraged to follow the blog for email updates.
- The PTO also has an active Facebook page (www.facebook.com/oharapto).
 - Dana reminded parents that all posts should be PTO-specific and not related to issues with the school administration. Issues should be addressed privately.

Project and Committee Reports

*** Contact information for committee chairpersons and PTO officers and representatives is attached.*

- **Homeroom Parents** (Dara Henne)
 - All rooms have homeroom parents assigned. Some have more than one.
 - Homeroom parents present at the PTO meeting received informational packets. Packets will be delivered to those not in attendance.
 - Homeroom parent duties range from photocopying to assisting with class parties.
 - The “no food” rule for class parties was discussed.
- **Welcome Back Social** (Kim Siddons)
 - The event raised over \$2,100, believed to be the highest amount yet.
 - Next year’s committee chair has been selected.
 - Parents requested the PTO provide dairy and nut free options (such as popsicles) for students with allergies.
- **Library Volunteers** (Stacy London)
 - Requests for library volunteers should be coming home with students.
 - Volunteers are needed to help librarians prep lessons and projects throughout the year.
 - Interested volunteers should use Sign Up Genius
 - Go to www.signupgenius.com and search using the email address “therehakfamily@gmail.com”
- **Square 1 Art** (Elizabeth Carter)
 - One of the main PTO fundraiser, Square 1 Art allows family members to purchase student art on items like coffee mugs, tiles, tote bags, etc.
 - Classes are currently working on their art. Order forms should be going home mid-October.
 - The fundraiser earns \$5,000/year for the PTO.
 - All students receive free stickers featuring their artwork (no purchase required).
 - This year’s proceeds will go to the Art Department, which has requested mobile art displays.
- **PALS** (Stacy London)
 - PALS is the Parent Advocates for Learning Support.

- The organization began 14 years ago and is a tremendous resource for parents who have struggling learners or children with learning differences. If you have questions about IEP or 504 plans, PALS can help.
- The group meets monthly. The next meeting is September 28 at 9:30am in the Atrium of the Giant Eagle Market District.
- Find out more at <http://www.palsinfo.org/>.
- **Clearance Process** (Lisa Fenton)
 - Clearances are required for nearly all volunteer opportunities.
 - Go to <https://oharapto.org/resources/> for detailed instructions.
 - Contact Sarah Johnson in the Administration Office with questions. She may be reached at Sarah_Johnston@fcasd.edu or 412-967-2443.
- **PTO Student Directory** (Cate Mettenburg)
 - Currently have all but 30 out of 700+ listings.
 - Ad space is still available; Directory goes out to 500+ families.
 - Directories should be ready by Open House.
- **Lunch/Recess Volunteers** (Dana Rofey)
 - Lunch and recess monitors received a handbook, which was recently developed.
 - Monitors will also be receiving additional training.
 - Parents with clearances on file are welcome to volunteer at lunch (no sign up required).
 - Parents should NOT plan to eat lunch with their child; Volunteers are needed to go around the lunchroom, mostly opening yogurt and applesauce containers.
 - Parent volunteers will not be permitted outside at recess
 - This policy will be re-visited after the new principal starts.
 - Yearbook volunteers who are on the Yearbook list will be allowed outside to take photographs only and should not interfere with monitor duties.
- **Scholastic Book Fair** (Maggie Mulhern)
 - Volunteers are needed to help run the Scholastic Book Fair, which will be held October 3 – October 7 in the library.
 - Proceeds benefit the school library.
 - A “sneak peek” at class hours was circulated; parents are encouraged to volunteer during their child’s class time.

- Shopping hours will be 8:40am – 4:00pm, M-Thursday, and 8:40 – 12:00pm Friday. Extended hours will be available Tuesday evening. The book fair will close at noon on Friday.
- Volunteer opportunities include “student escorts,” who can help students without a parent present select books. Cashiers and other volunteers are also needed.
- Each class will visit the book fair
 - Parents may note restrictions on what students can purchase.
 - At librarian requests, non-book items are also being limited.
- **District Forum Update** (Elizabeth Carter)
 - District Forum was established 20 years ago as a forum to improve parent and community involvement within the school district.
 - Elizabeth Klamut (O’Hara parent) is president.
 - Lisa Correnti, Elizabeth Carter and Kim Siddons are the PTO Representatives.
 - The recent meeting drew over 100 attendees; School Superintendent Gene Freeman discussed his vision for our school district and the role benchmarking and assessment play.
 - The next meeting is November 15th at 9am.
 - Details and meeting recaps available at <http://foxchapeldistrictforum.com/>
- **Traveling Art Gallery –TAG** (Kim Siddons)
 - TAG is a program that introduces students to different works of art.
 - Volunteers do NOT need an art background (but you do need clearances).
 - Volunteers receive all of the information they need to lead a discussion on assigned artwork.
 - Contact Anna Avondolio at anne.demarco@gmail.com if interested in volunteering.
- **School Courtyard Garden** (Dana Rofey)
 - The school is working on using and operating the greenhouse in the courtyard.
 - Maintenance from the HS need to approve repairs, including fixing fans.
 - Nadine Champsy is parent representative heading the project.
 - Mrs. Ulanowicz is the teacher representative. The greenhouse and a future courtyard garden will be used for STEM curriculum activities in each grade.
 - Overbeck’s Nursery and Giant Eagle have offered assistance.

- PTO funds will be needed for the project, along with assistance maintaining the garden over the summer months.
- The greenhouse may be ready by winter, depending on when all repairs are complete.
- **Apples for Students** (Tina DiGioia)
 - 933 cards registered last year, earning the school \$3,666.
 - To register your card, visit www.gianteagle.com/AFTS. Enter your GE Advantage Card number (under the barcode), and then enter school code 0790.
- **Spirit Sale?** (Carrie Work)
 - Susan Buchman has found a retailer that may be able to have O'Hara apparel available for sale online throughout the year (as opposed to the one-time sale held previously).
 - No objections were raised.

Help Needed

- Yearbook (Lisa Correnti)
 - A sign up form for parents interested in volunteering to take photos for the yearbook was circulated. Email Lisa at lisacorrenti@gmail.com if you missed the sign up.
 - Volunteers must have a "real" camera (no camera phones).
- 5th Grade Day (Heather Strittmater)
 - Heather will begin 5th Grade Day planning soon. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact her.

Other Items

- The SMART Study will continue in 2016. The study looks at the spread of the flu virus in schools. Additional information will be sent home with students. You must opt out if you do not want to participate. O'Hara and the HS are the only schools participating
- Several parents expressed concern over late bus arrivals. Dr. McNamara will be looking into the issue with the bus transportation company.
- Stacy London inquired as to possibility of O'Hara hosting a Curriculum Night. While some grades do host a curriculum night, other elementary schools make this a school-wide event. Dr. McNamara shared that there may be contractual issues, as the O'Hara open house is held on a clerical day. Discussed exploring further when new principals begin (for next school year). Dana to also reach out to PTO Teacher Representative, Barb Fownes.

Expense Approvals

- The PTO approved the purchase of new ink/toner for the large format printer, which was originally purchased by the PTO.
- The PTO also approved the purchase of coffee and breakfast goodies for teacher and staff on October 14th, in appreciation of the very long day put in for Open House.

Upcoming Events

September 19, Picture Day

September 27-30, Camp Allegheny

October 3-7, Book Fair, Library, 8:30am-4pm (Friday until noon)

October 11, Half Day

October 12, No school

October 13, Open House – 5:30-7:30pm

October 14, 1:30 – Dismissal

October 19, Half Day

October 21, PTO Meeting, Auditorium 9:15am

October 28, Halloween Parade, 2pm, Class Parties, (approx. 2:30pm)

*****See full PTO calendar attached. Visit oharpto.org/events/ for additional details.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:23am.

2016-2017 OEPTO Officers, Chairpersons and Representatives

Co-President	Dana Rofey	412-389-2436	rofeydl@upmc.edu
	Carrie Work	412-781-0446	carrielwork@gmail.com
Vice President	Faith Moser	412-781-2720	faith@faithmoser.com
Secretary	Sarah Shaffer	412-491-1381	shaffer135@gmail.com
Treasurer	Tonja Condron	412-963-6374	tonjacondron@gmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Lisa Fenton	412-967-0677	lisafenton@comcast.net
Fundraising			
Spring Baskets	Faith Moser	412-781-2720	faith@faithmoser.com
	Dawn DiPasquale	412-498-8634	dawn.dipasquale@yahoo.com
Box-Tops / Labels	Louisa Shin	412-968-5952	urgo.shin@hotmail.com
Apples for Students / Giant Eagle	Tina DiGioia	412-680-3448	tnabna80@hotmail.com
Ice Cream Social	Kim Siddons	412-406-7345	ktsiddons@yahoo.com
Square One Art	Elizabeth Carter	412-784-1939	carterelizabeth71@yahoo.com
Directory	Adam Goode	412-531-0138	adam@spicenitz.org
	Carrie Work	412-781-0446	carrielwork@gmail.com
	Cate Mettenburg	412-967-6093	cmettenburg@gmail.com
District Forum Representative	Elizabeth Carter	412-784-1939	carterelizabeth71@yahoo.com
Homeroom Parent Coordinator	Dara Henne	412-963-6364	darahenne@gmail.com
Hospitality	Dara Henne	412-963-6364	darahenne@gmail.com
	Susan Mah	412-337-3925	susanmah@comcast.net
	Debbi Adamo	412-828-1889	debby.adamo@verizon.net
	Tonja Condron	412-963-6374	tonjacondron@gmail.com
	Faith Moser	412-781-2720	faith@faithmoser.com
Library Volunteer Coordinator	Stacy London	305-807-7090	StacyLondon@me.com
Art Show Coordinator	Ellen Filar	412-600-6790	ellenfilar@gmail.com
	Laura Voigt	412-781-4803	lkvoigt@gmail.com
Lunch/Recess Volunteers	Missy Troutman	412-725-3228	hoov17@hotmail.com
Math Pentathlon	Marcy Kaufmann	412-406-7290	marcy9876@gmail.com
PAGE Liaison	Maggie Mulhern	412-963-0872	threemulkids@gmail.com
PALS Liaison	Abby Torres	412-480-8388	torresabby31@gmail.com
	Stacy London	305-807-7090	StacyLondon@me.com
Assemblies	Rosana Weldon	510-910-3636	rhweldon@cal.berkeley.edu
Scholastic Book Fair	Maggie Mulhern	412-963-0872	threemulkids@gmail.com
TAG	Annie Avondolio		anne.demarco@gmail.com
Teacher Representative	Barb Fownes	412-963-2400	Barb_Fownes@fcasd.edu
Thanksgiving Basket	Maggie Mulhern	412-963-0872	threemulkids@gmail.com
Yearbook	Lisa Correnti	412-781-4951	lisacorrenti@gmail.com
	Kari Tarasi		
Chess	Alice Paviglianiti	412-963-6996	alicepaviglianiti@gmail.com
5th Grade Day	Heather Strittmatter	412-726-7201	jhstritt@verizon.net
	Lisa Correnti	412-781-4951	lisacorrenti@gmail.com

2016-2017 PTO EVENT CALENDAR

Month/Day/Time	Event	Responsible Committee/Persons	
August			
24	6pm	New Family Orientation, Auditorium	Hospitality
30	8:45am	1st Day of School/Welcome Coffee, Commons Area	Hospitality
September			
7	530-8pm	Ice Cream Social, Playground	Kim Siddons
16	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
October			
3-7	8:40am-4pm	Book Fair, Library	Scholastic Book Fair
13	530-730pm	Open House	Hospitality
21	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
28	2pm	Halloween Parade (2pm) and Class Party (approx 245pm)	
November			
1-11		Thanksgiving Basket Collection Period	Maggie Mulhurn
11-18		Parent/Student Lunches, Cafeteria (Need Volunteers)	
18	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
December			
23	2-3pm	Winter Class Parties	
January			
27	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
February			
10	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
14	2-3pm	Valentine's Day Class Parties	
21	6-7pm	New Kindergarten Parent Orientation	Hospitality
TBD		Help Tag & Post Art for Art Show	Ellen Filar / Laura Voigt
March			
1	8:40am-noon 1-3:30pm	New Kindergarten Registration	O'Hara Staff
3	5-8pm	Read Across America Event, Barnes & Noble Waterworks	O'Hara Staff
6-10	8am-4pm	Art Show, Commons Area	
8	5-7pm	Art Show Evening, Commons Area	Ellen Filar / Laura Voigt
17	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Andy Gillespie
23	530-830pm	Multicultural Fair, Commons Area	
April			
21	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
TBD		Spring Basket Collection Begins	Faith Moser
TBD		Spring Basket Collection Ends	Faith Moser
May			
TBD	9am	Spring Basket Assembly	Faith Moser
TBD		Spring Basket Ticket Sales	Faith Moser
TBD		Teacher/Staff Appreciation Breakfast or Luncheon, Cafeteria	Hospitality
TBD		Spring Basket Raffle Winners Announced	
19	9:15am	PTO Meeting, Auditorium	Dana Rofey and Carrie Work
25	1245-3pm	New Kindergarten Student Orientation	Hospitality
June			
8		5th Grade Day	5th Grade Day Team

Clearance Forms: <http://www.fcasd.edu/ohara-resources/o-hara-forms.html>