

Executive Board PTA Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 5, 2015

In attendance: Debra Olson, President; Holly Searl, Principal; Stacey Rodriguez, Co-Vice-President; Kevin Wood, Fundraising; Allison Rabin, Co-Treasurer; Tena Howell, At-Large Member, Upper Grades; Camila Viegas-Lee, At-Large Member, Lower Grades; Kate Gardner, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Debra Olson at 8:50 a.m.

Principal, Holly Searl

- Language Stars
 - This vendor has been unreliable and unresponsive to phone and e-mail. After discussion, and considering the low enrollment, Debra will contact the Bethesda office to follow up and to request refunds for the parents who paid through online registration.ⁱ
- iPad Order
 - The school has 20 iPads total, which are 3-4 years old and starting to show their age. Principal Searl requested 10 additional iPads for K-1 and the library, which received unanimous consent from the board. Principal Searl will check on ordering details and Allison will figure out payment.ⁱⁱ
- Whole Foods Garden Grant
 - Now that we have new instructional units that can integrate gardening into the curriculum, Principal Searl reported that Ross would like to start a school garden. She has reached out to FoodPrints, FreshFarm Markets' food education program in partnership with D.C. public schools for support. Additionally, we can apply for the 2016 [School Garden Grant](#) from Whole Kids Foundation, which will give out \$2000 to each school that receives a grant. The application closes 31 October and Debra will have John (and Kevin) look at it, with Principal Searl to assist.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Acknowledgments
 - Principal Searl thanked the Foundry United Methodist Church for volunteering their time on Saturday, when they planted and cleaned up the garden as well as helped to sort materials in the building, including the library.
 - Shanti Sale and John Lang have done a great job keeping the website current.^{iv}

President, Debra Olson

- Field Trip Metro Card Discussion
 - On a recent field trip involving Metrorail, some of the fare cards were not loaded. As the PTA covers the cost of buses, it was asked whether the PTA could also cover the cost of Metrorail rides. Discussion of the current system's complications ensued, e.g. loading the fare cards remotely is difficult, while loading them at Metro is inconvenient, and when we do provide fare cards, they are, on occasion, not returned. Debra is looking into transit checks, loaded class sets, and a simpler way to ride the metro on field trips.^v

- Open House
 - Ross Open Houses Chair, Greg Wahl, made a sign-up genius and room parents will send them out. Camila and Tena will follow up re sign up.^{vi}

Vice Presidents' Update, Stacey Rodriguez

- Facebook/Yahoo Group Listserv
 - Discussion followed regarding the pros and cons of having a private Facebook group or Yahoo Listserv, especially for newer families. It was decided to establish or restore a physical PTA bulletin board for news and announcements, as well as adding a FAQ section to the website.

Treasurers' Update, Allison Rabin/Cherish Medawar

- Kick-off \$1K drive
 - In the past, the Fall membership dues and \$1K drive have generated \$50K. Holly and Debra will follow up with Jennifer Touchette, who has run the 1K campaign in the past.^{vii}

Fundraising Update

- D.C. United Game, Sunday, October 18th
 - Due to the upcoming long weekend, the final day to purchase tickets will be pushed back to Tuesday, October 13th, with a flyer going out today, and lottery re high five line to follow.
- Ross First Annual PTA 5K
 - After discussion, it was decided to revisit doing this event in the Spring.
- Ross Recycling event is pushed back until the Spring.
- Holiday Tree Sale, December
 - After discussion, Kevin volunteered to chair this event and we will ask Michelle Grossman about including a bake sale.^{viii}
- Auction
 - Allison is working on the Auction and looking for co-chairs.

At-Large Member, Upper Grades, Tena Howell

- Info session for upper grade parents on the middle school landscape
 - Tena will talk to Holly to coordinate an information session for the upper grade parents that showcases the schools that our graduates most frequently attend, as well as our feeder schools, Shaw and School Without Walls @ Francis-Stevens.
- Mosquito Control
 - After a child was bitten, options for controlling the mosquito population were discussed, with natural sprays and plants that repel stressed. Allison will ask the local listserv and Debra will follow up with parent.^{ix}
- Stationary
 - Tena will review drafts of envelopes, letterhead, postcards, and thank you cards, and send comments to the designer. The PK3 brochures just need images and hopefully these will all be available for the first Open House.

Secretary, Kate Gardner

- Membership Update
 - See above under Treasures' update. A "6-week membership drive" to begin next week to include a class contest with prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, with winners announced at the next General PTA meeting on November 18th. To date, approximately half of Ross families have joined the PTA, with PK3 in the lead for 100% participation.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

- National Walk to School, Wednesday, October, 7th, 7:45 a.m. – 8:40 a.m.
 - Tena will bring coffee and snacks and breakfast will be outside, with donated water and bananas from 7/11.
- Picture Day, Thursday, October 15th
- 1st Open House, Wednesday, October, 21st, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
- Ross Spooktacular, Thursday, October 29th, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
 - Survey was well done, receiving 50 responses, with the parade and trick-or-treat as the favorite, with second choice split for games and the haunted garden. PTA Vice President, Stacey Rodriguez volunteered to co-chair and will coordinate with Sarah Gilmore.
- General Body PTA Meeting, Wednesday, November 18th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 - Stacey to host if Debra is out of town.
- EB PTA Meeting, Friday, November 6th, 8:45 – 10:00 a.m.
 - Camila will take minutes for Kate.
- Open House, Saturday, December 12th

Meeting Adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Next EB meeting is at 8:45am on Friday, November 6th, 2015

MEETING MINUTES RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY KATE GARDNER, SECRETARY

ACTION ITEMS:

- ⁱ Debra to contact Language Stars in Bethesda to discuss Language Stars at Ross issues and request refunds.
- ⁱⁱ Principal Searl to check on iPad order details and Allison to figure out payment.
- ⁱⁱⁱ John and Kevin to submit garden grant application.
- ^{iv} Kate to write thank-you notes.
- ^v Debra to look into transit checks and loaded class sets for field trips via Metrorail.
- ^{vi} Camila and Tena to follow up on volunteers for the first Open House.
- ^{vii} Holly and Debra to coordinate with Jennifer Touchette re 1K fall campaign.
- ^{viii} Kevin to chair the Holiday Tree Event.
- ^{ix} Debra to follow up with parent and Allison to ask a local listserv re effective mosquito repellent options.