



MORRIS BRANDON PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION



Morris Brandon PTO General Meeting + Principal Coffee Talk

Friday, April 17, 2026

10:00 AM via [ZOOM](#)

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Presenters: Fran Cowart and Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Meeting Called to Order: 10:01 AM

Discussion: The PTO Co-Presidents introduced themselves and welcomed attendees to the final PTO General Meeting of the 2025-2026 school year. They introduced the agenda for the meeting as well as the guest speaker, counselor and parent, Teddy Bair, M.Ed., M.S., NCC.

II. Vote to Approve Minutes from January 2026 PTO General Meeting

Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: Approval of the January 2026 PTO General Meeting minutes.

Motion to Approve: Ena Brooks

Second Motion to Approve: Lane Kurban

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Minutes Approved: Yes

III. PTO Treasurer Report

Presenter: Tricia Ricketts, PTO Treasurer

Discussion: The treasurer's report revealed a budget surplus, surpassing the revenue goal of \$183,000, due to the success of the Parent Party, Mom's Mahjong, and Read-A-Thon events. At this point in the school year, there is no more expected revenue as there are several upcoming expenses. The school year's cash balance began at \$105,000 and the current cash balance is \$174,000.

IV. Presidents' Report

Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents; Ena Brooks and Tricia Ricketts, Incoming PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: A review of recent and upcoming PTO events was discussed. Recent events included Parent/Son Night in February, Teacher Appreciation Week in February (lots of fun, food, and sweets), Bingo Night at the Primary Campus in February, Chick-fil-A Spirit Night, Talent Show, and the Blue Jean Ball Parent Party. Monthly meals for teachers and staff have been ongoing. Upcoming events were also presented. The Tall & Small Ball for girls and their parents will take place on April 24th at the Primary Campus. Parents were encouraged to purchase tickets and order their Chick-fil-A dinners ahead of time. World Cultures Night will take place on April



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30th at the Primary Campus, showcasing the diverse cultures of the families of our school. This event will include performers and free pizza. Parents were encouraged to also register for this event. The Dad's Golf Tournament is approaching and is sold out. Walk to School Day will take place on May 6th. Further, the Rising K Popsicle Social will take place on May 11th at the Primary Campus. Parents were encouraged to spread the word to their friends and neighbors. Field Days will take place on May 12th, 13th, and 14th. Classroom teachers will send home information relating to this event. The 5th Grade Graduation will be held on May 21st, and the Last Day of School along with the Kindergarten Splashdown will be held on May 22nd.

The Co-Presidents thanked all the parent volunteers for putting in so many hours and hard work throughout the year.

The incoming Co-Presidents, Ena Brooks and Tricia Ricketts, were introduced by the current Co-Presidents. Ena and Tricia spent time presenting small bios about themselves. They then presented the PTO Board for the next academic year, including Kim York as Treasurer and Lindsey Bedell as Treasurer Elect, Ashlee Portis as secretary, Susannah Barko as VP of Communications, Morgan Neff as BeeMail Editor as well as VP of Communications Elect, Fran Cowart and Meg Watts as the Parliamentarians, Sam Meyer and Jennifer Pittman as Co-President Elects, Laura Nix as Room Parent Coordinator, and Juliana Cagle as Foundation President.

Motion to Approve the 2026-2027 PTO Board:

Motion to Approve: Teddi Bair

Second Motion to Approve: Lane Kurban

Members Approving: All

Members Opposing: None

Minutes Approved: Yes

V. Guest Speaker on the topic of "Parenting the Anxious Generation with Positive Discipline"

Presenters: Teddi Bair, M.Ed., M.S., NCC

Discussion: Teddi Bair, a licensed professional counselor and parent at Morris Brandon, presented on parenting challenges post-pandemic, sharing tools from her training in a treatment modality called Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions (SPACE) and Adlerian positive discipline approaches.

Ms. Bair first presented an activity that stems from positive discipline. Parents were encouraged to imagine the biggest challenge they may be facing with one of their children today. Subsequently, they were then asked to imagine this particular child visiting in twenty years and what sort of adult they hope to see. Based on presented answers, parents were shown that they can turn a difficult challenge into a teachable moment.

The psychologist Alfred Adler was discussed. While punishment is effective in the moment, positive discipline is most effective in the long-term for creating empathic, self-starting, critical thinking, and kind adults that we want to raise.



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Anxiety is an interpersonal emotion, a healthy emotion. Our children look to us to determine if they are okay. They need a little anxiety, also called healthy anxiety, to motivate themselves. However, when anxiety gets in the way of sleeping, eating, social habits, etc., this is called capital A anxiety. As parents, we often make two pitfalls, permissiveness and demandingness. Instead, try supportive statements with children. There are two features to supportive statements, empathy (i.e., "You're feeling scared") and efficacy (i.e., I know you can handle that feeling"). An analogy of Mac N Cheese was offered, as one cannot make Mac N Cheese without the noodles and the cheese.

Ms. Blair offered to make her slides available with everyone.

VI. Principal's Coffee Talk

Presenter: Jay Bland, Principal

Discussion: Mr. Bland began his talk with quick shot outs for all the amazing activities and events the school has had over the last several weeks (i.e., Boys' Night Out, Black History Month performances, Bingo Night, etc.). Mr. Bland provided a comprehensive school update, sharing spring MAP assessment results showing strong performance in reading and math proficiency, particularly noting second grade's 90% proficiency rate in math. He discussed CCRPI scores, subgroup performance, and Gallup survey results showing high teacher engagement.

MAP assessment results are a great predictor of the Georgia Milestones. Brandon demonstrated strong performance in reading and math proficiency. Science scores were also shown, however science scores have no alignment to the Georgia Milestones just yet. Science has been a stagnant proficiency the past two years and a goal was to increase this by 10% this year. Mr. Bland spoke about the subgroups, economically disadvantaged and exceptional education. Approximately 11% of Morris Brandon is identified as Exceptional Education, and thus it is important to understand their data and know that they constitute a large subgroup. While math had growth, reading was a little bit more stagnant but still an 8% gain. Approximately 8-10% of Morris Brandon is identified as economically disadvantaged. These scores were presented on a slide as well. Principal Bland met with the GO team as well as his administrative staff to plan the summer and the next school year with a focus on instruction.

Mr. Bland discussed our partnership with Globe Academy, a charter school and leader in the immersion schools in Dekalb County. As they do not have the same resources as Morris Brandon, Globe Academy staff visited our school to view our learning environment, climate, and culture. Morris Brandon students toured them around.

Gallup was adopted by APS approximately 8-10 years ago and is a survey with an educational component used with corporations and companies. Scores indicated over 70% teacher engagement at Morris Brandon. Out of twelve categories, Morris Brandon only dropped in two, "I have received specific recognition in the past 7 days" and "Someone at work cares about me."



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Principal Bland closed with a quick hiring update. New hires for the next school year include a new kindergarten teacher, a third grade teacher, an Autism teacher at the Primary Campus, a General Maintenance position, and a new Assistant Principal. The conversation ended with announcements about upcoming events including World Cultures Night and various end-of-year celebrations. Principal Bland thanked the PTO and parents for a great school year.

VII. Closing Remarks and Reminders

Presenters: Fran Cowart & Meg Watts, PTO Co-Presidents

Discussion: The PTO Co-Presidents thanked everyone for joining and participating in the last meeting of the school year.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:04 AM

Meeting Recording: The recording for this meeting can be accessed via the Morris Brandon website on the PTO page and/or via the link: [PTO General Meeting April 2026 Recording](#) with the passcode #n2ziCQ1.