
FLORHAM PARK PTA

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

JANUARY 11, 2017

FLORHAM PARK LIBRARY

Executive Board:

Stephanie Rauschenberger
President

Val Huang
VP Ridgedale

Alfie Zirpoli
VP Ridgedale

Kathy Henning
VP Brooklake

Jennifer Casola
VP Brooklake

Alexis Seubert
VP, Briarwood

Nicole Takla
VP Briarwood

Liliana Cannizzo
VP Arts in Education

Kristen Fox
Treasurer

Jennifer Pulice
Food Treasurer

Kimberly Rezzonico
Recording Secretary

Sarah Iodice
Corresponding Secretary

Call to order: President Rauschenberger at 7:06PM

- I. **Briarwood School Supply Kit Program** – The PTA is extending the school supply kit program to Briarwood for the fall. Currently looking for someone to volunteer to administer the program. Responsibilities include working to develop the lists of supplies in the late spring, working with the vendor and coordinating distribution in late August. Please contact the PTA if you are interested in volunteering. **UPDATE:** A coordinator has been secured so we are happy to announce the program will be implemented this year district wide.
- II. **Back to the Classroom Book Drive-In** support of the Readers/Writers Workshop program, the PTA is collecting gently used books to donate to the classrooms in all three schools. Drop off is at Brooklake and will end on Friday, January 13.
- III. **Principals' Updates**
 - A. **Briarwood**- provided by Sherri Glaab
 - Children have been very enthusiastic about our BWD Buddies activities. Last month puzzles; this month's activity- Frosty Friends! Children will create snowmen out of clay/ play- doh to take home.
 - No Name Calling/Spirit Week- January 16-20. Children will wear different items to show their commitment to making good decisions, listen to stories, and end the week with an Assembly focusing on Good Character sponsored by the PTA on January 20.
 - Our students are currently going through the next round of running record assessments. Teachers have been assessing children to look for growth and successes as well as and understand any challenges.
 - Our monthly newsletter, the Briarwood Buzz, is published every month- we hope you are enjoying the information and pictures!
 - We look forward to our Pennies for Patients kick off Assembly. Information will be coming home following the assembly.
 - Kindergarten Registration is Thursday, February 9. Families may begin to place information into Infosnap. Incoming families will come into the building for paperwork verification (the process is the same format as new student enrollment) Families will also schedule their dates/ times for visitation and screening.
 - B. **Brooklake** – provided by Dr. Steven Caponegro
 - The Gr. 5 Peer Leaders develop problem solving activities, conflict resolution tactics, and enhance the positive climate/culture of the school by working with Gr.3-4 students, as well as their own peers throughout the day The Peer Leaders attended their initial all day training at FDU on Dec.9th. FDU hosts the training and provides lunch free of charge (~\$1,000 cost) as a courtesy to BKL, as the two institutions work closely on many activities.

- The BKL Climate/Culture Committee members met with parents during the “Coffee with Cap” event on 12/22/16. The event was also hosted by Dr. Trish Hinder, the Director of the College of St. Elizabeth’s Center for Human & Social Development, who helped conduct the Climate & Culture Student and Staff Survey and analyze the results. We are happy to announce that the Brooklake School results for both staff and students were very positive and have remained strong since the last survey was conducted 4 years ago.
- Holiday Cheer Day was a huge success on 12/23, when students and staff dressed in festive holiday clothes. All BKL Staff were provided an opportunity to enjoy a 12-15 minute massage at school as a sign of appreciation from Dr. Cap. (Integrated Wellness Associates of East Hanover provided their services free of charge.)
- PWC- BKL has continued to work with PriceWaterhouseCoopers this year on developing real world application and realization of financial awareness at levels appropriate for Gr.3-5 students. This coordinated effort will continue in the spring.
- The Brooklake Winter Concert was again a success! All of the BKL music ensembles are experiencing their highest rate of student participation in the last 10 years. In fact, more chairs have been requested for the spring concert due to the overwhelming audience turnout at the evening concert. Thank you to Mr. Serfozo and Mr. Hipwell for their efforts and their dedication to the BKL music program!
- The BKL Science Fair took place on 1/10/17. As per Mr. Perruso, Coordinator, BKL had the largest turnout of interested students since he has been working at BKL. Thank you to Mr. Perruso for organizing this event and to the staff for promoting it.
- The 2nd marking period ends on Jan. 27th and report cards will be emailed on Feb. 3rd. I encourage parents to visit the Powerschool portal regularly to view student progress and to contact teachers should they have questions, concerns, etc.
- The PTA Gr.3 Fun night is Feb. 3, and Gr.4 Fun night is Feb. 24th. These are wonderful events offered by the PTA and I look forward to seeing the students participating.

C. **Ridgedale-** provided by Peter Christ

- This Friday we will send 15- 8th grade girls to the second Tween Tech STEM conference that is held at Drew University. It is a great day of science, technology, math, and engineering activities that works to get girls excited about, but are traditionally male dominated fields.
- Hope the parents have been enjoying our monthly newsletter. If you have areas of interest you would also like to hear about, please let me know.
- Ridgedale has it Geography Bee scheduled for January 19th. Our contests have been identified and the contests will begin first thing that Thursday morning.
- We have collected all of the contestants for the PTA Talent show and we are looking forward to another great performance. Thank you Mrs. Coster for again volunteering to lead this traditional event.
- With the second marking period coming to an end. I encourage you to check in with your children to see that they are up to date with their assignments. Remember, this is the ‘meat and potatoes’ of the school year with new concepts and content being delivered. It is vital students complete homework assignments and prepare for assessments a few days before tests are given.
- On the last day before winter break the entire school watched a movie, “Freedom Writers” which has been a traditional treat for the students. What made this year’s special is that we were able to bring the producer of that movie in to talk to the students. What made this visit extra special was that it was Mrs. Abdy’s daughter, Pam who was a producer at Paramount at the time.

IV. **Prize Party Update** – Jamie McGough

- Sponsors-We have had a great response from the local business community for sponsorship. If you know of any other businesses who may be interested, please contact Jamie McGough.
- Auction Baskets-Sign up Genius went up this week with gift basket ideas. Families are encouraged to sign up to put together a basket, or pool together with other families to provide one. We are also looking for donations of the actual baskets and containers to assemble to auction items-a request for these will be sent out. Volunteers will be needed to help assemble the baskets the end of February.
- Currently seeking volunteers to help with business solicitations for basket donations
- Student Donations-So far, over half of all students donated directly or through My Food Days to their class basket. Donations are still being accepted and the class moms are beginning to plan for their baskets.
- 50/50 Raffle Tickets-In mid-February 50/50 tickets will go home with the invites. They will also be sold in local coffee shops and businesses.
- Party-The planning for the party has also begun. It will be a casual, cocktail party, with live music being provided by The Benjamins. Food will be provided by food trucks that will be staged outside of the venue, but being brought in and served by caterers. Currently finalizing the food trucks and caterer.
- **Urgent Call for Volunteers**-This is the largest PTA fundraiser of the year and requires a lot of volunteers to put this event together. If you can assist in any area, please contact Jamie McGough at fp prizeparty2017@gmail.com

V. **Lunch Program** – Jenn Pulice

- Ordering-A number of parents missed the ordering window over the holidays. They will open it back up on **Monday, January 30-Tuesday, January 31st only** for the February 6th through the end of February lunches.
- Ridgedale Daily Items- Students can purchase the salad bar and snacks every day ala carte. Students who pre-order the salad bar are allowed through first, so parents are encouraged to pre-order through my food days. Jenn will speak with the caterers to discuss reducing any wait time for those purchasing the salad bar ala carte.
- Considering putting plain bagels on the menu for the next session starting in March.
- Brooklake-For students who bring their lunch but forget silverware, there is a cart outside of the serving area with extra plasticware.
- Overall, the program is running smoothly four months in and the students and parents are enjoying the new program. Parents are always welcomed to provide feedback.

VI. **PTA** – What can the PTA do to better support the kids/families in the district? – Stephanie Rauschenberger

- Communication
 - Everyone felt that consolidating all of the PTA communications into the weekly email on Monday was helpful.
 - Document Manager-Too difficult to navigate, as a result many parents don't go there frequently enough. PTA to discuss with administration. **UPDATE:** Document Manager at BWD and BLK updated to archive older posts under a Saved Flyers folder.
- Lack of Parent Involvement
 - Seeing a decrease in parent involvement and volunteering, particularly in the younger grades at BWD. Some expressed a general feeling of a lack of enthusiasm and low morale.
 - Concerns were raised about the elimination of many traditional activities that families looked forward to i.e. Thanksgiving Feast, Mother's Day, Kindergarten Celebrates photos.
 - Parents were encouraged to bring their concerns to the appropriate administrators and the PTA Executive Board will bring concerns to the administration's attention.
 - Ideas were solicited about what activities the PTA can do to increase involvement and parents were encouraged to contact the PTA with those ideas.
- Barnes and Noble Fundraiser raised \$50.80

VII. **Thank Yous**

- Dr. Caponegro thanked the PTA for the grant for rugs and white boards for the school, Katie Hawk for the new books for her classroom and Kona Ice for their support.

VIII. **Strategic Planning Meeting** – These meetings will be conducted by the Board of Education and District Administration to help set the direction for the district. Specifically they will be seeking input and feedback as well as prioritizing the needs of the district in preparation for an upcoming referendum to seek bond funding for improvements to the schools i.e. installation of air conditioning to wings in schools that currently do not have it as well as a new sound system for Brooklake. They have currently been meeting with other districts who have had successful referendums, such as Chatham and New Providence, to get guidance on the process. Parents are encouraged to attend any or all three of the meetings, with the first meeting taking place February 6th.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:26pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Rezzonico
Recording Secretary