



YORKTOWN PTA MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 12, 2024

Meeting: 7:30pm

1. **Welcome - welcome from PTA president**
2. **Approval of January Meeting Minutes -**
 - Motion to approve minutes - minutes approved.

3. PTA Updates:

a). Treasurer's Report from January:

- We have a balance of \$41,081.67. Receipts totaled \$189. Reimbursements were \$715.41 for fall teacher grants and teacher of the year awards. Do remain on track for our expenses. Toward end of year we have spring grants, spring event for the students. Working on the "senior send off" - will have more information as that committee puts that together.
- Hosting workshop "little known secrets of paying for college" on 2/15. Mr. Jolley is doing it in person at YHS.

b). Committee Updates and Other PTA Items

- Spring Dance - March 9th - will need volunteers to chaperone. Will have sign-up genius in the newsletter.
- Looking for a 3 person search committee to help seek candidates for PTA Board Vacancies for the 2025-2026 school year.

Vacant positions:

- President
- External VP
- Internal VP
- Secretary
- Possibly Treasurer - to be confirmed.

Communications VP (Cristina) has decided to stay on..

A lot of people who have filled the volunteer positions have kids leaving YHS or have done it for a long time. So will have a lot of positions open - if you have Freshman or Sophomore and can help out for next couple years to help out, that would be wonderful.

- ACTL (Cloe Chin)



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- During last meeting discussed substitute teachers - in pretty good shape. Started the year with 99% of positions filled. One area that they struggle with is special ed. There is a very high turnover and there are always vacancies.
- Had conversation about long-term subs and how to best support them. Can they team up with permanent teachers who can take them under their wing, get professional development, etc.? Sometimes substitutes have a whole year so want to make sure they have resources.
- Grading policy and the fact that it was changed halfway through the year. Now kids have to have scored below an 80% in order to be allowed to do a retake whereas the 80% limit did not exist before. Discussion about how this can be renegotiated. Perspective that 80% is not mastery of content - may disincentive kids who have high 70s - want to look at bringing it up to 90% for a retake policy. There are inconsistencies in the way teachers apply the policy which creates an equity issue. Seems that the policy will be revisited and there will be a compromise so if kids are willing to do the retakes, they should have the opportunity.
- Central office is talking about helping to draft multiple drafts of tests - this will take some of the burden off teachers.
- Overall view is that it was extreme to move the retake policy back to 80% but understand that for the teachers, the former approach created a lot of additional work.

4. Dr. Clark's Update: Q&A on new Procedures for [Promoting Attendance and Positive Behaviors](#)

- **Q:** Main concern is around kids not being able to go to the bathroom at different times during the day. There isn't enough time between classes. Some kids take medication and have other considerations that require them to use bathroom more often.
- **A:** Teachers received additional guidance that didn't go to the parents. Trying to minimize the amount of kids that are moving around and call it "no movement Tuesdays" just to make sure that kids are where they are supposed to be. But teachers know that they can let kids go based on their own discretion if there is an emergency. But want to assuage fears that we won't let kids go to the bathroom if they really need to go to the bathroom.
- **Q:** How would you determine if they really have to go or they don't. Maybe kids who have been pegged as bad kids won't be allowed to leave the room.
- **A:** Parents should know that they can share their kids' health plans and needs with teachers so the kids know that they won't be stopped if they really need to go to the bathroom. Can put a clarification on that out in the newsletter. Teachers are aware and accommodating but want to start the semester with some strong expectations.



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Bathroom is really not the issue on Tuesdays. Kids want to go do other things on Tuesdays other than SEL. No movement is really because teachers are all in their advisories. Teachers need to teach during that time so they can't accommodate kids that come to their class for additional help.

- **Q:** How effective are the SEL classes? If kids need extra help and want to go see their teachers and would rather spend their time that way. Should the students be surveyed? This has come up in the ACTL meetings - people question if this is an effective use of time.
- **A:** That is a good question. About to do "your voice matters" survey - some measures are directly related to SEL content and skills. A lot of the SEL skills are the underpinning of successful academics and development. VDOE is requiring standards for implementation. Do need to evaluate whether lessons are effective. Have had it in place for about four years now. YHS does try to differentiate content based on grade levels to make it more relevant. APS requires it 2 times/week - Tues and Thurs. But kids are allowed to get a pass on Thursday to go see teachers. On Tuesday all kids are required to be in SEL lessons.
- **Q:** Does VDOE have this requirement for SEL or just APS?
- **A:** They may not have a minimum number of hours, but VDOE has SEL standards. On Tues and Thurs, all students learn and engage in SEL content and skills on a baseline level so the school knows everyone has general sense and common understanding of what SEL skills are and have opportunities to practice. Vast majority of SEL instruction happens in the classroom. On M, W, Fri, practicing these skills. If anyone is interested in joining SEL committee, have parent representation along with staff, students, and teachers.
- **Q:** How was SEL scheduling determined?
- **A:** During the pandemic, had the sessions on Mondays but now pushed it to Tuesday and Thursday. Have collected feedback every year. These days seem to be working well and leaves good amount of time for students to get help.
- **Q:** Consequences: can Dr. Clark address the consequence chart for students involved in athletics/activities and those that are not? I read it as: students who are participating in sports/activities are given extra consequences (i.e. detention plus one week of no activity/sport vs. detention only). If this is the policy, why are the consequences more for those who are involved in the school and sports?
- **A:** There are two pieces to that. If student athlete is having issues, will impact extracurriculars. But isn't just athletes - it affects kids in band, theater, etc. And also affects kids who want to go watch sporting events. Have worked with Activities/Athletics department and coaches so can collaborate on that. First hall sweep is a warning, second time is one day detention. Trying to make connection between performance during the school day, coming to class on time, and their ability to participate in



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extracurriculars. What we found is that kids who are late to school and class, really span the gamut. Some of the AP teachers are complaining that a quarter of their kids are showing up 15 - 20 minutes late to class. This allows teachers to reinforce the importance of attendance. Athletics and extracurriculars are a privilege that comes with responsibilities. Students are definitely responding. There is a lot more hustle in the mornings. Numbers in the sweeps are going down significantly. Teachers are appreciative.

- **Q:** Worried that YHS will not be able to hold athletes accountable and once one parent challenges and an acceptance is given, won't be able to hold the line on the policy and be equitable. Is YHS really committing to keeping these kids from competing at the level they compete at?
- **A:** Plan is to hold students accountable. But a lot of kids don't have any issues getting to class on time. For those who do have issues, we are seeing more motivation to get to class on time. In order to get to the point of missing a day, you have to be caught in 2 cumulative hall sweeps and that equals one day that you don't participate in the extracurricular activity. The day you miss is the second time you get caught in the hall sweep. Right now we put this out and have to execute the plan. In spring season, will likely have more of an impact.
- **Q:** What about kids who are relying on public transport to get to school? What happens if they get 3 or 4 sweeps? Is one tardy a month unreasonable?
- **A:** This is new as of second semester. Can take a look and perhaps can consider resetting at third quarter. Sweeps are random and only a couple times a week. If you are caught up in several sweeps, you are either very unlucky or you are tardy a lot. During first semester, were doing detentions, but consequence wasn't immediate and kids were not serving detentions. If the kid has excused absence, then all ok. But if you have an unverified absence, you can't play that day anyway. By fourth hall sweep, you are out for two full weeks.
- **Q:** Does this incentivize kids to just not come to school?
- **A:** They were having 200 - 300 kids arriving late in the morning. And now down to 100. 300 kids is 10 percent of the student body arriving late and this impacts the classes.
- **Q:** When numbers were high, were kids who were late chronic offenders? And if so, was it well understood why they were late and were they for things beyond students' control (e.g. public transportation)?
- **A:** Students get APS public transportation if out 1.5 miles. But most frequent issues are that they didn't get out of bed on time or had issues parking in the neighborhood.
- **Q:** Can you please explain how the missed day/week is determined and how the detention day is determined for missed activities/athletics?
- **A:** If tardiness is in morning, then lunch detention is served that day. If it is afternoon, then lunch detention is served next day. After school detention is Tuesdays and Thurs. Part of this is that they have missed time during their classes so try to have them get



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work done during detention. Starting a Saturday opportunity for kids to come if they have missed detention or as an alternative to suspension.

- **Q:** What happens beyond punitive stuff? School refusal is huge right now - are they reaching out to those families?
- **A:** Depends on the tiers - if tardy once or twice, then no. But kids with persistent issues, often tardy, missing full days of school, then have clear set of steps we take. 3 days get a letter, 5 days get a letter and attendance meeting. If miss seven days unverified, then it can go to the courts for attendance plan to be put in place. Can't do that with 300 kids - but can do that with 100. It is a scale issue - was getting unwieldy. In detention, trying to make that productive. Detentions are run by teachers and counselors. Support of parents getting kids to school on time is critical.
- **Q:** Can we further discuss the bathroom issue....again, just punish the rule breakers please
- **A:** Yes, we are trying to be targeted.
- **Q:** Are parents being notified if their child gets caught in a hall sweep?
- **A:** Yes.
- **Q:** Test retakes - can the 80 percent be renegotiated to 90 percent? Discussed in the ACTL meeting. Would 90 percent be closer to mastery? Have heard that Central Office is talking about helping to draft revised tests.
- **A:** The 90 vs. 80 percent is an interesting question. 80 percent was decided by the Office of Academics. They viewed that as mastery. That is what we have for this semester and won't be changing. Parents advocating to the school board and to Dr. Duran is the way to get the message across. Teachers may continue doing retakes up to 100 percent if they want to. But at YHS, teachers have to have consistency across the curricular teams. Current system is not sustainable and the impact on teachers is remarkable and concerning. How do you get your best performance on that first attempt? And then do better on the next opportunity even if can only get up to an 80.
- **Q:** Were teachers also part of the process of forming the retake policy?
- **A:** They had a committee that worked on this all last year. Early fall did focus groups. Understand that some parents may feel that they were not adequately informed about the changes to the policy..

- Would love to have teachers join the PTA meetings. Teachers know we appreciate them and we do reach out to them.
- Thank you Dr. Clark and your team for everything you are doing! Appreciate all you are doing to get the students to be in the learning environment.

3. Adjournment - 8:52pm