

Minutes from Puffer-Hefty PTA Monthly Meeting
LRC Henry Puffer School
January 17, 2017

The general/monthly meeting of the Puffer-Hefty PTA was called to order on **January 17, 2017** at **6:33 p.m.**

- President – **Co-President** Lisa Eddington called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.
 - Co-President Lisa Eddington introduces **Beth Taylor, District 58 Board of Education Candidate** for the upcoming April election and invites her to address membership and provide a bit of background on herself. There are seven candidates running to fill the four seats in the election this April. You may find Beth Taylor listed second on the ballot April 4th.

Beth Taylor is a retired District 58 teacher and a 34-year resident of Downers Grove. She has chosen to run because she believes it is important to have a retired District 58 teacher on the School Board to provide perspective and insight from that role. Currently, Roberta Diehl, a retired District 58 teacher sits on the School Board and is not seeking re-election in April. Mrs. Taylor has been retired for 6 years and has been substitute teaching since her retirement. She is looking to spread the wealth of our District among all of the kids within it. Prior to her retirement, she taught for 30 years-her teaching experience spanning the towns of Morris, Plainfield, Lockport and at Pierce Downer Elementary here in Downers Grove. She has taught special needs, LD resource and has also been a Classroom Teacher in grades 1st-5th. She also holds two advanced degrees in Education: Masters of Curriculum & Instruction and Masters in Administration.
 - VIP Day was held November 22, 2016. Thank you to **VIP Co-Chairs Kate Marzo and Barb Friedel** for their planning efforts and to our **Teachers** for welcoming students' VIP's into their classrooms and planning a fun & educational morning for all. It was a success.
 - Room Parties were held Thursday, December 15, 2016 for our Preschool students and Friday, December 16, 2016 for our K-6th grade classrooms. Thank you to Room Party Parent Coordinators Joanne Vought and Jenni Grganto, our parent volunteers and Teachers.
 - PTA taxes have been filed.
 - PTA By-Laws were last reviewed April 2015 and are up for review. A committee must to be formed with their charge being to review the By-Laws, ensure they are consistent with regulations and how we are operating, make any necessary changes and then submit to the Regional PTA Director. Co-President Lisa Eddington volunteers to Chair the committee and requests volunteers. PTA By-Laws will be voted on at the March PTA meeting. Mandie Casper and Joanne Vought volunteer for the committee. Tracy Weiner makes a motion for the formation of the committee and its members. Kristen Hurter seconds the motion and the motion carries.
- Secretary – **Secretary** Jenni Grganto presented the minutes from the November 15, 2016 meeting. The minutes were approved as written.

- **Treasurer** – The November and December Treasurer’s Reports were presented by **Treasurer** Laura Novotny. She notes donations to the Playground Fund account are now available on line. There are no questions and the reports will be filed for audit.
- **Vice President** – **Vice-President** Joanne Vought reports the Living History Abe Lincoln Assembly is scheduled for the end of February. Additionally, she has scheduled the Laser Mania Assembly requested by Student Council for May 22, 2017. Laser Mania combines Science with Lasers for a thrilling presentation. There is a little money left in the assemblies’ budget, Joanne is open to plan something for individual grades/classrooms or on a smaller scale; please come forward with your ideas or interest.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Daddy Daughter Dance** – **Co-Chair Tracy Weiner** reports the “Candyland” themed dance will be held Friday, 2/3/17 from 6:30-8:30pm in the Henry Puffer gyms. This is the 5th annual dance. The committee is hard at work on creating the themed decorations. Invitations were sent home and 85 girls have RSVP’d thus far.
- **Mother Son Gym Jam** – **Co-Chair Kelly Matusiak** reports 47 boys have RSVP’d so far. Coach Josh will MC the event once again. Planned activities and contests include: hula hoop, tug-o-war, dodgeball, dancing, minute-to-win-it games and photo booth etc. Volunteers are still needed to work during the event.
- **Trivia Night** – *Puffer-Hefty PTA’s largest fundraiser of the year* will be held on **Saturday, 3/11/17 at 6:00pm at the American Legion in Downers Grove** hosted by **The Trivia Night Team: Amy Klawitter, Sheila Frederick, Meg Main and Jen Belsky**. Trivia Night funds all that your Puffer-Hefty PTA does for the Students, Teachers and Parents of Henry Puffer School. In 2016, \$17,000 was raised for efforts. A target of \$10,000 has been set for this year’s event.
 - New this year, an “After Party” held at the same location and DJ’d by a Henry Puffer dad, is included with the ticket price of \$30 person/\$60 per couple! The Team is also looking into holding a 50/50 raffle.
 - The Trivia Night Team is currently putting together Silent Auction items. If families have Timeshares, Sports Tickets, Golf Rounds etc. they would like to donate to the cause, items are needed!
 - Teacher Experiences for the students will be offered again this year. Experiences for parents will be offered again as well. The following parent event donors have recommitted: Women’s Wine Down Woodward, Ravinia Night and Euchre Night. The Amazing Race and Progressive Dinner can be offered again if new groups of families volunteer to donate, coordinate and host these events.
 - The Team is open to new ideas for Experiences as well! If you have an idea for an Experience you would like to donate, coordinate and host, for parents to sign up for during Trivia Night--please let the Trivia Night Team know!
 - Volunteers will be needed the night of, please contact the Trivia Night Team if you are interested.
 - Stay tuned to the weekly eBlast and the Puffer-Hefty Facebook Page for updates on this fun night, less than 2 months away!

- **Talent Show** – **Co-Chair Kara Rambke** reports the Talent Show date will be on Saturday, April 22, 2017 in the Downers North High School auditorium. Doors to open at 6:00pm, show time 6:30pm.
- **Playground Update** – **Chair Katie Hurckes** relayed that the committee has finalized the Donor Thank You Letter, has plans to open their own Everybody Plays at Puffer bank account and are working with Village of Downers Grove and District 58 regarding possible signage on the Belmont fence as a donor thank you/acknowledgement.

FUNDRAISING REPORTS

- **Dine n Share** – **Chair Stacey Palansky** asks to remind everyone that Chipotle Night is this Thursday, January 19th from 4:00-8:00pm. Bring in your flyer and the Puffer-Hefty PTA will receive 50% of the sale! The next Dine-n-Share will be in February, likely at Panera Bread. Once finalized, flyers will be sent home in folders.
- **SCRIP** – **Chair Kara Rambke** states that SCRIP orders totaled \$835 last month.
- **Box Tops** – **Chair Kathy Yee** states that the current Box Tops contest has started and will run until February 24th. The collection sheets were sent home right before winter break. Please be sure to put your child's classroom teacher's name on the forms! Additional collection sheets can be downloaded from the weekly e-blast.
- **Yorktown SchoolBucks Program** – **Co-President Lisa Eddington** explains the new Yorktown SchoolBucks program to membership. Initially, our PTA declined the opportunity due to other requirements such as kids participating in a Fashion Show. Those requirements have been lifted and now, only turning in purchase receipts is required.
 - The program runs until May 1, 2017. Any receipts from purchases made at Yorktown Mall, surrounding shops, AMC, Target, Westin Hotel or Restaurants all are included. You may turn in receipts within 60 days of the purchase date.
 - The top 10 participating schools will win cash prizes. 9 schools are signed up, with the 9th and 10th place schools to receive \$500!
 - Grab those Holiday Shopping receipts, you may still turn those in! If you no longer need your receipts you may turn them into the PTA mailbox via envelope in your child's backpack and Lisa will bring them to Yorktown. Or, if you need to hold onto them, you may show your receipts to the Yorktown Service desk by the new entrance to gain credit for our school.

New Business

Leftover Halloween Party and Winter Party Funds will be added to the Valentine's Day Treat and Drink budget for all Preschool-6th grade classrooms. Mr. McDaniel will purchase the items for all students to enjoy in their classrooms.

The Belmont/Prairie Intersection has been updated with the safety enhancements approved and installed by the Village of Downers Grove and DuPage County. Our crossing guard Phyllis notes a decrease in Right Turns on Red. Mr. McDaniel has requested enforcement on random days each week.

Mr. McDaniel Update

- Winter benchmarking of students is happening now with a focus on the progress our students have made. We will especially look at our low achieving students that are not achieving expected growth and our high achieving students that are not achieving expected growth. Teachers spent last week administering testing and this week will be working on test makeups and completions. Information will be shared next week with our Teachers and Specialists for the use in our instructional groups.
- Co-President Lisa Eddington introduces Mr. McDaniel's next topic: Henry Puffer's recent drop in its GreatSchools rating and gives some background on the site to those in attendance.

greatschools.org is a website that provides parents with information about PK-12 schools and education. It is linked to many real estate websites and is used as a tool for Realtors and prospective home buyers. The website provides ratings of schools based on test scores and growth performance of students' year over year.

In recent years, Henry Puffer School has been rated as "above average" as an 8 out of 10, with 10 being the highest. It was discovered however, that Henry Puffer's new GreatSchools rating has dropped by 50% to a 4 out of 10. The lowest of their "average" rating. The growth rating of our student's year to year is of particular concern.

Henry Puffer has dropped to the lowest rated school in District 58, and is the lowest rated school compared to 62 schools in our surrounding area. Of the 62 schools, Henry Puffer being the only 4; there were three 5's, four 6's and the remainder of the 62 rated schools being a 7 and above.

This new rating is based off of a combination of students' growth and PARCC scores from the 2014-2015 school year which happens to be the first year of PARCC testing. PARCC is a test for 3rd graders and up. ISAT had been the test previously used to measure performance.

Concerned parents brought this information forward to our PTA co-presidents prior to the meeting and they arranged for Mr. McDaniel to address it during tonight's meeting. Discussion ensued.

As a result, Mr. McDaniel echoed the concern of the drastic drop and has committed to parents to find out more information from GreatSchools directly, as he is under the impression that Henry Puffer's most recent (March 2016) PARCC test scores were above District 58's average performance and has many questions about the measurements himself.

Mr. McDaniel will find out details and facts and hold a **Town Hall meeting** for Henry Puffer parents with his findings, explanations and to field questions and concerns. Please look for information regarding the meeting, via the weekly eBlast or the Puffer-Hefty Facebook page shortly.

Meeting was adjourned at **7:48** p.m. Minutes approved as _____.