



**TALLEY STREET UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION, INC.**

**2617 Talley St
Decatur, GA 30030**

MEETING MINUTES
October 13, 2022 7PM

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Talley Street PTO Board of Directors was held via videoconference and in person on October 13, 2022 in the Talley Media Center. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Co-President Sara Weathersby.

I. Approval of Minutes from September Meeting

The Board reviewed the September PTO meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2022 meeting was made by Sara Wethersby and seconded by Michael Shahriari. The minutes were approved by a show of hands. Motion carries.

II. Treasurer's Report

Co-Treasurer Hetal Rathod presented the September treasurer's report to the Board. Specifically regarding spirit wear, the PTO has received \$6,161.55 in spirit wear receipts. The House sweatshirts have been very popular with students. The sweatshirt order included a cost of \$141.48 for printing fliers to promote the sale. The spirit wear store is currently closed, however, the Spirit Wear Committee can help with additional sweatshirt requests. Other expenditures accrued in September include \$500 for the capoeira performers organized by the DEI committee; \$484.50 for STEM supplies; and \$150 from the discretionary fund in tribute to Coach Nichols' father.

III. Standing Committee Reports (Part I)

Fundraising Committee and Reading Rally

Fundraising Co-Chair Kimberly Mohl provided an update to the Board regarding the reading rally. As of November 13th, students have read for 9162 minutes and the PTO has received \$4,120 in donations. Donations can be submitted through the website and via check delivered to the school.

Presentations are posted on Facebook related to each House. Kimberly worked with house leadership to design a reading rally program for this year and future years. Classroom teachers and families can access the presentations to find books and reading sources related to their House. The board reviewed the Amistad presentation as an example. Ms. Long from the media center contributed content and helped design the reward system. Each "booklet" has books and learning opportunities about the culture, the symbols and the relevant characteristics of each House. Reading sources are accessible via the online system, Sora. Students can earn trinkets and tokens. Ms. Long is helping students locate materials when they visit the library.

The Board acknowledged its appreciation for Kimberly and the Reading Rally team. The Fundraising Committee will pivot to Tiger Fest after Reading Rally has concluded.

IV. Principal's Report

Principal Heaton updated the Board about leadership and staff positions at Talley. We have two new vice principals and a new school manager. Two teachers on staff, Ms. Mosely and Coach Nichols already held leadership certifications and are transitioning to their new roles as vice principals. The school manager position has been offered to Sharonda Edwards, who is currently working at FAVE and has a long connection to the Decatur community. Mr. Heaton explained that two parapro positions equal a certified position. Filling the PE position with a parapro offers the school more staffing flexibility. Mr. Heaton plans to assign Tara Koski to the front desk alongside with the new school manager. Mr. Heaton is also working to hire a Title I parapro. An additional update concerns the school nursing position. The school is currently relying on a contract nurse through a staffing agency while the district works to find a long term solution. The position has been posted with the district central office. The district is currently reviewing the salary structure for certified staff. As Ms. Mosely transitions to becoming a vice principal at Talley, Mr. Heaton noted that a former teacher has returned to fill the opening for an EIP teacher. Mr. Heaton and the Board wish the best for members of the Talley family who have moved on to new opportunities.

The Board inquired about offering band to students. Mr. Heaton explained that the school does not currently have a staff person t qualified to teach band. The high school and middle school band directors have made inquiries about music/orchestra support.

Sara raised a question for Mr. Heaton on behalf of the Garden Committee. The school will be receiving a compost delivery twice a year by Compost Now, which will be stored in large bags. The Garden Committee plans to use a three-bin system with garden scraps (no food waste from the cafeteria). The Garden Committee would like to know if they could set up an area to compost outside the fence line. Mr. Heaton agreed to this plan in concept, and suggested naming Ms. Koski as the contact person for deliveries from Compost Now.

Related to composting and recycling, Mr. Heaton noted that Talley does not have a recycling bin from the city. Mr. Heaton would encourage parents with sustainability concerns to reach out to city representatives. Co-President Kelly Brown made a note of this and indicated that she would research how other schools address recycling.

Lastly, Mr. Heaton noted that the covered walkway plan coordinated with the central office is still moving forward. Hoping installation will occur before the start of the next school year.

V. Standing Committee Reports (Part II)

DEI Committee

The Board received a summary of upcoming plans by the DEI Committee. A Peace and Pie event is scheduled for November 16th at 7pm. Plans are set for the family book club at the Decatur Rec Center later this month. 23 families are currently slated to participate. Mijha Godfrey from Jambo Books curated an age appropriate book, Dragons in a Bag, for Talley families. In addition to the book reading, crafts and snacks are planned. The goal is to build relationships. Any books not assigned to families will be donated to class libraries.

VI. Committee Reports from Committee Reps or the Board

Garden Committee

Jen Serwitz from the Garden Committee provided a report to the Board. These minutes incorporate her written and verbal presentation. Jen noted that the roselle and holy basil plants in the school garden are thriving. The Garden Committee dried the plants to make tea and has received positive feedback from teachers and families. The Committee will continue to harvest garden products and offer to our Talley community. The committee collects an estimated \$100 from families during each walk and roll event. Jen reports that the garden committee has plant starters that could be offered to the teachers.

The Garden Committee would like to model additional sustainable practices including creating a compost area for garden scraps. Jen proposed that the Garden Committee establish a three-bin system, (incorporating free pallet wood) with the school's permission. The Garden Committee can purchase materials for the bins with its existing PTO budget. The proposed location would be outside the fence over by the wood chip pile.

Jen indicated that she has contacted the company, Compost Now, about serving as a garden partner. Compost Now has agreed to deliver 200lbs of compost in 40lb bags twice a year at no cost to the school. This delivery will provide sufficient compost to maintain the garden beds at a consistently full level. Compost Now will post our school on their website along with our logo and our mission statement.

The Garden Committee continues to support Talley classes. Recently, committee members worked with Mr. Polding's class as part of a measurement curriculum. His class harvested sweet potatoes, which were weighed, and the length of the vines and leaves were measured. During a recent Wednesday work day, with the help of the students, committee members transplanted kale and lettuces, thinned out radishes, harvested some collards, arugula, cilantro, and spinach, made live and dried bouquets for teachers. The okra will stop producing soon, but we are hoping to get a few more for a witch art project underway. The students enjoyed harvesting and preparing the hibiscus. Overall, the garden is slowly transitioning from a summer garden to a fall/winter garden.

Current and upcoming eblasts from the school to families emphasized that the garden would like to receive leaves to mulch the garden and to help amend the soil.

Room Parent Committee

The Board received a positive update about room parent activities and the fund pool. As of the meeting, 46 teachers who are homeroom, co-teachers, links have been assigned a room parent. This year, the allocation will be \$425 per teacher. Coordinators India Epps and Lynda Kim will reserve about \$1,600 in case there are staffing changes or other unexpected circumstances. The PTO conducts a staff appreciation event in March. The PTO has budgeted for a staff lunch. If the reserved fund are not need for staffing changes, the Board can consider applying these funds to a teacher appreciation event in May.

Spirit Wear

Sweatshirt order has arrived and will be sorted tomorrow. Because parents paid for the sweatshirts in advance, the activity is essentially budget neutral to the Board's finances. Hetal will track the invoicing documentation.

Spirit Nights

The Board received a brief summary of spirit night activities. The last spirit night at Raging Burrito was enjoyable. The Co-Treasurers will track the results in the budget once the funds are received from the participating vendors/restaurants.

STRS

Participation for Walk and Roll this school year is going very well. The Board discussed the details from the September walk and roll event which included a plant sale and hibiscus juice tasting with the Garden Committee.

VII. Old Business

No old business was raised for the Board's consideration.

VIII. New Business

The Board undertook a discussion about discretionary expenses. Related to a planned custodian appreciation day, the Co-Presidents proposed moving \$100 from the discretionary fund, which was agreeable by the members present. This led to a discussion about whether there should be a threshold amount below which the co-presidents would be authorized spend without a vote of the full Board. Following a brief discussion, a suggestion was made to allow discretionary spending decisions by PTO officers not to exceed \$250. Discussion also considered a policy to avoid overly favoring vendors. PTO Secretary Lindsay Hodgson will prepare draft language for the board to consider.

Next, a question was raised about flexibility with our square website usability. The current field options create complications when trying to coordinate student/parent information and spirit wear sales. Board members discussed whether to customize features without incurring additional costs. Co-Vice President Michael Shahriari suggested that we reactivate the "shipping" field which is currently not used, and then we could require more information.

IX. Adjourn

There being no other pending business, Sara moved to adjourn the meeting and Kelly seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13pm. The next meeting of the Talley PTO Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2022, at 6:00 PM.

PTO Board Members Present for Meeting:

Co-President: Sara Weathersby

Co-President: Kelly Brown

Co-Vice President: Gwendolyn Shaw

Co-Vice President: Michael Shahriari

Co-Treasurer: Hetal Rathod

Co-Treasurer: Tcee Bell (virtual)

Secretary: Lindsay Hodgson

Fundraising Co-Chair Kimberly Mohl (virtual)

Garden Committee Jen Serwitz

3rd Grade Member at Large: Briana Dayton (virtual)