

University Park Meeting Minutes
Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the PTA Board and Membership
March 13, 2018
6:00 PM

Location of Meeting:

University Park Elementary School, Art Room

Present at Meeting: Stacey Hauhuth, Merrell Aspin, Grant Varveris, Svenja Henze, Jennifer Frenkel, Angela Rathbun, Scott Rathbun, Joanna Shear, Katie Fitz-Gerad, Rachelle Montanaro, Heather Wise, John Urbana, Meridith Burrows, Ellen Landy, Geoff Babbitt, Nathan Lipke, Ashley Dempsey, Gilda Zaragoza, Kristen Jackson, Kirsi Peterson, Candace Kristensson.

The regular meeting of the PTA board and membership of University Park was called to order at 6:00 by Merrell Aspin.

- I. Principal and School Update: Grant Varveris and Katie Hendershot. Grant provided a handout on updates and introduced Katie Hendershot, one of the Mild/Moderate teachers at UPark. Katie said that she is currently applying with Freedom Service Dogs to provide a full time therapy dog for use at University Park. She has previously brought in a therapy dog for a few students at the school, and it has been very positively received. Typical placement of a dog takes at least a year. The school would work with the district and all departments to address allergy, legal, nursing, and other issues. Bill Roberts where Grant previously work had two service dogs at the school. Grant also informed us of a new program by the Denver Police Department (DPD) to be present at least once a month at every public school in the district. DPD was present today from about 11:30-1:30 during lunch and recess.
- II. Great Education Colorado: Roberta Ritvo and Alison Hargarten. Alison and Roberta presented on the Great Schools-Thriving Communities ballot initiative. They discussed the achievement gaps, teacher shortages, and abysmal teacher pay in Colorado. The initiative would address both the TABOR and Gallagher acts. An amendment to the Gallagher act would halt the annual property tax decreases. The initiative would also introduce a graduated income tax starting with incomes at and above \$150,000 at 0.3%. They asked that anyone interested in helping obtain signatures carry petitions and increase interest and awareness of the initiative. Their next meeting is Tuesday March 20th at 6pm at Park Hill Library. See also <https://www.greateducation.org>
- III. 2018/2019 PTA Board Vote: Stacey Hauhuth put forth all nominations. Jen Frenkel moved to elect each candidate, Kristen Jackson seconded president position, Ellen Landry seconded all other positions. All board positions were filled by unanimous vote.
- IV. Silent Auction: Katie FitzGerald. Excluding wine and class baskets, the auction has \$48,304 in donations! For the wine pull, we have 68 bottles, and need more

- whites. Discussion was had as to the appropriateness of a live auction vasectomy. Generally, all agreed that this could be an entertaining live auction, and that hopefully those who were not interested would just not bid.
- V. Garden Update: Geoff Babbitt. The garden committee is proactively working with the UPark kitchen staff to determine what produce would be most useful for their recipe needs. The 1st grade team plans to add Big Green's Garden Bites curriculum utilizing the garden this spring. The committee continues to write 3-4 grants each year for further funding. Their next meeting is March 22nd at 2:30 in the teachers' lounge.
- VI. DPS Foundation: Jen Frenkel. The PTA will be donating it's second annual \$1000 to the DPS Foundation. The DPS Foundation Gala is April 18th and everyone is invited to participate, and learn more about the essential services this charity provides to all the school in DPS.
- VII. Backpack Program: Svenja Henze. Year to date, the backpack program has already spent \$1500. The increase in spending compared to previous years is due to greater demand for the program. The program also provided the families with gift cards over the holiday break. Unfortunately, the application with Food Bank for the Rockies for University Park to become a pantry was denied. Svenja is now working with Ellen to partner with the next nearest pantry, so that the backpack program can purchase food from their site, thereby decreasing the cost and effort for obtaining food. The Urgent Care facility on Evans met with Svenja and Steve N. about having a greater connection to the school, participating in the wellness fair, supplying first aid and toothbrush kits for the backpacks, and also donating \$1200 to become a sponsor.
- VIII. Budget Review-Jen Frenkel: February was generally another slow month for income and expenditures. Apple continues to have some income, the grocery cards will probably not meet our budgeted goal of \$11,000. Ticket sales have begun for the Silent Auction. Expenditures were also small with band expenses, as expected, being greatest.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50pm.