

# **Orange Grove General FFO Meeting Minutes**

## **Thursday, August 24, 2017**

Present: Galena Robinson, Becky Swift, Anne Gruber, Kent Gardner, Anthony Maggi, Melissa Dean, Leslie Beckett, Courtney Hinkle, Tracy Ferriter, Kate Spaulding, Tanya Martin, Christeen Bates, Shirley Parks, Brenda Harrington, Michelle Ijams, Mary Grodman, Amy Bholá, Lisa Budisarjevic, Marianne Felt, Gwen Mikinski, Melinda McNeilus, Nancy Loose, Jessica Brandt, Mark Rubin-Toles, Blythe Edmondson.

Meeting called to order by Past-President Galena Robinson at 8:30 am.

### **Principal's Update - Mark Rubin-Toles**

- Mark gave a brief summary of his background: 18th year in the district. At the high school for 17 years. 10 years as an AP English 12 and Humanities 9 teacher, 7 years as the Curriculum Technology Integrator, served as School Improvement Co-Chair. Also an Orange Grove parent, to alum Max, and 6th grader Simon. When he asked his son Max what he valued about OG he mentioned ZAP and academic tutoring to help kids. Has really come to learn how excellent the staff is. They spend long hours here, helping each other.
- Spent a lot of time packing and moving because of the class room renovations this summer. No more chalk boards. School is functioning well despite challenges.
- Every FFO meeting has a breakfast at 7:45am. Next month will be for 6th-grade families. Future meetings will feature different topics.
- Thanked the Executive Board. Thanked parent volunteers. Thanks for Panther Pride donations.
- Challenging hiring environment - we still have 3 positions currently filled with long-term subs: part-time Spanish, PE, and Inclusion. We are actively seeking applicants. Our district has not lowered standards for hiring, like the state legislature has. Need college degrees, 30 credit hours in subject they are teaching. Just got new PE teacher from Florida.
- Total number of students is 686. Significant jump from last year. Open enrollment is 266 students, for 39% of population. Those families keep our schools full, and are needed.
- Academic Assistance, ZAP programs are continuing. ZAP has expanded from just Wednesday mornings to Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons, as well. We will be rolling out a new automated system to alert families about missing work by email - after students reach three missing assignments, they will be required to come in to ZAP. The students and parents will receive the email. You can set up parent vue to alert you if assignments are missing. We want students to complete work while it is still relevant. We do not penalize a student's grade because of work habits. Grades reflect master of academic standards. But we have to make consequences for missing deadlines. Students should do homework badly if they don't understand it, not just

skip it. It's better to make the attempt. Parents can give guidance, ask questions, but don't need to make sure homework is perfect.

- Our academic intervention courses are starting next week, as well - students receive targeted, individualized support from a teacher, and integrate digital tools as well as instruction tailored to fill specific skill gaps for each student. Students pulled out of PE or elective courses. If your student is eligible you will receive an email. It is optional.
- Please don't drop your children off on Late Start Wednesdays before 8:55 if not signed up for early morning programs. No supervision at that time.
- Kids are wearing their lanyards and ID's. It must be visible, and you must have it present. They are the key to everything, i.e. lunch, bus, library. Doesn't have to be worn as a necklace.
- Students are doing a good job following dress code. Students and their undergarments must be covered for a full range of motion - sitting, standing, reaching down, squatting. Might want to review and revise our dress code. Gender neutral policy. Dress code violators will change into PE uniform.
- Gum is not allowed on campus. Middle schoolers don't dispose of gum properly. Kids who bring gum will help clean the campus. Keeping our campus clean is a priority. This is also demonstrated in the lunch room, like picking up after themselves, etc.
- Bus rules: please follow them! Use of cell phones on the bus can be problematic. Kids are not allowed to take pictures of other kids without parent permission. Buses have video cameras. Please let us know of bus problems.
- We had good feedback this year about expanding 6th-Grade Orientation to include new 7th and 8th graders, so we will continue this year. The Pick-Up-and-Unpack was very successful - thanks to all who volunteered their time and energy.
- Had welcome lunch last week. Invited students who didn't know many people. Counselors helped these kids understand the system. Mostly this was for kids brand new to the district.
- Student council will be open to all students willing to commit to taking on a leadership role at our school. Any kids who wants to commit is welcome. Kids who join Student Council will elect officers. As a school, we are working to make sure that all students feel a sense of belonging to the Orange Grove academic community - Student Council will be instrumental in making this happen.
- Back-to-School Night is next Thursday, August 31, 6-7. It is an adult only night. Students will bring home a map and schedule next week. Helpful to come up with a battle plan for the night with your student. 6th grade gifted kids parents will start at 5:30 in Mr. Bindschadler's room. We are looking forward to a great year!

- Question about rubric grading - does that continue on to the HS? Yes and no. The grades given always translate into a GPA at the HS. Discussed the differences between the number grades.
- New this year, every assessment for a grade needs to have a 4 level opportunity. Will take some time for all teachers to completely implement.
- Question about rubric information. Should be viewable on the teachers website. Kids should know what the rubric is for each assignment.

### **Budget Report - Becky Swift**

- Statement of activity - Cindee Reynolds prepared this after last year. \$3300 under projected revenue, lower than expected E Scrip and Basha's money. Came in under budget on expenses also. Also didn't spend a lot in grants. Reserve of \$11,000.
- Worked over the summer to create the new budget. Presented the new budget to members. Few notable changes due to increase in student population. Increased IXL, teacher support. Decreased Panther Pride due to lower trends in giving.
- Anne Gruber moved to approve the budget, Nancy Loose seconded. Motion passed.

### **General Business**

- Approve minutes - Blythe Edmondson moved we approve the minutes from the last meeting, Shirley Parks seconded. Motion passed.
- PUUP went really well.
- Please check with the office if your student needs an ID.
- PE shorts size large are in the office. PE uniforms are an optional purchase. You can wear your own black shorts and gray shirt.
- Panther Pride Update from Blythe Edmondson - direct giving campaign. Our goal is 100% participation. We need to raise \$18,000 this year. Please consider giving and asking your friends to donate. \$5500 raised as of today. All the money stays at the school and goes right back to the kids. Write a check and drop in the office, or on line through the in touch system. All donations are tax deductible
- First dine out was successful, \$780 from Chipotle. About one dine out a month.
- Book fair - Christine and Tonya, chairs. Working on increased promotion so parents are aware of the fair. Open during conferences October 9-11.
- FFO website is updated. Stephanie Olson is a staff member and OG parent and is working on the website.

- Amanda Saffer sent in a legislative update. Galena read it to the group.
- Save Our Schools Arizona group has delivered 111,540 signatures to the secretary of state. The signatures were collected to put the expansion of Arizona's school-vouchers program, Senate Bill 1431, on the November 2018 ballot. The law was put on hold while the state evaluates if 75,321 of the signatures meet the requirements for valid signatures.
- The expansion of the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts program, [signed into law last month by Gov. Doug Ducey](#), opens ESAs to all public- and charter-school students. Up to 30,000 parents could use the new program by 2022. It's scheduled to take effect 90 days after the state Legislature adjourns. ESAs had been limited to certain children, including those with disabilities and those from poor-performing schools. Save Our Schools Arizona was formed by a group upset by the expansion of the ESA program, which they say could dismantle public education. They also say it [disproportionately benefits wealthy families](#) who might otherwise afford private-school tuition without taxpayer aid. If the referendum qualifies for the ballot, the ESA expansion would be enjoined from taking effect until the vote. Senate Bill 1431 would be undone if a majority of voters cast "no" votes.
- Lunch duty - easy way to volunteer, and very helpful to the staff. An adult presence is great. Please visit the sign up genius link. One helper stands at the snack bar line, the other helper circles around the lunch areas.
- We still need committee chairs. Also have many 8th grade parents who are leaving next year and would like to train the next chair. Please fill out a volunteer interest form. Not a firm commitment, just indicates that you would like more information about a different opportunity. Need a PE uniform chair, most of the work is at the beginning of the year during PUUP. Student Action Committee chair Amy Bhola will be leaving next year and needs a shadow. A holiday food drive and spring sandwich making event. Box tops and e-scrip chair needed.
- Ongoing fundraisers - Fry's VIP cards can be linked to our school. Ask your family members who shop at Fry's to also link. Basha's/AJ's cards are for purchase pre-loaded with \$10. When you reload we get 5% back. Use it for your coffee runs at Aj's.
- Community Schools -Mary Grodman, program director, gave update. Started first quarter of programming. Athletic programs are almost completely full. Have everybody hired and ready to go. Games and meets start next week. Link to sports schedule from community school website. Also have enrichment classes, i.e. drama, yearbook, crafting, etc. Running a late study hall program from 4:15-5:30. If you need study hall in the morning or afternoon please call to register. Mary is running a backpacking class starting next Wednesday. Will do an overnight back pack trip on the mountain. Two spots are available. Working on second quarter activities now. That info will be out end of September, registration October 6. Space is always limited so register on time. Constantly looking for coaches and instructors. Need inclusion aids for after school activities. Fall break caving trip is full. Mt. Lemon camp out trip still has room. A survey will go out for summer program participants. We want to know what middle school students want to do during the summer, what can we provide.

- Melinda McNeilus, foundation representative, gave report. Thank you for donating to the foundation. The foundation raises supplemental funds to attract, develop, and retain quality educators for our students. We want you to be invested in the education of your kids. A quality teacher equals a quality education. We offer a 3 year induction program that every new teacher to the district participates in. They offer installment plans to help people make donations. Last year gave \$150,000 to the program. September 23 event, Tapas for Teachers, \$40 for a ticket at St. Phillips Plaza. Adults only event. Buy tix on the website [cfsdfoundation.org](http://cfsdfoundation.org) . Check out the video on the foundation website for more info on giving.
- Staff Appreciation - first event for the teachers on September 1. Cindee Reynolds, chair

### **Upcoming Events**

- Back to School Parents' Night - Aug. 31 6-7
- Tapas for Teachers - September 23
- Next FFO meeting Thursday, September 21 at 8:30 am.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:57am.**