

**PTSA Parent Meeting Title 1- Parent Engagement
MINUTES
March 19, 2018**

I. PTSA Announcements:

1. Used Book Fair drop off has begun – bring books or games to Hillside lobby. The sign-up sheet for volunteering to sort books and set up for the book fair has been sent up. Contact the PTSA if you did not receive it and would like to volunteer!
 - o Used Book Fair is from April 26-28th (special opening night on Wed April 25th)
2. Upcoming events:
 - o Facing History (rescheduled due to storm): Mon April 30th. Topics will include ways to navigate discussions with kids about current events.
 - o Traffic Safety Brainstorming Meeting 3/28 at 7pm in the FMS/HHS Library
3. FMS Lost and Found: Seeking volunteers! Big need right now for sorting. Contact Silvia Robles if you can help out
4. PTSA Executive Board is seeking new members for next year
 - Board consists of VPs at each building level, as well as other positions/committees
 - New energy? New ideas?
 - Contact liaisons or VPs if you are interested

II. Administrative Announcements

School Happenings

- The Walkout (March 14th), presented by Ms. Kipper:
 - o This was a student led event. Administration met with students (Grade 8 executive board and other students) and they planned the event together. No new curriculum was to be taught during the walkout time. First plan was a walkout inside the building. Students then later requested to walk outside the building. Students wanted it to be entirely from them. Final plan was multi-tiered and developmentally appropriate. Some stayed in class, some went into hallways, some went outside. Police were present, for safety.
 - o Teachers were reminded to honor all perspectives, all children's views respected.
 - o Of note, kids were receptive to adult concerns as well!
- Black History and International Women's Day, presented by Mr. Keogh:
 - o Mr. Keogh featured a focus on women of color in STEM fields. They showed the movie Hidden Figures (7th and 8th grade). Teachers were asked to follow up with kids in class discussions.
 - o Women's History – teachers in 5-8 were asked to focus on contributions to science and tech (Rocket Scientist Annie Easley, Astronaut Mae Jemison, Astronaut Ellen Ochoa, and Physicist Chien-Shiung Wu). Discussions included accomplishments and obstacles/challenges they faced. Teachers are expected to integrate these topics into curricular conversations. Posters of the women are being put up around FMS along the stairs.
- Field Trips: 5th went to Purchase for Black Violin; Liberty Science Center trip upcoming ;Botanical Gardens – building a terrarium-

6th _Metropolitan Museum – visit galleries pertaining to the social studies curriculum including Ancient Egypt, Greek and Roman Galleries. After the visit, students write an essay giving their position on the rightful owner of ancient artifacts (museums, individual collectors, native countries, etc.

7th – Maritime Aquarium; fish dissection; Students learn how the respiratory, circulatory and digestive systems work together to accomplish the body's essential functions.

8th – Chelsea Piers. Culminating trip, connected to PBIS
PTSA provides scholarships so that all children can go

- Family Diversity Projects – This year's photo exhibit is a gallery on refugee and migrant experience (PTSA supported).
- Science Fair was a huge success.

- Staffing Update:
 - o Retirements Mrs. Horowitz (hiring is underway. Screened 30 candidates, brought 15 for formal interview; now 5 coming for demonstration lessons. Committee members included: Gail Kipper, Chris Keogh, Jeannette Kocur, Jocelyn Perez, Nicole Roque, Fred Sandhop, Catherine Gigantino, Caryn Hecht, Julia Ball, Mary Mielke, Catherine Hong, Daphne Shih. Elaine Avinoam is on leave currently, and planning on returning mid-April. She is retiring this summer. Have posted for new teacher – will start screening. Andy Lubitz is retiring. Kyle Case is returning from leave before April break. Sonya Cherry Paul is currently planning to return after April break.

7th Grade Math Acceleration: Presented by Greg Stephens (Math Dept Chair)

The school begins planning for this now, and parents should expect an explanatory letter in April. Teachers will talk about it in the 7th grade classes. Kids do not have to take the Algebra qualifying test – but they are offered it.

There are two math classes in 8th grade: Math 8 (Traditional pre-algebra and algebra) or Algebra. Based on school's review of each child, they will make a recommendation about testing for the 8th grade Algebra class. Math 8 curriculum increases the depth of learning in fractions, expressions, graphing curves, and more sophisticated uses of math. Taking Algebra in 8th grade does mean missing some of this material and needing to catch up later. Of note, there are pockets of 7/8 grade math that appear in other subjects (Earth Science tests, Chemistry, etc)

Algebra takes place in middle school with middle school teachers, but is a high school credit class, so it is the first math class that culminates in a Regent's exam and a score, which is part of the child's portfolio through high school. The decision to "Accelerate" (i.e., take Algebra) is based on grades, how the child is doing in class, how they would do with skipping over some material. Success is also correlated with English and Science grades, so this is considered as well. Math course work is now very verbal (may have changed since we were kids). The school's goal is for each child to be successful.

Math progression is Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II, Precalculus, and Calculus or Statistics. There is variability in what kids take in high school. If your child takes Math 8, then they take Algebra in 9th grade (which means that they do not take Calculus in HS). Requirement is 3 courses and 1 Regents exam. There are math Honors options in high school, as well.

Earth science is also a Regents class, all 8th graders take it.