

Douglas MacArthur PTA Community Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2021 6:30pm

Welcome and Opening Remarks – Jamie Pfister, PTA President

Fall Appeal – we do everything through volunteer and donation, one time a year we ask for this big push in donations, more information to come

Thank you to Jocelyn Parks and Liz Johnson – who led **Reading is Fundamental**, a successful event

New Tapestry was revealed, an effort championed by Reagan Moore, and Kristina Seppala, and previous Principals

Teacher of the Year Nominations due next week – Ms. Hairston is looking for your nominations by this Thursday November 18, minimum requirements – taught for 5 years, check that out.

Approval of October Meeting Minutes – Charissa Slack, Secretary

- October Minutes were sent in the PTA Weekly Newsletter
- motion to approve Reagan Moore, Seconded by Carmina Carper

Alexandria Health Department Information for Parents, Natalie Talis Cases in Alexandria

Be mindful as we are considering gathering with our loved ones this holiday season

- Rates of vaccination adjusted the data to include 5+, so overall eligible population has increased and so the percentage has decreased (kids 5-11)
- 75% of eligible are vaccinated (Target of 80%)
- 5-11 just authorized a couple of weeks ago, of the 11,500 people ages 5-11, 2400 have been vaccinated 21% - one of the highest
- We do have the highest of 12-17 vaccinated in this region
- Roll out – Education & Access
 - **Education:** Working with ACPS (Parent Liaisons, principals, social workers, etc) social media, ACPS Express in multiple languages

- presentations to be able to make sure people have the information they need, be able to ask their questions and talk through what these vaccinations mean and why they are important to our community.

- **Access:** Ongoing large AHD clinics

- § Every Wednesday night we are at the U.S. Patent and Trade office at Carlyle where we are hosting clinic in the evening and afterschool so people can get their kids vaccinated there and we have also been having clinics at the Alexandria City Public High Schools on the weekends

- § We are working hard to provide access to schools particularly, Title 1 schools – not during school hours, we want to make sure there could be a parent/guardian present and to talk through medical records, after school and evening clinics.

- Long-term effects, serious impacts even for the asymptomatic who can spread it to those who are high risk

- Quarantined out of school and activities, after 2 weeks after they've gotten their 2nd dose, and they can go back to school – unless they have symptoms then they need to stay home

- Cora Kelly on Saturday

- Going to large clinic may not be the best place for your kid to have their vaccination, pediatrician have access to vaccination for a smaller more intimate setting, pharmacies

- Vaccines.gov. look for your age group and locations

- AHD Outreach team will be at the Turkey Trot to answer any questions or want to find out more information about vaccinations

- Booking Dose #2: Children can book dose #2, every provider is different, some pharmacies can make both appointments at the same time, for AHD clinics, book one appointment and when you come in they book the second dose while you are there. You can also book it later online as well.

- Information for Boosters for Adults

- For those who are fully vaccinated: If you received your 2nd dose Moderna or Pfizer and it was at least 6 months ago, you are eligible if:

- Work in education/health care
 - 65+ older

- 18+ live in a long-term care setting, or congregate setting
 - 18+ underlying medical conditions
 - 18+ work in an environment would put you at risk (education/health care)
- Those if you have J&J, you are eligible if you are able to get your booster after 2 months after your 3rd dose
 - You are able to mix and match – you have options - you don't have to stick to the same kind of vaccine that you had earlier or you can stick with the same brand vaccine.

MacArthur Programs Update, Stephanie Paulson, VP Programs

Turkey Trot – November 20th! Hosted at the Chinquapin Circle, behind Chinquapin Rec Center

- 1 mile fun run
- Check in at 8am
- Race starts at 8:45am, we have fun things planned before like stretching with Ms. Nicholson
- Non-perishable food item for ALIVE!
- Prize by grade level – PJ day and possibly movie for the grade with the heaviest donations
- Free t-shirts for all racers
- Running Brooke – donating Move to Learn Running Packet for all who run
- There will be Music and Fire Truck
- Dress in a costume, get creative
- Individual and grade level prizes for:
 - Most Creative Running Attire
 - Most Spirited Participant
 - Metals for top runners
 - Most Generous Grade (based on pounds of food)
- Parent-Volunteers still needed

Learning Gardens, led by Susan Tomiak

- Plant vegetables and harvest for the Thanksgiving Luncheon in the past
- Ms. Dugan has worked with a group of 4th graders to plant
- Susan will be working with kindergarten to plant pansies

Congratulations to our **Reflections Winners!** Carmina Carper

- Reflections is an art competition with several levels. MacArthur Level has two divisions: K-2 (Primary) and 3-5 (Intermediate).

- Winners at MacArthur get raised up to Alexandria Level, and then winners from Alexandria get raised up to the State level, which happened last year's competition

- Categories: Literature, Photography, Dance, Visual Arts, Music

- Primary Winners:

- o Visual

- Ezozakhon Kamiljanova (2nd) *Clean World*
- Vaughn Portez (2nd) *Mosaic Sundial*

- o Literature

- § Baker Geddis, *I will change the world*
- § Dena Yellin, *I will change the world*

- Intermediate Winners:

- o Visual

§ Eleanor Chambers (4th) *Equity Matters*

§ Rowan Dines – *How I Can Change the World*

§ Honorable mention: Raya Yellin, *Opening Doors*; Lily Smith, *Roby, Your friendly robot companion*; Charlotte Dines, *Say Yes to the Can Not to the Ground*; Jozsef Szamosfalvi, *A Day Cleaning Up at the Park*; Alexis Hyland, *Litter Away*

- o Music

§ Catherine Parks, *A Better Place to Be*

- o Photography

§ Catherine Parks, *Childhood*

§ Addy Koly, *Adding Happiness*

○ Literature

§ Raya Yellin, *My voice*

§ Catherine Parks, *I Can Help*

- Want to make sure that this competition achieved two things Ease of entry and Access to Materials through distribution of art materials and ability to enter digital/remotely

- Thank you to the PTA Reflections Committee: Jen Ayers, Rachel Barth, Susan Tomiak, Laura Martino, Amira Reiss, Becky Dines, Carmina Carper

Book Fair Recap and Proceeds, Jamie Pfister

· Thank you to the Chairs of the Book Fair Committee: Christine Coussens, and Dennis & Maryann Chong

· Big event done In Person and Online all week long

· Scholastic told us this was a very successful event with nearly \$16,000 in sales, raising almost \$4,000 for the PTA – Thank you to all who participated

· Some of the proceeds from the book fair go toward the children in our school (identified by the school) who wouldn't otherwise be able to purchase a book. We are able to give them "All For Books" Vouchers that allowed for 181 children to receive a book from the book fair equivalent to \$1500 in sales purchases. We appreciate the generosity of our community.

Treasurer's Report, Michele Dixey, Treasurer

· Most was covered already: Book Fair, Learning Gardens, Lena's Night results should be coming out soon, we will report it next meeting, fund teachers in Amazon wish lists in the classrooms to get them good/wanted supplies

Fall Appeal Fundraising Efforts

· This is our one-time ask to help us covered our operating budgets

· Passive ways where we raise money – like the restaurant nights, book fair

· Based on the funds carried over and what we're projected for next year, the Board Identified \$27,000 needed to try to raise by November 30. We have raised over \$6000,

- A group of families has agreed to match up to \$3000 Unlock an additional \$3000 in matching funds
- Reach out a Board if you have any questions
- This is not limited to parents, share with your social networks, there may be a business, grant parents, etc – we're making
- Social Engagements – volunteers who are open to hosting an event to encourage attendees to donate, please let us know

ACPS Updates to Quarantine / New Guidelines (released 11/15)

- ACPS shortened the length of quarantine for close contacts to seven days after the date of last exposure if families provide documentation to the school of a negative COVID PCR test that is administered on day five, six, or seven. The earliest return date is day eight.
- Students returning to school on the eighth day after the date of last exposure will be *required* to provide their negative COVID PCR test result to the school. The test must be a PCR test. Families should email their student's negative COVID PCR test results to their school's general email address.
- If a family does not choose to have their student tested, the student will be quarantined for 10 days, with a return on day 11. The student must be asymptomatic.
- **Isolation** is still required for students who have a positive COVID-19 test. Individuals with a positive COVID-19 test must be isolated for 10 days, and can only return to school if free from COVID-19 symptoms, including a fever, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting and loss of taste or smell.
- **Please remember the quarantine guidance only applies to unvaccinated individuals. Fully-vaccinated individuals identified as a close contact are not required to quarantine if they have no symptoms.**

Upcoming Events, Jamie Pfister

§ **Room Parents:** PTA is seeking additional volunteers for a room parent, we are hoping to have a parent from each classroom that can act as a liaison. For example, to gather information on the classroom teacher's interest so that those who want to get gifts for their teachers this holiday season can get something that their teacher would enjoy.

§ **Holiday Cookie Swap** – Takes up to 70 Bakers! We need volunteers to bake

§ **School Holiday Drives** - We are working very closely with Laurie Gali – will identify needs of families within our community who may be in not have the generosity of this holiday season so that we can respect their privacy, but help those families in our community

§ We have an upcoming **Holiday Read-aloud** with Principal Hairston

Principal Hairston:

§ I appreciate all that PTA is doing for our staff

§ We are experiencing challenges with our human resources, it a larger problem in the district and across the state, but we are experiencing it at MacArthur as well. We can not share any more official information as background checks are being done, but we are short staffed in human resources and have a couple of resignations: one moving and one is having a baby. We do have a wonderful new orchestra teacher that we are sharing with George Mason, and the band teacher worked with me previously at Tucker and he is great. We will share new information as soon as we are able, I will say that I am particular about hiring. I don't want to hire a warm body, I want to hiring qualified individuals who have the skills to be great for our kids. As for the upcoming hires, we are just waiting for finger printing and background checks before I can share any additional information.

§ Walking for Ruby Bridges Day during Encore classes.

§ Masks are still required at ACPS, that is the policy.

§ Push your kids to use IXL and Lexia for at least 30 minutes each night, the kids love it and we are happy our money went to good use.

Jamie: Thank you all for coming, we hope to see you at the turkey trot. Though we didn't hear about the update on the building, we are hoping to get an update on the New MacArthur building in December. Apologize for the interpretation challenges hoping to get that button available for the next meeting in December