

**Claremont Immersion School PTA
General Membership Meeting
November 14, 2017. 7PM
Claremont Immersion Elementary Library**

Introduction--Melissa Schwaber, President

Melissa welcomed all attendants to the meeting and introduced Carol Schaedel, Resource Teacher for the Gifted at Claremont.

Gifted Services Presentation-- Carol Schaedel

Carol laid out the overview of her presentation saying that it was divided into two parts; differentiation in the classroom and identification of gifted learners. She said that gifted services have evolved into a pull-in method rather than a push-out method, meaning much of gifted learning takes place in the students' classrooms. Carol spoke of the NAGC (National Association of Gifted Children) which is an organization that ensures that gifted learners, like the ones at Claremont, are served in a systematic way. Carol serves 90 Claremont gifted students with help from the professional learning communities which are made of her, the classroom teachers, and instructional specialists. Jessica Panfil, Principal, jumped in to introduce herself and spoke more about the professional learning communities that Carol mentioned saying that the groups of educators meet on a regular basis to plan how to best serve the needs of gifted and high ability learners. Carol then introduced Denise Santiago, Claremont's math coach, with whom she works closely within the professional learning communities.

Carol then spoke about differentiation in the classroom using content, process, and product. Carol went over ways that Claremont uses collaborative teaching in the classroom and touched on some of the content resources that teachers use to serve the gifted community. Carol mentioned how using the "growth mindset" in the classroom encourages students to take risks with their learning.

Carol then said that gifted children are identified in the middle of the school year and placed with other gifted learners in the same classroom the following year to ensure the students have intellectually similar peers. Once identified gifted, the label will remain with the student. Parents will be notified if their children are being considered for gifted services.

Carol then spoke more about the gifted identification process. Gifted students are identified Kindergarten through twelfth grade. In January/February teachers begin to identify students who would benefit from a gifted evaluation. Any person in the community, including parents, can make a recommendation for a student to receive a gifted evaluation up until the April 1 deadline. Carol said that certain tests are used to screen for gifted students. Academic achievement is also used to identify gifted learners. A portfolio is created for a student considered for the gifted program which is then reviewed by classroom teachers and instructional specialists to determine if the student qualifies for gifted services. Parents will be notified if their student is to receive services via a letter. Parents can appeal the decision if they so desire.

Carol finished her presentation with discussion of how students are clustered in classrooms. Jessica also weighed in about how children are placed in classrooms from year to year. Carol, Jessica, and Denise fielded questions from some of the PTA meeting attendants.

Announcements--Melissa Schwaber

Melissa made announcements on behalf of Donna Lombardo, Treasurer and Amy Oldham, VP of Education and Green Initiatives because they were not in attendance at the meeting.

Treasurer Report

Melissa announced that the PTA taxes done and mailed. Donna will send out an email to everyone soon about where the PTA is with the budget. She requests that all reimbursements be turned in as soon as possible.

VP of Education and Green Initiatives Report

Melissa announced that Amy does not have much information on Jr. Great Books yet, but is working on it. Odyssey of the Mind is up and running. Odyssey of the Mind is much bigger this year than last year. Contact Lyzbeth for more information about Odyssey of the Mind. Fall After School Enrichment is coming to the end on December 8th. Winter registration for After School Enrichment runs from December 4th-11th.

VP Communications--Melania Saraniero

Melania announced that APS has three big initiatives that need parent input: middle school boundaries (the APS school board will meeting on November 30th to discuss this); a strategic plan that will guide APS operations for the next six years (there is a survey available for parents to share their hopes and dreams for APS in the coming years); and a discussion on proper and effective use of technology (there is a community discussion tomorrow, November 15th). Melania encouraged the meeting attendants to check the Engage Arlington website for more information about these initiatives. Melania announced that Claremont calendars for December will be coming out soon.

Giving Tree, Fun Run, and Winter Celebration Classroom Parties Updates—Melissa Schwaber

Melissa announced that over a third of the leaves are gone from the Giving Tree. There are 97 students and 10 families that the community is helping through the Giving Tree. Melisa encouraged the meeting attendants to sponsor a family in need if possible. The PTA is using the Amazon wishlist feature to collect gifts which can be directly shipped to Claremont. All gifts are due December 4th. Gifts should be donated unwrapped. On December 11th there will be a gift wrapping party at the library. Please bring scissors.

Fun Run is coming up this Saturday, November 18th. Participants should meet at Claremont to get their race papers then head to Barcroft where the run will take place. Sign up for the run is available online or on paper. The money raised from this event goes back to fund recreational supplies for Claremont.

Winter holiday parties are coming soon and Melissa encouraged all homeroom parents to start thinking of themes of service for the parties. Melania reminded everyone that the parties times will be split; K-2nd in the morning and 3rd-5th and VPI in the afternoon. Valentine's Day parties will be in February and the theme will be The Love of Friendship and Reading.

Principal Update-Jessica Panfil

Jessica thanked Gina Mendoza, VP Social, for her work with the Marine Corps Marathon Fun Run and the Fall Fest. Claremont won the Healthy School Award, a prize of \$1000, and a session with "Jumping with Jill" from the MCM Fun Run. Jessica spoke of the grade-level conversations and how they focused on two key elements: building community and student learning. Jessica then spoke of the importance of Spanish Language Arts and learning in two languages. Jessica talked about all lost and found items that are accumulating and the importance of labeling children's items. Betty Young is organizing the lost and found effort. Report cards are coming home November 28th. Book Fair starts December 5th.

Jessica thanked everyone for coming. Melissa announced the next English PTA meeting will be in January.

*****Meeting Adjourned*****