**Campbell PTA Meeting  
February 12, 2019**

**6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Approximate # of Attendees: 28**

1. **Welcome: Barbara Martinez, President**

* Barbara welcomed everyone to the meeting
* We shifted the agenda to vote on the Nominating Committee before the discussion about reading levels and assessments

1. **Overview of Executive Board Positions and Election of Nominating Committee**

* Barbara introduced members of the Nominating Committee, whose job it is to identify candidates for the PTA Executive Board
  + Volunteers for Nominating Committee: Nathan Zee, Ryan Reed, and Kate Williams
  + Motion to elect members of the Nominating Committee passed unanimously
* Reminder that two Executive Board positions are open for new nominees this year due to people cycling off their 2-year rotation (VP of Programming and VP of Fundraising)
* PTA Executive Board members gave an overview of positions:
  + **VP of Programming (Paige Hamrick; term ends this year):** puts on entertainment activities e.g. movie night, game night, dances, 5th grade promotion and reception – we meet over the summer to talk about the calendar, what we think will have the most engagement – always open to new ideas – this is a position which isn’t really dictated by anyone, you can come up with the ideas and run them by the PTA Executive Board
  + **VP of Fundraising (Julia Ahumada; term ends this year):** oversees all fundraising efforts and works closely with a team of dedicated volunteers (e.g. wetlands fundraising chair, Square One Art coordinator, box tops coordinator) – we’ve done a Fun Run for the past 3 years, whether we do one again next year will be one of the first decisions to make
  + **VP of Communications (Kathy Evans Cordon):** manages outreach via listserv announcements, Facebook posts, etc.
  + **Treasurer (Amanda Lowenberger):** takes care of cash flow (e.g. takes in money, pays vendors) – coordinate budget at start of year (what we want to spend/take in) and presents budget at every meeting – responsible for filing taxes
  + **Secretary (Shana Brown):** takes minutes at PTA and Executive Board meetings and does the school directory
  + **President (Barbara Martinez):** keeps everything running! Keeps the PTA in good standing and makes sure we host our required number of meetings

1. **Reading Levels, Assessments, Report Cards—and how they relate to each other:**

**Maureen Nesselrode, Principal**

* We explored and discussed different components of the reporting system used at Campbell (which is unique to Campbell, driven by EL) and the standard APS report card
* Parents often ask about “instructional level” (reading level) represented on the report card as two numbers – e.g. “1-1” means the student is reading on level for the first half of first grade; “1-2” means the student is reading on level for the second half of first grade (math is similar)
* We broke into small groups and each group reported on what struck them as the most interesting/noteworthy thing they learned
  + Group 1: Reading Levels
    - The group noted that parents aren’t necessarily told where their child falls in the assessment, they are only told whether their child is on, above, or below grade level for reading
    - Maureen explained that Campbell used to use the DRA for reading assessment but now uses the FMP which uses letters instead of numbers for reading levels (e.g. “A” is kindergarten, “Z” is 5th grade) – the FMP is about reading as well as comprehension, so there isn’t much difference between being at reading level A or B, which is why they don’t necessarily report that level of detail to parents
    - Students could in theory be reading above grade level but receive on-grade level report because the assessment takes comprehension into account as well
  + Group 2: Standards-based Grading
    - Focuses on where students are along the spectrum of learning a particular skill
    - In K-3 it’s about how consistent students are in demonstrating a standard or skill and how advanced are they in the use of a skill – it’s not about achieving a skill and being done with it, it’s about how far along the path are they
    - Parents noted that they would like more information, e.g. it would help to know where a child is “inconsistent” in demonstrating a particular skill so parents can provide better support at home
    - There are so many standards (state specified) that it would be overwhelming and unhelpful for teachers to score each one individually; the skills/standards that relate to one another are grouped into “strands”
    - The main difference with standards-based grading is that students aren’t graded based on average scores, e.g. students’ grades reflect what they know, not how much work they turn in
    - Campbell didn’t used to have a report card at all, just did a narrative statement which caused a lot of problems, so several parents and teachers worked together approx. 7 years ago to create the report card we have now – which is an indication of where students are in relation to state standards
    - Most EL schools use standards-based grading – there is a key on the report card so other schools can equate our system to theirs
  + Group 3: EL Guidance on Grading
    - The group noted that the student-led aspect and focus on communication in their learning process is really apparent in the EL approach, e.g. portfolios, student-led conferences, morning meeting, reflection and discussion – a school may do project-based learning but that doesn’t make the school EL
    - Even the youngest students are capable of reflecting on their effort and progress, presenting and defending their work
    - We aim to motivate students to learn, not just to get an A on their report card
    - Campbell has a lot of information about how students are doing in terms of perseverance (habits of a learner) gathered as part of credentialing process
  + Group 4: Campbell’s Alternate Report Card vs APS Standard Report Card
    - Campbell has a separate system for K-3 and Grades 4-5; the rest of APS has one report card for K, another for Grades 1-3, and another for Grades 4-5
    - The standard report card includes an “effort” grade for each subject (Campbell’s doesn’t) – there was a lot of discussion about this, as some parents felt it would be helpful for Campbell to report on students’ behavior/effort for each subject this since this could yield information about where a child could be improving
      * Maureen responded that since most students tend to show the same amount of effort for every subject, Campbell reports on students’ behavior/effort in one section (habits of a learner) instead of having behavior/effort grades for each subject
      * Paige (APS teachers) noted that APS is moving away from grading students on their behavior/effort for each subject because it is too subjective for teachers to try to grade students on how hard they’re trying – when you think about what do we really want teachers to grade students on, it should be about how well students know the material and whether they can prove mastery of the subject, not about whether they talk in class or even attend every class
      * Kate Sullivan (Campbell school counselor) noted that APS is working countywide to improve trauma-informed care knowledge base and training staff, which relates to what teachers see as behavior/effort in the classroom – in this context it would be unfair to penalize a student for perceived lack of effort and formalize it on a report card
      * A few parents commented that even with half of Campbell’s report card dedicated to behavior/effort, this still doesn’t provide enough information for parents about where their child might be struggling
      * Maureen responded that the point is to take teachers’ perceptions out of the equation so that it doesn’t unfairly target English language learners or students with other issues (e.g. mental health challenges, disruptions at home) that could mimic poor classroom behavior/effort – there are still ways for teachers to communicate concerns to parents, e.g. in the comments section teachers can give more information
    - Maureen noted that Campbell’s report card was developed approx. 7 years ago by parents and teachers in response to the need for something more official – the report card should be viewed as part of the full package of assessments (including formal testing, portfolios, 5th grade project) – standardized testing reports, which are generated by the testing companies (not Campbell or APS) are always sent home and parents can feel free to bring those into school to ask teachers for more information
    - Question: What is the difference between Campbell’s K-3 and 4-5 report cards?
      * There is a different item in the personal and social responsibilities section that was more sophisticated
      * Main difference is the grading key: K-3 uses Exceeds/Meets and 4-5 uses the 4,3,2,1 system
* Barbara thanked Maureen and all attendees for such a great discussion, and noted that the history about Campbell’s report card was very helpful too

1. **Update on Countywide School Topics: Katherine Novello, Campbell’s CCPTA Representative**

* The School Board is reviewing Pre-K-12 Program Instructional Pathways and had a work session tonight on this topic, so there isn’t a lot of information to report right now
* Katherine met with Reid Goldstein (School Board Chair and Campbell’s liaison) – the draft work session presentation he shared seemed to indicate broad changes to the Pathways model – they are working with the Advisory Council on School Facilities and Capital Programs (FAC) and the Advisory Council on Instruction (ACI) to develop concepts, and will be asking for community input and recommendations this spring
* Maureen noted that the EL model will likely stay intact at Campbell, especially as we proceed with the credentialing process

1. **Wetlands Festival Update**

* Save the Date: Wetlands Festival is May 4 (“May the Fourth” – Star Wars Day!)
* We have already booked the inflatable climbing wall from last year and an inflatable obstacle course – these will be managed by someone from Arlington Parks & Rec
* We will have the same food model as last year, i.e. food will be provided for free (donations accepted); the Kona Ice Truck will also be there selling dessert
* Katie and Melissa are working on an outdoor activity – Long Branch staff will be coming to do some water sample testing

**Parent Donations (Julie Feltman and Julie Bohler)**

* The auction is our biggest fundraiser – we will be sending home a letter requesting donations for the auction – please don’t hesitate to offer something!
* We especially appreciate people donating their personal talents/gifts or unique experiences (e.g. hosting dinners, teacher events, babysitting, etc.)

**Book Swap (Elizabeth Fabrizio)**

* New this year! We are organizing a diverse book swap to celebrate Campbell’s diversity – focus on books by diverse authors, featuring diverse kids/stories e.g. gender, ethnicity, race, religion, SES, LGBTQ, ability/disability, family size and composition – especially including groups that have been historically underrepresented in children’s books
* We are asking families to look at their books and see if you have anything to donate – we will also be asking publishers, book stores, Friends of the Library to donate books; we may come back to PTA to ask for funds to buy books
* There will be a table at the Wetlands Festival for families to donate and/or select books to take home – there will be a box near the office to collect donated books leading up to the Festival
* It was suggested that we provide a list of books since we will probably only have 1 copy of each of these books, in case families want to get their own/another copy
* It was also suggested to have a poster so people could add comments about books they liked

1. **Treasurer’s Report: Amanda Lowenberger, Treasurer**

* Amanda gave a quick overview of the budget – there were no questions
* In addition to our regular ongoing expenses, we spent approx. $500 for family game night and $600 deposit for the inflatable climbing wall and obstacle course for the Wetlands Festival
* The 5th Grade placards were previewed (PTA funded the printing) – Maureen will ask to have APS Facilities install them and then we’ll have a ribbon cutting ceremony

1. **New Business and Closing: Barbara Martinez, President**

* No new business
* Reminder: March 21 is restaurant night at Silver Diner in Clarendon, 5 PM – 8 PM (we have another one coming up in June at Dogfish Head – this is our most lucrative restaurant night since they are very generous, so let’s have a big turnout for this one)
* Kate Sullivan is working with the 5th grade on middle school transition – there is a lot going on with this! Please reach out to Kate with any questions.
* Next PTA meeting on March 12, 2019 at 6:30 PM