



# MORRIS BRANDON PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION



Morris Brandon PTO General Meeting + Principal Coffee Talk  
Friday, January 23, 2026  
12:00 PM via [Zoom](#)

## I. Welcome and Call to Order

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

Meeting Called to Order: 12:02 PM

Discussion: Fran and Meg, the PTO Co-Presidents, introduced the meeting and gave an overview of the meeting flow and agenda, including introductions of the IB coordinators from North Atlanta and Sutton schools.

## II. Vote to Approve Minutes from October 2025 PTO General Meeting

**Presenters:** Fran Cowart, PTO Co-President

Discussion: Approval of the October 2025 PTO General Meeting minutes.

**Motion to Approve:** Tricia Ricketts

**Second Motion to Approve:** Shannon Konn

**Members Approving:** All

**Members Opposing:** None

**Minutes Approved:** Yes

## III. PTO Treasurer Report

**Presenter:** Tricia Ricketts, PTO Treasurer

Discussion: Tricia presented the treasurer's report, highlighting that we are nearly halfway to our revenue goal (\$84K earned to date with a goal of \$183K), and that we have closed the PTA bank account in November to simplify operations. The conversation ended with an announcement about the kickoff of the Read-A-Thon and upcoming events like Boys' Night Out, Tall & Small Ball, Field Day, 5<sup>th</sup> grade celebrations, as well as supporting our teachers and staff during our upcoming Teacher Appreciation Week.

## IV. PTO Events

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

Discussion: Recent PTO events were reviewed including Willy's Spirit Night, Chick-fil-A Spirit Night, Jamboree, Kindergarten & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Thanksgiving Feasts, Southern Baked Pie Fundraiser, Mom's Mahjong Fundraiser, Read-a-Thon (starts today, encourage students to read outside of school and families/friends to donate, as well as an outside author), and Monthly Teacher/Staff Appreciation Meals.

Upcoming events were announced including Parent/Son Costumes and Clues, Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week, Bingo Night, Brandon at the Hawks, Chick-fil-A Spirit Night, Brandon's Got Talent, Blue Jean Ball (tickets have a reduced price this year and will sell out quickly), Tall & Small Ball, World Cultures Night, Dad's Golf Tournament, Walk to School Day, Field Days, Rising K Popsicle Social, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation, and Kindergarten Splashdown.



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Reminders to start reading and donating for the Read-A-Thon. Tryout forms for the Brandon's Got Talent Show are due on February 6<sup>th</sup>. If going to the Parent/Son Costumes & Clues event, pre-order your chick-fil-A food items. Event details are in the BeeMail every week. Finally, please check the BeeMail for a link and sign up to chair a PTO committee next year.

## VI. International Baccalaureate (IB) Continuum

**Presenters:** Danielle Costarides (IB Coordinator, North Atlanta High School) and Brett Flater (IB Coordinator, Sutton Middle School)

Discussion: Mr. Sam DeCarlo introduced the guest speakers to discuss the International Baccalaureate (IB) continuum, highlighting Morris Brandon's long standing commitment to the program and the opportunities available at other schools in the district. The meeting focused on the IB program's continuum from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the North Atlanta Cluster. Danielle Costarides coordinates the IB program for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade courses at North Atlanta High School, while Brett Flater coordinates the program for Sutton Middle School.

The IB coordinators presented the benefits of the IB program, emphasizing its consistency, development of essential skills, and preparation for college. They highlighted how the program builds upon itself each year, focusing on lifelong learning, critical thinking, and international-mindedness. The presentation also covered the transition from elementary to middle school and how the IB program at Sutton Middle School sets a foundation for academic and personal success in high school and beyond. The elementary school houses the Primary Years Programme (PYP) which lays the foundation, focusing on language and vocabulary development. The middle school's program is identified as the Middle Years Programme (MYP) which is a 6<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade program. The IB program's "Ten IB Learner Profile Attributes" include inquiries, knowledge, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective.

The IB coordinators discussed North Atlanta High School's IB program, highlighting its emphasis on project-based learning and skills development from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They explained the school's rigorous IB programs, including the Diploma Program and the Career-Related Program which prepare students for college and beyond. The speakers noted that North Atlanta has a high post-secondary enrollment rate for IB students and that colleges highly value IB graduates. They also touched on the school's collaboration with Sutton and the use of Toodl, a shared program for vertical planning and project storage. The session concluded with information about prospective parent tours and the option for dual enrollment.

## VII. Principal's Coffee Talk

**Presenter:** Jay Bland, Principal

Discussion: The principal presented a comprehensive update on Morris Brandon Elementary School's performance and strategic plans. He highlighted the school's new strategic goals, including increasing ELA scores to 87%, improving student growth percentiles for subgroups, and yearly gains for exceptional education students. Parents were encouraged to check the website to learn more about these strategic goals. The principal also discussed the school's recent CCRPI released score and emphasized the importance of maintaining high performance. Morris Brandon received a CCRPI score of 93.2%. He shared data on student achievement and growth, noting that second grade students are performing exceptionally well.



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# MORRIS BRANDON

## PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

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The principal reviewed the school's budget development process and allocation for the upcoming year, which includes funding for new positions and programs. He encouraged parents to complete the Climate Survey to help improve the school environment.

### **IX. 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 meeting.

The next PTO General Meeting will be held on April 17, 2026.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:08 PM