

GPES PTA
General body meeting minutes
[Zoom](#) and GPES Media Center
Tuesday, November 1st at 6:30 pm

Board Attendees: In person - Hanita Natelson, Lin Sunny Yu-shan, Carolyn Morris, Laura Basford, Alexis Rourk, Ellen Vandeloo; Ryan Fogarty Via Zoom – Suzanne Romero, Eddine Mureke, Jessica Lieberon, Dana Goodson, Rebecca Stallone

Participants via Zoom: 21

Participants in person: not captured

1. Welcome

- Greeting given by PTA President Hanita Natelson

2. PTA Board Updates

- VP, Communications: Laura Basford
 - Updated PTA bulletin board at the school with pictures of current board members
 - If you have any issues accessing our PTA communications or have any questions, please email Laura: basfordlaura@gmail.com
- VP, Events: Rebecca Stallone
 - 1st Restaurant Night - Lebanese Taverna on Nov 14: 15% of proceeds will go back to the PTA – please support!
- VPs, Diversity and Inclusion: Dana Goodson and Eddine Mureke
 - Working on recruiting new committee members
 - November is Native American Heritage Month – the committee will be coordinating events including:
 - Working with the Nat'l Portrait Gallery (Indigenous Peoples) on ways to work with teachers and incorporate their programs into classroom learning
 - Working on map of traditional tribal areas in Maryland
 - Book walk – creating a path with each page of a selected book on Native American history, students will follow the path and at the end will be suggestions for other books on the subject
 - December - Inclusive Schools Week
 - Last year the committee worked with [The Arc of Maryland](#) and is looking to work with them again this year on a variety of projects including the Together We're Better Art Contest (physical and digital mediums) promoting unity within our community. Last year's winners' works, including GPES, is featured at the Wheaton Regional Park mural
 - Students were very engaged and enthusiastic about the week last year
 - Please don't forget to engage with your students and ask them how the monthly events are!
- Treasurer: Ryan Fogarty
 - Treasurer's Report
 - B2S picnic raised \$1,309.67 (not a traditional fundraising event); Rocky Fund raised \$4,009.10

- Expenses: Staff Appreciation; Sensory Path purchase (being installed today)
- Total Balance \$35K (minus ~\$7K written to Scholastic for Book Fair)
- Mr. Smith line item: Musical Theatre Production – costs include:
 - Buying rights to the 5th grade musical club performance - Willy Wonka. *Note: Former 5th graders (current 8th graders) who were not able to have a performance due to the pandemic will be invited to participate*
 - Licensing, scripts, video
 - Piano accompaniment for Spring and Winter concerts

Question: Ukulele update from last year's purchase?

- We will check in with Mr. Smith and report at next meeting

- Staff Appreciation: Laura Basford
 - In the planning stages, week will include:
 - Pie Raffle – a really fun activity that everyone enjoys (classrooms get very excited when their teachers win)
 - Holiday Treat Cart – this year planning to bring cart around to teachers
 - Also thinking about creative new ideas for 2023
- Yearbook: Hanita for Heather Down and Bridget Manifold
 - Please continue to send pictures in! Laura will add the request for pictures to the newsletter
- VP, Extracurricular Activities: Lin Sunny Yu-shan
 - Winter/Spring Activities (same a Fall)
 - Science K-2 and 3-5
 - Spanish Feb – May
 - (new) Creative Art Class – Jan (6 classes)
 - Group Music
 - Chess Club
 - Flyers came home last week, details on the PTA website <https://www.gpespta.org/before-and-after-school-activities>
 - Please let Sunny know if you have any ideas for new classes: ssunny0610@hotmail.com
 - If you need financial assistance, please contact the individual organizations for potential scholarships
- Green Committee: Alexis Rourk and Ellen Vandelloo
 - Working on setting up first event and work plan on various activities
 - Budget request - \$1,275 **put to vote** for:
 - Ongoing garden programming
 - 2-3 after school sessions
 - 4 environmental events

Motion – Ryan, Seconded

In Favor – All

Opposed – None

- Planning events and activities to recognize/celebrate Green (Eco) issues
 - Green School re-certification – working with GPES staff member to coordinate
 - Events in after-school settings (green cleaning products, etc.)

- Food Waste Prevention/Awareness: Send Treats to Troops coordinated with local Girl Scout troops. Please donate wrapped Halloween candy to send to troops. Candy can be dropped off in white plastic bins by PTA bulletin board in the main hallway through November
 - Please reach out to the committee if you are interested in volunteering or participating - alexisrourk@gmail.com
- Room Parent Coordinator: Carolyn Morris
 - Fall Festival – many thanks to all Room Parents and Teachers, the festival went very well, and we are excited to be able to have the event again!
 - Melanie Bachrach added – as the event was re-framed as a “Fall Festival” it felt more inclusive, and no one opted out as in past years. Thank you for embracing the shift it made a difference for students and families and how they feel a part of Garrett Park
- Book Fair: Michelle Corno
 - Thanks to everyone who participated and volunteered – it was very successful
 - Provided \$2K in books for students in need and \$2,500 in books for the media center
 - PJ Read Aloud went over well and the first virtual portion was attended by 10 students, again promoting inclusivity of events
 - We still need a co-chair for the Spring – please email the PTA if you are interested

Question - When do students get the books they ordered at the book fair?

- Orders through Scholastic should take about 3 weeks, contact Scholastic directly with questions

3. GPES Administration Update

- Assistant Principal: Melanie Bachrach (see attached “Principal Updates’ slide deck for details, and emailed out 11/3)
 - Celebrations and Shout Outs (slide 2)– Fall Festival and Parade and Book Fair. Thanks to Heather Down for coordinating the PJ Read Aloud
 - Covid Updates (slide 3) – positives are up across MCPS and at GPES: 20 cases in Oct
 - MCPS Central Office is contacted when there are 3 or more cases in the same class and could be related
 - RSV is also present, and cases are on the rise, please remind students to practice good hygiene
 - Steps to take if your child tests positive for Covid:
 - Complete the MCPS Google Form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfs2RqaGzagPTfOg-HJEUXEblcH-zyADhFZRS7ifjAf21wPBw/viewform>
 - Email Mr. Tucci (Daniel_K_Tucci@mcpsmd.org), Mrs. Bachrach (Melanie_S_Bachrach@mcpsmd.org), and the homeroom teacher
 - The school will provide a return date for Day 6 (Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms or a positive test) and a date through which they need to wear a mask at school (Day 10)
 - If families need additional tests, please let Ms. Gambrills in the main office know
 - Safety and Security Updates (slide 4) – Mr. Tucci sent a letter today to promote transparency around school safety

- Outlines different procedures, how they are practiced and how families will be notified if there is an emergency (refining communication processes)
- Please talk to your kids about how they are practicing these at school
- There are 2 Security Coordinators for the cluster (Mr. Hernandez visits schools on a rotation)
- Letter explains the various practices and distinguishes between fire drills, Shelter vs. Lockdowns with Options, earthquake drills, Drop-Cover-Hold etc.
- Students also watch a video to explain the different practices and drills
- There is a staff meeting next month to review emergency preparedness

Question - Does the school have door stoppers for each classroom?

- Classroom door handles are locked from the outside and magnets are provided to fit over the door jam. Teachers can remove the magnet to lock the door quickly and easily. Additionally, all outside doors are locked at all times. 1 door at recess remains unlocked and monitored by staff and staff is instructed do not prop doors. Vestibule doors are locked at all times and cameras monitor the outside of the school.

Question – reverse evacuation?

- If students outside need to move inside, whistles let students know what to do (by grand band) and/or whether all students need to return to the building immediately
 - Free Tutoring Options for Students (slide 5) are available due to CARES Act funding
 - Information is available on the MCPS website
<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/tutoring.aspx>
 - November is Remembrance and Reconciliation Month (slide 5)
 - 1st time celebrated in MCPS
 - five 15-minute lessons provide a look at Black and African American history in our area, available today (11/1) to classrooms
 - Together We're Better Art Contest with The Arc Maryland (slide 7)
 - Joint programming and in-person assembly during National Inclusive Schools Week in December. A huge success last year and excited to work with The Arc again.
 - Lost and Found Volunteers needed (slide 8)
 - Please email Ms. Bachrach to help sort and hang up lost and found items so students can claim (could also use volunteers to launder clothes to donate or stock Counselors and Health Rooms) -
Melanie_S_Bachrach@mcpsmd.org
 - Lunch/Recess Volunteer training coming up (slide 8) -
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1G_3sp74rXDdS-ViYO3cAgY09ee055jqV/view?usp=share_link
 - Hanita suggests forming a volunteer committee via the PTA help sort and launder lost and found items

4. President Updates

- PTA President Hanita Natelson
 - Aware of the directory not working and looking into resolving issue, updates to come

5. Open Forum

6. Adjourn

**Have questions? Contact us at GarrettParkESPTA@gmail.com
www.GPESPTA.org**