

# General PTA Meeting | MINUTES

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Meeting date | time 1/26/2015 8:15 AM | Meeting location Blaine Auditorium

## AGENDA TOPICS

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### Agenda topic Welcome | Presenter Melissa Bullock

- Thank you for coming out to the Parent/Teacher Social last Thursday! We had a great turnout. Thanks to Dana Rizzuti for planning it and to The Butcher's Tap for hosting.
- The snow day makes up days have been announced: Friday, Jan 30<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup>
- The 2015-16 calendar has been posted on the CPS website. The school year starts pretty late due to the date of Labor Day so spring break is also very late in April and the last day is at the end of June.
- The deadline has past, but if you hurry you can still order flowers for the Valentine Dance to benefit 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip Fundraising.
- There is a LSC Meeting Tomorrow at 6:15 pm in the auditorium. In addition to the committee reports, the new business is the principal's evaluation.

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### Agenda topic Middle School Clubs | Presenter Pam McKenna

- Enrollments for Spring Middle School Clubs will take place on Yubbler. The online enrollment is merely a way to gauge interest, actual enrollment may depend on many variables such as # of students interested in a certain club, whether or not a student has participated in a certain club in the past, etc. Confirmation of enrollment will be posted to Yubbler.
- Spring Middle School Clubs will take place from February 2 – April 3, 2015

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### Agenda topic Tea Dance | Presenter Peggy Herrington

- Round 2 Tickets are still available as well as pre-ordered DVDs. DVDs are only \$10.

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### Action items

### Person responsible

### Deadline

Parent email needed to detail out rehearsals and pick up times/locations

Peggy Herrington

1/27/2015 12:00 PM

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### Agenda topic No PARCCing | Presenter Catherine Francis & Melissa Bullock

- ISATs have been replaced by the PARCC test as Illinois' statewide test for 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. Our students will not take the ISATs this year. They may or may not take the PARCC test in March and May.
- The PARCC test was developed by a company called Pearson, who are also responsible for most years of the ISAT. Illinois selected the ISAT and now the PARCC test to fulfill its federal obligation to federally funded initiatives No Child Left Behind and Race To The Top. The states were given money to adopt this new test. Illinois only received \$42 million for administering this test which is less than 1% of the state's education budget. To administer the test will cost Illinois \$160 million over 4 years! Pearson is a for profit company that needs a certain number of states to take their test to maintain their no bid contract with the federal government. They need students to take the test to make money.
- There has been a general uproar over the PARCC test: not field tested, confusing logistics for a computer test, very high fail rate, no special considerations for diverse learners, only given in English, not validated as an accurate assessment of common core, takes away 10 days of instructional time, and the list goes on.

- The PARCC will NOT be used by CPS for 2014-15 to determine student promotion, student acceptance to selective enrollment schools, principal/teacher evaluation, or school quality ratings. The scores simply do not matter to us as parents of students in CPS.
- The CPS Board does not want to give its students the PARCC test for this school year. They have requested to the Illinois State Board of Education to be exempt. The ISBE has denied the CPS board's request. The CPS board has in turn announced that only 10% of CPS schools will administer the test. At the moment, ISBE is determining if they are going to sanction CPS.
- **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR BLAINE STUDENT?**
  - There is a chance that Blaine will not be chosen to administer the PARCC test. We don't know yet what schools will be selected.
  - If we do get selected, you can still, as a parent, opt out your student from taking the PARCC. The goal of the PTA is to get 100% of students to opt out so students get regular instruction.
  - We may not know if Blaine will be selected until the very last minute. The PTA is collecting opt out signatures starting today. Should we be selected; we will be prepared. If we are not selected we will shred the letters.
  - If you do not want your student to take the PARCC, then sign an opt out letter today! The opt out letter requests reason code 15 be recorded for your student so that neither Blaine nor your student is penalized for the refusal.

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Sign an Opt Out Letter for your 3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> student if that is your wish	All Blaine Parents	2/27/2015 12:00 PM
View sample PARCC questions at <a href="http://parcc.pearson.com/practice-tests/">http://parcc.pearson.com/practice-tests/</a>	All Blaine Parents	

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**Agenda topic** *Book Club | Presenter Catherine Francis and Melissa Bullock*

- The next book club is Friday, February 6 at 8:15 am at Jolly Posh. The book to be discussed is Reign of Error by Diane Ratvich. You can reserve your copy at the Chicago Public Library here: [http://chipublib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/8725602081\\_reign\\_of\\_error](http://chipublib.bibliocommons.com/item/show/8725602081_reign_of_error)
- We are changing the format of the book club from last semester. A parent will facilitate each of the meetings and a guest educator (not always Mr. LaRaviere) will help provide an educational insight. This book club is run by the PTA and interested parents.