

PRES PTA Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2022

7 p.m.

President's Report

Dalia Bracy

- Called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for coming. Shared background on her involvement with PTA over the years.
- Dalia noted that PTA is in sincere need of volunteers to take over several aspects of running the PTA for next year because all members of the current Executive Board are not able to serve again next year due to term limits.

Administration's Report

Dr. Holden, PRES Principal

- Thank you to PTA for the staff lunch provided for back to school.
- Advocated for parent donations to PTA so we can continue to give excellent benefits to kids.
- Passed out survey results for HCPSS Equity Framework – shared results of survey, which included staff, students, community input. She noted PRES is supposed to use this as part of our school improvement plans.
 - Focusing on differentiation on math and language arts. Working closely with math support teacher.
 - 2nd page: green shows lowest areas of concern (meaning of all questions asked under that element, was a low area of concern).
 - First area of concern under belonging – area of concern was individual social/emotional needs are met. County has guiding framework. Plan to meet with staff to discuss and also want to include parents. They will discuss what do you see and what do you need for indicators of highest concern.
 - Second area of concern - Opportunity and access. Leadership opportunities are welcomed/encouraged.
 - Instructional Excellence – area of concern was professional learning for staff is equity focused and promotes professional growth – individuals are empowered to shape own learning experience.
- School year is off to a great start.
- Vacancies:
 - PRES is a very large school with several different programs. The school is not fully staffed and currently has 10 vacancies.
 - Today, we had 14 staff members out plus the 10 vacancies. This is a very serious concern. In some instances, we're not always able to do what we'd like to do if we had everyone here.
 - We don't have subs that are able/available to pick up jobs so we're pulling support staff to fill in absences.

- Vacancies are: 1 Regional ALS; 1 Regional teacher (submitted recommendation to hire but waiting for HR to inform us to hire); 2 general ed paras and 1 special ed resource; 1 special ed for primary learners; 1 ALS para (submitted rec); 1 student assistant and 2 resource teachers (lunch monitors).
- Because of the vacancies, PRES can't provide outdoor lunch. Lunch must be done in a safe way.
- Question: Can parents help with outdoor lunch? Answer: Yes. Dr. Carr is going to share info.
- **Enrollment Figures – 809 students at PRES**
 - 35 in Pre-K RECC
 - K - 6 classes – 128 students – (21-22 per class)
 - 1st – 5 classes – 104 students (19-22 per class)
 - 2nd – 6 classes - 133 students (21-24 per class)
 - 3rd – 5 classes – 139 students (24-30 per class)
 - 4th – 5 classes – 137 students (26-27 per class)
 - 5th – 5 classes – 133 students (22-27 per class)
 - None of the classes are above the class size limits set by the county. For intermediate grades (3-5), it's set at 32 so none of the intermediate grades are above the upper threshold for those classes.
 - Staffed appropriately in terms of number of classes. Vacancies are mostly in special ed. Not general ed. So it would not impact staffing.
- **Parent Teacher Conferences – Nov. 21st and 22nd**
 - County still determining how they'll be held – right now in person. Question is whether to add hybrid. Teachers are not required to stay beyond 4pm so when they stay, it means they get the equal amount of time off the next day.
- **Hispanic Awareness**
 - Many people who have impacted our lives who identify as Hispanic. I want us to try to look at all of the cultures of our students and celebrate what their ancestors/families have brought to our community/country. Trying to gather a list that will identify our families so we can celebrate accordingly.
- **Halloween:**
 - There are only 2 schools in HCPSS that currently celebrate it; parade, etc.
 - asking if parents can think about ways to provide Halloween activities on the 28th in our parking lot, after school
 - PRES admin has thought about a few things we could do; we probably don't have a lot of time to discuss tonight; we can meet virtually to discuss how we could move forward, for example a trunk or treat; music; parade; crafts; eye ball punch; apple cider; can decorate and make it nice for kids.
 - It's a challenge for kids who don't celebrate Halloween. We've had to provide alternate activities during Halloween celebrations and move forward with those activities for those students who feel excluded.

- It's a school by school decision, not county. County is supporting to not have it but they're leaving it as principal's discretion.
- If we're being honest about being inclusive, then when we celebrate things during the instructional day, it excludes students so what other opportunities occur during the day? Can dress up outside of school day. Work together and open the discussion. Going to send out a link to meet to discuss further. What about fall festival? How many kids typically do alternative activities?
- **Volunteers at School**
 - Parents can volunteer in the school – there are required expectations, which will be] put in Pointers View newsletter. If you want to volunteer and you haven't done the requirements, still come in and you can do it right before you volunteer.
 - Each grade level team will handle volunteers differently. PRES Admin will communicate that request with Instructional Team Leaders next week.
- **Policy**
 - PRES Admin will share school policy information in Pointers View newsletter (search and seizure; alcohol and tobacco on campus; student behavior; restraint exclusion; etc.) – asking families to look at it. Will be included along with slides for GT seminars.
- **Spirit Wear**
 - PTA used to handle, but this year the school will take it on. May need volunteers to help us separate the items. Meeting with vendor next week.
- **Flu Shots**
 - Question: Will PRES offer Flu Shots in October for students at school? Answer: Yes, They are coming, but date is not selected yet. Will also have Vision/hearing screening in Jan./Feb.

Dr. Carr

Assistant Principal

- **Cafeteria update:**
 - outdoor dining is up to student choice; Up to 44 students in one grade who want to go out and lowest was 7. So given the number of students per grade, that leaves about 100 kids in the cafeteria. Therefore, given our current staffing issues, we cannot safely leave one staff person in charge inside and one person outside with that ratio.
 - We're hoping to have parent volunteers sign up for lunch date via SignUp genius – and have on person sign up for 3 lunch shifts at a time (1.5 hour) and what will happen is when we're better staffed, we can have that volunteer be with us outside. The thing with volunteers is that they have to be partnered with employee.
 - We want the kids to have this option but we can't always manage it b/c of staffing shortage. Hoping to start this with brief explanation coming out in beginning of October.

- We are now the only school in the county that is announcing to the community each day that we're cancelling lunch. It's happening at other schools but they aren't announcing it to parents. They did tell us we don't have to do daily announcements anymore, but we've decided to do it as a courtesy each time.
- There are no assigned seats at tables but they are sitting with their classes for inside. Outside for 3, 4, and 5 – they can sit at any table. All have peanut free opportunity.
- **Screening and Testing**
 - Starts first day of school in K (census – K readiness and Dibbles reader screener that help us identify kids who need targeted instruction)
 - MAP starts in grades 1-5 (1st and 2nd takes 3 times per year – adaptive test)
 - Fall MAP starts with 2nd grade next week

Budget

Dalia Bracy

- Reema passed out the budget sheet for this year and last year, plus detailed version. The PTA members present must vote on the overall budget amounts.
 - Motion to Approve Budget: Adelis Rodriguez
 - 2nd: Lindsey Sullivan
 - All in Favor: all
 - Nays: 0
 - Motion passed
- Suggestion to use Giving Tuesday as a push for more donations.
- Suggestion to better explain what programs like Walking Wednesday are.
- Suggestion to improve website by adding explanations of programs.
- Suggestion to provide a one pager on what's coming up and what opportunities are there to volunteer.
- Note: Companies can match donations to the school. We can add link to one-pager with information

Membership

Adelis Rodriguez

- 388 PTA members total
- Over 800 students
- Total of 603 families.
- Pre-covid we had about 500 members
- During covid, went down to 200s
- I think we can do better in having more parents join.

Family Fun

Katy Petty

- Back to School Picnic was a success. Thank you to all who helped.
- Donations have allowed us to restore funding for the End of Year Picnic in June.

Restaurant Night

Katy Petty

- Chipotle – Maple Lawn – October 11th – 5-9pm – they'll give us 33% of proceeds.
- Must mention PRES or put in promo code online so we'll get 33% of proceeds.

Directory

Dalia Bracy

- Parent volunteer Diana has stepped up to put together this year.
- We'll have a paper directory this year. (Use Canvas/Synergy in the interim)
- By the end of November, they'll go home with students.

Walking Wednesday

Erin Kirkpatrick

- We have 2 co-chairs: Lyndsey Sullivan and Michele Scarborough.
- Walking Wednesday takes place during recess every week. We need 6-8 parents there to sign off on laps. Kids can earn prize for walking certain amount.

Fun Run

Erin Kirkpatrick

- PTA hosts an annual 1 mile fun run as a fundraiser for the PTA
- We do it across the street at Clarksville Middle School
- Looking for parent volunteers to help with planning:
 - We need someone outgoing who can raise funds by going to businesses for sponsorships
 - Need someone who can run website for signup and organizing shirt orders. This does not require HTML knowledge, just populating info into fields, making shirt sign up and collecting money through the site

Enrichment

Noreen Ramienski

- Enrichment committee plans assemblies for the students during the school year. We hire different performers to come to school and do shows during the day for kids
- First assembly of the year: Reptile Guy is coming in December
- Hoping to get an assembly in Feb. from Smithsonian called Discovery Theater – Noreen saw them a few years ago and did amazing show.
- Typically have 2 assemblies per year. It can be expensive because the performer(s) usually stay the whole day because we have to split school population in half and do two assemblies in a day.

Cultural Celebrations

Elif Tasci

- Jeehan Kashim is the chair of PRES Cultural Celebrations and Elif is helping her.
- Doing two events per year:

- one is International Night – November 10th – sign up sheet has been sent out for volunteers – sign up to come in and present countries with food, art, attire, etc. Henna artist. Cultural performance. Will have craft activities.
- Also do Talent Show in the Spring. More information to come.

Community Service

Dalia Bracy

- Angela Stark is leading, and Jeehan Kashim and Tiffany Hall will help her.
- First project is now underway with a quick turnaround: coat and winter accessories drive. Donations of new or gently used hats, coats, mittens, gloves and scarves can be dropped off in a box in the vestibule done now through Sept. 30th. They will go to Howard County's MultiService Center.
- The next project is early next year: Pajama Drive for KC Cares. This one comes with a competition – the classroom with most donated PJs gets a prize from Chick Fil A.

Yearbook

Diana Hodges

- Cover Art: publishers keep pushing deadlines earlier. This year it is due in November. Encouraging students to submit art work – colorful, visible, art for cover of year book. The theme is Better Together. It's no longer a contest. Everyone's art will make it somewhere in the book.
- Don't forget to submit pictures from events. Information on how to do this is in newsletters and posted on Facebook.

Volunteers

Dalia Bracy

- Dalia noted that we are still in need of parent volunteers to fill several positions on the PTA. Please contact Dalia if interested in any of the following:
 - **PTACH (PTA of Howard County) Representative.** The representative will feed info to the PRES PTA from State or National. PTACH has their own mission when it comes to HoCo. They have a monthly meeting. We are allowed to send 2 reps to meetings and are allowed to vote. Right now, we have 1 volunteer. We could use another volunteer so we can have 2 votes and so we can trade off attending meetings. The meetings are the first Monday of every month, in person off 108 at Board of Ed. Building.
 - **Staff Appreciation Committee.** Parent volunteer Aamina Bhutta runs this and does a great job, but she is doing it by herself when this used to have a whole committee of volunteers. This involves planning the welcome back lunch for staff, dinner for teachers during parent-teacher conferences, staff appreciation week in May, a snack/coffee cart for staff on select dates. We really need some more volunteers to help her out. We have 135 staff members to serve.
 - **Fun Run** - see description above. We need a few more folks to help make this a success.
 - **Watch D.O.G.S.** – This is a program that used to run prior to the pandemic that involved dads and other male figures in students' lives (grandfathers, uncles, etc) to come in and

volunteer in various classrooms for a day. This needs a committee chair to get it up and running again.

- In general we need volunteers for next year who can shadow Board Members and other committee members this year to learn how it works – many of us are leaving next year.

Meeting adjourned 9:10