PTO General Meeting

10-14-2026; 6pm

Attendance: 14 Parents + 8 Board, Dr. Batis, Mrs. Squeglia, Ms. Myer, Dr. Francis, Mr. Kapalo-Allen
Start time: 6:07pm

Icebreaker presented by Kathryn Barbash

Principal's Update: Teacher committee presentations (with slide deck) & their initiatives

- 6 committees
    - BEST: Behavioral Emotional Support Team (Mrs. Squeglia chair)
        - Advanced tiers of support
        - Every student gets tier 1 support
        - Tier 2 is short-term/small group
        - Tier 3 is more intensive (e.g. 1:1 meetings, school-based mental health, weekly/daily check-ins)
        - SAP = advanced tier team
        - Tiers 2-3 is provided with parent approval only
        - Matrix is shared with staff for referrals and then matches children with proper supports after parent discussion
        - Parent request that this information is shared with parents as the teacher burden is too great to be aware of every child's emotional needs and well-being and could be better supported if the families have input
            - This is part of the MTSS process at the beginning of the year; Dr. Batis stated should could provide more clarity about the process when that information goes out each year
            - Not something that a parent could opt in to
            - Parents can reach out to counselors if they have emotional need/support questions or concerns
    - Climate
        - Building theme support and mural "Grow wild, learn big"
        - Veterans Day Program
    - EMT (Safety)
    - Engagement
        - Seeks academic engagement (e.g. book buddies, therapy pets), strategies for getting kids engaged in class
        - Spirit week
    - Growth & Achievement
        - Ms. Myer helps chair this (was MTSS Facilitator and is now 2nd grade teacher)
        - MTSS = Multi-tiered systems of support

        - First in Math School Wide Competition
        - Sticker Challenges
        - PBIS Prize Patrol Cart - 3rd Year Running
            - Tangible & Non-tangible items (1st in lunch line, lunch with Dr. Batis, lunch with a counselor, etc)
            - School store and teachers have option for their own “store”
        - Beginning of year lessons on Respect, Responsibility, and Integrity
    - Sunshine

Kylie Mascara-Gupta (President)

- Board Intros
- PBIS Assembly
    - Josh & Gab today; huge hit!
- Halloween Parade & Parties
    - Fri Oct 30; Parade @ 1:30
- Dance Committee: Oct 20 @ 1pm - details forthcoming
    - New Theme: Safari to play off school theme
- Multicultural Night Committee: Oct 12
    - Another meeting coming up 1st of 2nd Week of November
    - Multiple people can sign up for countries (e.g. 2 families can present an Italy table)
- Finalized Directory being worked out
    - Should be done and off to print by Friday
    - Thank you to everyone who opt-ed in
- One of our biggest PTO goals this year it to really create a sense of community and belonging;
    - thank you for being here
    - thank you for all of your commitment and contributions

Patricia Antinopoulos (VP)

- 5th Grade Day
    - 1st meeting was held last week: a lot goes into this for the 5th graders
    - Bouncy houses, vendors, etc - it adds up in cost
    - In-person fundraising event at Harp & Fiddle - Thursday, Nov 5 @ 6pm
    - If it’s a success, we’d like to hold it annually during Camp Allegheny as a parents night out
- Restarting squeeze tube/pouches bin collection in the cafeteria
- We are working on a form so that moving forward, there will be a link to donate financially if you’d like to do that instead of donate your time; we know this is not feasible for everyone, but want to provide more opportunities for supporting the kids in whatever way works best for your family

Loghan Wright (Secretary)

- Newsletter Requests committees please submit anything and everything you’d like to promote or shout out
- Bylaws updates and proposed changes are available for view in the weekly newsletter; will go to a vote at November meeting

Mallory Bernstein (Social Media)

- Any feedback, comments, etc - please let us know
- Those in attendance shared that they like the posts and to keep them coming “Never less posting for social”
- Would anyone be interested in receiving the newsletter via text?
    - Too many phone calls, texts, etc
    - Would get lost
    - Maybe have the option to choose
    - Most parents said they wouldn’t be that interested

Julie Serig (Treasurer)

- Budget & Voting
    - Getting any outstanding checks sent out
    - All numbers for all committee budgets are up to date
    - If there are ever questions, please please please come to us
    - VOTE unanimously approved: 12 (some parent attendees had to leave prior to vote) + Board

Kristi Campbell & Chelsea Dukovich (Fundraising)

- You will start seeing goals & what we made for each fundraiser
    - Want to keep up with transparency on what we need, how we’re doing, and where the money is going
- Square1 Art will be going out shortly
- Homecoming Sales: Blankets ($25), Socks ($15), O’Hara Tshirts ($5), Hair Ties ($2)
    - Booth at Carnival near petting zoo
    - Goal: $500
- Charleston Wrap
    - New gift shop in place of greenery - wrapping paper, but many other holiday gifts; Catalog should go out end of October for 1st week of December direct home delivery
    - Goal: $4000
- We need someone to help with/spearhead Talent Show: scheduled for March 5

Kathryn Barbash & Joe Vickless (Community Relations)

- Joe: Connecting and engaging with local businesses for our school events
    - Want to expand past O’Hara
    - Will be doing cold visits
    - If you have anyone you think might want to partner with us, please reach out
    - Working on contracts and buttoning up documentation
- Kathryn: “Ask A Parent” feature
    - Goes out in the newsletter
    - Submit any questions you might have about O’Hara community, holiday celebrations, submitting trip/travel forms
- please reach out if you have any ideas about what the community might need

Committee Updates

- [ ] Assemblies
- [ ] Book fair
- [ ] Community Outreach
- [ ] Field Day
- [ ] Green Foxes Emily Glick rep; does Wonder Club; kids are going to bird & butterfly space by Crofton tomorrow; wants to focus on the 30 acre space of O'Hara property; how can we create additional spaces for kids to be kids and explore outside; recycling resource ideas; where do we focus Green Foxes money to maximize impact for the kids? $5000 pavilion at Lauri Ann West–could we copy/paste at O'Hara for more outdoor space for kids?; ideas: natural play area to break up the traditional play area, adding activities to the paved area, expand use of the outdoor space; plans to hold 3-4 meetings over the year; please email if you have ideas or would like to be part of meetings greenfoxes@oharapto.org;
- [ ] Homeroom Reps
- [ ] Multicultural
- [ ] OFC
- [ ] Party Planning held in-person kickoff meeting a few weeks ago; 11-12 people attended; basket packing scheduled for next week; new this year: letting party planning committee be a part of the parties this year so long as you have clearances; more collaborative games planned
- [ ] Science Fair Yes, it is happening April 16!
- [ ] Someone Special Dance Meeting Oct 20 @ 1pm - details forthcoming
- [ ] Spring Baskets
- [ ] Team O'Hara Appreciation
- [ ] Welcome
- [ ] 5th Grade Day see notes above re: Nov 5 fundraising event @ Harp & Fiddle