

**PTA General Membership Meeting
June 7, 2016, 7:30 pm**

Meeting began at 7:40 pm

1. **Welcome** – PTA President Amy Moore welcomed attendees and meeting began.
2. **Principal Palmisano’s Annual “State of the School” Address**
 - a. Principal Palmisano began with a thank you to Amy Moore for serving as President and looks forward to Anthea Higgins term next year. A big thank you as well to Karen Roman for all she had done to support the school.
 - b. Classroom numbers – School Board and County Council passed the operating budget, which allowed class sizes to be reduced by one. Currently, Carderock’s class numbers are:
 - Kindergarten – 42 Total (21, 21)
 - 1st – 56 Total (28, 28) 27 max
 - 2nd – 50 Total (25, 25)
 - 3rd – 44 Total (22, 22)
 - 4th – 88 Total (30, 29, 29) 29 max
 - 5th – 74 Total (24, 25, 25)

For every grade each class must be one over max and one class must be two over max to request additional teacher.

13 students are not returning to Carderock. Most of the children are moving and 4 are going to private school. So far, we have 17 new students incoming. Parents will continue to be updated on class sizes over the summer. Only one staff member is leaving – Sarah Childers (Autism) will be moving to Colorado.
 - c. PARCC. PARCC testing has been completed. Kids were finishing the test quickly. 90 minutes were given and many finished the test in 30 minutes. 6 states currently administer PARCC. 20 states originally administered PARCC. 11 administered the test last year. Other states are going back to different assessments. Maryland is continuing with PARCC.
 - d. Writing – This was our 2nd year with the Lucy Calkins program. Principal Palmisano has seen a growth in writing confirming we have made a good decision. Several other schools have come to Carderock to observe the program. Ms. Zeitlin is a wonderful supporter of the program.
 - e. Reading – Notice and wonder strategy. Other important strategies focus on close reading, taking text apart at the sentence level and paragraph level.
 - f. Math – Principal Palmisano discussed different math strategies Carderock has been working on. Children should be talking more in math. Students should respond to teacher and re-voice the subject stating it in their own words. Teachers have implemented a “wait time” between when they ask questions and when they look for response.
 - g. Mindfulness – Carderock spent time working on building the faculty’s understanding of mindfulness in the classroom this year. Will continue next year. Laurie Cameron with Purpose Blue led the faculty training. Principal Palmisano will meet with Laurie to plan out next year. Students need to be emotionally healthy to learn and Carderock teachers seem to understand that connection.
 - h. Peer to Peer – 5th Grade tutoring of 1st continued and this year we added 4th grade tutoring of Kindergarten. Successful year.
 - i. Mentoring Program – Will begin next year. Matching students who need extra help with mentors in the school.
 - j. TV Studio – Mrs. Ropelewski has got the program up and running. Teachers are becoming involved and will continue being involved next year.

- k. Carderock Website – Website is being completely re-designed. Will be under construction for the next few months.
- l. Intervention Block – Enrichment and support across all grade levels. Has not been very successful. We need to add more teachers to get to a 7/8 student per teacher ratio.
- m. Reading Scores – Carderock is required to monitor reading monthly. We are at an all time high. Map M P & R at an all time high.
- n. School Improvement Plan – We have been successful by focusing on a few areas rather than many. Carderock is a high performing school - outperforming every school with similar demographics in the county.
- o. Principal as Leader of Learning – Effective meetings with teachers begin with “What are kids expected to learn and are they learning it?” Principal Palmisano is working on tightening up grading. Teachers spend a lot of time as a group scoring papers and assessments.
- p. Homework Survey – 212 responses received which is a great response rate. 70% said homework is important while 30% view it as busy work. Generally, Principal Palmisano does not believe in homework at lower grade levels. No research has proven that it helps in elementary school. However, some of the pros of homework are that it keeps parents in the loop, develops good habits, and re-enforces lessons. Across the board, parents agreed the best thing to do at home is to READ. Principal Palmisano also gave teachers their own homework survey and their responses mirrored the parent responses.

QUESTIONS:

Q: Scoring. Can we provide more feedback to kids? It seems kids don't know how to improve.

A: Some teachers are better than others at giving feedback and it can be difficult in big classes. Kids tend to listen to oral feedback rather than written. It is an area for improvement.

Q: Does Carderock receive graduates scores from Pyle?

A: Yes. Carderock does very well at Pyle. County is planning to re-assess grading system.

Q: When do test results from MAP P, M, R arrive?

A: Mrs. Veihmeyer has detailed reports and is working on printing them out and will get them sent out in next two weeks.

Q: What is new with Common Core Math?

A: Curriculum 2.0 moves too slowly for K-2. There is nothing for kids who have mastered the subject and are ready to move on. County has hired consultant to review. Enrichment activities are needed. By 3rd grade it starts to pick up. Students do seem to develop better number sense with C 2.0.

Q: Why can't we have Math groups like reading groups?

A: Principal Palmisano thinks that they do. He does think there should be more enrichments and centers.

Q: Is there a reason they don't want students to do next level math?

A: Principal Palmisano explained it can be a slippery slope and that compacted math doesn't always work well. He spends a substantial amount of time discussing math placement with parents.

Q: In first grade, when my child is done with the subject they seem to have unstructured free time on the computer?

A: Principal Palmisano said computer time in the classrooms is structured and determined by the teacher.

Q: What will you do to support the 4th grade if they do not get the extra class/teacher?

A: The reading initiative teacher will be utilized in 4th grade and also in 1st. In addition, Ms. Veihmeyer will be doing team teaching for 4th and 5th.

3. General PTA Membership Vote – 2016-2017 PTA Budget

- a. Shannon Buskirk, PTA treasurer, presented the budget for next school year for approval. CSES PTA's finances are healthy. The main goal of the PTA is to support teachers and programs for students. The majority of the money is spent on faculty and staff support including start-up checks, training and subscriptions. The next largest chunk of the PTA budget is programs including our cultural arts assemblies and visiting artist programs. Membership dues, donations, and fundraisers such as book fair, giant gift cards, and online fundraisers fund the PTA budget. Shannon mentioned possibly adding spirit wear as a fundraiser next year or another single event like book fair. The board has approved this budget. No questions from attendees.
- b. Ted Duncan made a motion to approve the budget. Karen Roman seconded the motion. Amy Moore asked attendees to approve the motion. All attendees approved the budget. 2016-2017 PTA budget approved.

4. Reminders:

- a. School Supply Kits – Deadline to order is June 10th.
 - i. Visit www.schooltoolbox.com to register or log-in and select Carderock Springs ES
 - ii. GIVE BACKpacks – Consider donating \$10 for a student in need by going to the MCPS website, www.mcpsgivebackpacks.org. Please fill in CSES PTA in the PTA field.
- b. Yearbooks – Order by Friday, June 10th on www.pay4schoolstuff.com. Yearbooks will be delivered to students on Monday, June 13th.
- c. Autism Speaks 5K and one mile walk on July 4th in Potomac - Join our Carderock Buddies team to support our autism program and students. Contact Wendy Kuhn for details.

5. CSES Educational Foundation Computer Camp

- a. Morning program for grades 3-5, June 21-24, \$150 per child
- b. To register, visit www.csesef.org and click on the Computer Camp Tab

Meeting concluded with Amy Moore extending thank yous and echoing Principal Palmisano's thanks to Karen Roman. She thanked outgoing PTA Board members and welcomed the incoming members. Amy introduced Anthea Higgins as next year's PTA Board President and Katie Gilbert as next year's PTA Board Vice President.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.