

**Travis Heights Elementary School
PTA Board meeting October 4, 2016**

Present: Eliza Platts-Mills, President; Julie Ulrich, Vice President; Manuel Garcia, Co-Vice-President; Dave Lamkin, Treasurer; Jill Wiggins, Secretary; Lisa Robertson, Principal; Carrie Turner, Assistant Principal; Colin Clark, Advocacy; Amy Cooper, Historian; Daniela Licona, Parent Support Specialist; Cesar Benavides, audit committee.

Eliza called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Principal's report and discussion of STAAR test results:

Ms. Robertson reported that the reading and math assessments were done. About one-fifth were above, one-fifth were below, and the rest in the middle. Fifth grade math tutoring will begin this Saturday, and fourth grade the following week.

She said that THES is planning a partnership with St. Edward's University that would include training at THES for interns, with two professors, one in Methods and one in Reading. The interns would then serve as volunteers at the school. She needs to find some space for them.

Discussion of STAAR results: There have been questions as to why we went down. Ms. Robertson pointed out that one-fifth of our students are special ed, and they are tested. Also our project-based learning doesn't exactly match up with STAAR. Campuses that scored higher do much more test drilling, while THES focuses on the whole child. Our discipline problems also went down and kids' confidence went up. Ms. Robertson and Ms. Turner will craft a short message making these points as an "elevator speech."

Daniela Licona reported that she invited 88 parents whose children had three or more tardies or absences to a meeting, and only 10 showed up.

Treasurer's report:

Dave reported that Cesar Benavides has completed the entry of all membership forms to date. Memberships total 72 – 61 families, and 11 teachers.

David moved and Eliza seconded a motion to approve a \$40 mini-grant for Andee Cooper for online training for special ed. The Board voted unanimously to approve.

He also reported bank fee of \$152 for checks. Discussion of whether to withdraw from Wells-Fargo because of recent scandal: consensus was we have a good relationship locally and to leave it for now, but Dave will research fees at A+ Credit Union.

Ms. Turner will remind teachers of the October 15 deadline for reimbursements from the \$500 supply fund.

Dave reported on insurance coverage, including \$70 social media coverage. Eliza moved and Colin seconded a motion to approve that expenditure. The Board voted unanimously to approve.

Costs for Young Scientists Day will not be incurred as it will be presented by UT physics people. Manual Garcia moved and Ms. Robertson seconded a motion to provide t-shirts to the presenters. The Board voted unanimously to approve.

Advocacy team report:

Eliza reported that she and some of her law school students will provide legal advice to tenants at the Heights. They will also help them form a tenants' association.

Blunn Creek neighbors will have a creek cleanup this Saturday, October 8, meeting near Big Stacy Pool at 9 a.m.

Austin Interfaith delegates meet on Sunday, October 16.

PTA housekeeping:

Everyone on the board needs to sign a conflict of interest form, which will be provided at next meeting.

Minutes of each meeting are placed in Dropbox and members are asked to review them so they can be approved (or corrected) at the next meeting.

Fundraising:

Julie Ulrich said that the District may not be funding all projects and we need a sustained and ongoing fundraising effort, which requires a team and a leader. Julie will also work on this with Thunderboard on Thursday.

Calendar review:

Science Fair and PTA meeting are on the same day in January, precluding any other programming, but it was agreed that's ok for that meeting. There had been previous discussion about adding programming, in addition to the kids' performances, to future PTA meetings.

Travis Heights Art Trail: Ms. Turner said that unless someone steps forward to take this on we have other needs that take priority.

Open positions: Kim O'Driscoll is running the carnival but won't be there that day; Melanie Greene and Julie will cover that day, but a leader needs to be in place for next year for Kim to mentor now. Manuel Garcia stepped up and offered to lead the Carnival team for next year.

A leadership team is in place for the Tamalada and the Cultural Festival. Willow Benavides has taken on the Teacher Appreciation Team Lead. We are still looking for a Fundraising Chair and Team, and a Communications Chair.

The Board debriefed briefly about things to improve for next year's Back to School Night. The primary suggestions were to have childcare and food available next year.

The meeting adjourned at 6 p.m.