General Meeting Minutes

PTA: Liberty Elementary School PTA, General PTA Meeting
Date: December 3, 2019
Time: 3:00 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.
Attendees: Caitlin, Lisa, Jill, Becky, Poonam, William

I. “What is PBL (project-based learning)” by 5th grade team

- Courtney Peckham and Alexis James present the PBL format for 5th grade curriculum. Liberty, as a STEM-focused school, drives hands-on learning. There are eight essential elements for learning via PBL, which are best teaching practices for any curriculum. Authentic interest is necessary for kids to be motivated. Liberty Learning Loop categorizes the eight elements and helps apply them. Driving Question begins their quest, and Public Product is result of the research and work. Can be applied to any lesson. Every grade develops a PBL project each year and they vary by grade and students. Community leaders, classroom elections, Shark Tank product for hearing or vision impaired are examples. Eight elements incorporated into all PBL lessons, whether weeklong or entire quarter projects. PBL gives a sense of voices heard and it feels important to the students. They are life changers and can take ownership over their ideas. Genius Hour can be used to expand on the PBL lesson, but not necessarily. More used for personal interest. Uses critical thinking and research elements of PBL.

II. Call Meeting to Order at 3:14pm

III. Approval of Minutes

IV. Reports of Officers

- Treasurer’s Report - Lisa Geurin
  - Dance: Came under budget. Kerri spent $400 under budget, and we made more than planned. Up $647. Diversity Night came $88 under budget as well. Plus $500 donation. Check from Amazon $48, check from Benevity Fund (corporate matching) $155.

- Principal’s Report – Mrs. Rebecca Pierce (Assistant Principal)
  - Thank you to PTA for American Education Week. Miss G, our Art teacher, nominated for Loudoun County Teacher of the Year.

- Fundraising - Jill DeLorenzo
  - Disney Tickets: Approved for 20, will receive in the mail, 45 or so days from now. Drawing winners at Matball. Split into 5 groups, one exclusively for CDN volunteers and teachers. Other four included in Matball admission. Each winning family gets package of four tickets. One day park hopper passes. Will push out info closer to Matball.
V. Reports of Committees

- Membership - Anaheeta Minwalla
  - Pushing another membership flyer with benefits of joining PTA. Includes discounted Bingo tickets and priority seating. Because of crowd size, gym seating will be limited. First purchasers (members) will be first to sit in gym, rather than café overflow.

- School Dance
  - Kerri sent via email: I think it went well, I think the photo booth was another success and same with the food that was free. Loved that the gym teachers did dance moves the week leading to the dance, I thought was great! Obviously, no hay going forward, it looked cool and ppl used it as seating, but it was a mess to clean up, lol. Big shout out to those who helped (You and Poonam, Ben, Kristina, and Julie (plus those who helped the front door and food concession!) I’m pretty sure I stayed under budget! And I think we had good on-line and door sales. My thoughts for next year are to see if we can push into February and make it Mardi Gras themed Friday February 19th, 2021?! Also make sure we push the Dance more, Morning show, flyers, 3 weeks online sales.

VI. New & Continuing Business

- PTA Programs
  - Reflections – only three categories were entered into
    - Literature: Elizabeth Cherian, grade 5
    - Music Composition: Aarnav Upadhyaya, grade 4
    - Visual Arts: Atharv Nandamur, grade 4
  - Citizenship Essay – Jan 24
    - Will send more info before holidays, when they can write over break.
  - Power Plates – Feb 13
    - Create recipe and send in photos to VA PTA.
    - PE teachers covered healthy eating topics.

- Spirit wear
  - No time for December order, vendor can’t turn it around. Will do January.

- Bingo
  - Still need baskets. Will push more.

- Spring ASEP (After School Enrichment Program)
  - Becky working on gym situation, can give half the gym every day. Will is happy with half. 7-9 teachers have applied so far. Becky says to have custodians divide with cones. Gymnastics, spikeball, maybe other sports classes. Programs start Feb 17. Opening registration after holidays, info goes out as soon as school is back in session.
• Open discussion
  o William asks about teacher reimbursements. Lisa confirms $4,207. For about 80-85 teachers. Will says we close end of 2nd quarter. Would like to reallocate the extra money. Chelsea Diana asks if an assistant could buy teacher gift card. No gift cards can be reimbursed. Teacher Pay Teachers credit excluded as well. Need receipts for actual items. Don’t want a lot at the end of the year. Many still outstanding.

VII. Announcements
• Dec. 6 – Parent Night Out: TFE
• Jan 7 – PTA General meeting CANCELED
• Jan 10 – Spirit Night: Ashburn Ice House
• Jan 24 – Bingo

Adjourned at 3:30pm

MSAAC Notes by Natalia Beardslee
The November MSAAC meeting was a joint community conversation between MSAAC and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) which advises the School Board on unmet needs of special education students. The meeting was focused on discipline disproportionality and alliances among LCPS stakeholders. Attendees included MSAAC and SEAC delegates & members, LCPS administrators and staff, and law enforcement. The purpose of the meeting was to achieve clarity around discipline disproportionality in terms of why it is important, what has already been done and what is left to do. Some background: In 2013 a Discipline Task Force was formed when data was brought to the public’s attention highlighting discipline disproportionality within LCPS. The task force made 39 recommendations of which 30 were approved. LCPS made a commitment in 2016 to reduce the discipline disproportionality gap and the rate of suspension among students with disabilities, African-American students and Hispanic students by 2020. Recent data presented at the November meeting showed:

• LCPS’ suspension rates for all, White and African-American students and students with disabilities are the lowest for divisions of comparable size and demographics.
• The difference in suspension rates for students with disabilities compared to students without disabilities in LCPS is the lowest among comparable divisions. The disproportionality is highest among comparable divisions.
• The difference in suspension rates between African-American and White students in LCPS is the lowest among comparable divisions.
• The suspension rates for the different student groups in LCPS have decreased over time along with the differences between the groups.
• The referral rates and disproportionality for referrals have increased specifically for students with disabilities, Black students and Hispanic students.

Clearly there is more work to be done. The meeting also shared information about restorative practices and positive behavioral interventions & supports (PBIS). For more details visit the the MSAAC November Meeting page at https://www.lcps.org/Page/223177. To help Liberty families navigate their way through the discipline process and appeals process, please find attached the LCPS Parent’s Guide to Understanding Student Discipline Policies and Practices. If you have questions please contact the Liberty Elementary School administration team and/or Dr. Virginia Patterson, Director of School Administration at Virginia.Patterson@lcps.org.
Additional highlights from the meeting include:

- Equity update by the Director of Equity, Lottie Spurlock. Check out the LCPS Equity Website for more information.
- MSAAC Student Representatives: If a student wants to get involved in equity work please complete a student interest form using this link. First meetings will be virtual.
- LCPS has been working with law enforcement to improve an existing memorandum of understanding (MOU) to give clarity around the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders to include parents and students. The MOU will also expand to include information about discipline disproportionality, staff rights and responsibilities, restraints and seclusion, SROs (School Resource Officers), and SSOs (school employees that work for the LCPS safety and security division). LCPS families are invited to provide feedback directly to MSAAC. The document is attached and is also available on the MSAAC website at this link.

We look forward to seeing LCPS families at the next MSAAC General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the LCPS Administration Building (no meeting in December). The theme will be: Culturally Relevant Instruction and Equity in the LCPS Budget.