

PTA President, Debra Olson, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Welcome: Debra Olson, PTA President**

- Reported the Fall Membership Drive class competition results: PK3 were first to get 100% participation; 1<sup>st</sup> grade came in 2<sup>nd</sup>; and PK4 in 3<sup>rd</sup>. The winners chose between a free dress day or a games-style extra recess.
- Announced that with the Ross Holiday Tree Sale around the corner, a new class race will start next week: the three classes with the highest percentage of volunteer sign-ups by the morning of Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> will earn a free dress day or games-style extra recess.
- Shared that WETA provides free workshops for parents in order to extend the educational influence of the PBS KIDS programs and we will partner with them in a January workshop, at either a parent coffee or evening event, to learn more about how to use children's television programming to help young viewers learn to read.
- Thanked the Homeroom Parents.

**Principal's Update: Holly Searl**

- Communicated the enrollment audit update from October 22<sup>nd</sup>, which determines our school budget for the following school year. We were audited at 167, and although our target was 170, this is the highest enrollment to date, an uptick that shows another year of growth at our school.
  - This year, the class sizes are set at: PK3=15; PK4=20; K=28; 1<sup>st</sup>=26; 2<sup>nd</sup>=24; 3<sup>rd</sup>=23; 4<sup>th</sup>=22; 5<sup>th</sup>=9
- Noted that the boundary/feeder lines have changed as of 2015/16 and current Ross Elementary students will have by-right enrollment at School-Without-Walls at Francis-Stevens. Principal Searl encouraged parents to attend the MySchoolDC EdFest on December 12<sup>th</sup>, D.C.'s citywide public school fair, to explore additional middle school options.
- Reported that she, along with LSAT members Daniel Adler and Betsy Hagan, will attend the December 19<sup>th</sup> Budget Engagement Meeting with the Chancellor and noted the Chancellor and D.C. Council have committed to release budgets earlier this year.
- Provided a tour of our school website, including its calendars and staff info, and thanked Shanti Sale and John Lang for continuing to update and maintain the website with important news and information for our community.

- Announced that the Winter After School Enrichment Programs will begin the week of January 11, concluding the week before Spring break and will require minimum enrollment with registration to begin soon.
  - It was suggested that enrichments end later, at 5:00 p.m., but these are enrichment classes as opposed to after-school care providers.

**Co-Treasurers' Update: Cherish Medawar/Allison Rabin**

- Allison Rabin reported that the PTA has \$150K in the bank and as it is the season of spending, we are fortunate to have this money so teachers can have what they need for their classrooms and professional development.
  - Ms. Juriga thanked the PTA for the new table in her classroom.
- Allison also noted that reimbursement forms that need to accompany receipts are in the PTA box in the main office and reimbursements will be processed on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Membership Update: Kate Gardner**

- Reported that PTA membership has more than doubled since the first PTA meeting in September, from 40% to 95% participation, and to date we have reached 76% of our \$50,000 goal from PTA dues, activity fees, and additional donations and pledges. Thanked the teachers, who have all joined the PTA, as well as the many staff members who have joined. The Fall Membership Drive runs until the end of November.
  - After some confusion was expressed regarding the separate activity fee and PTA membership dues, the Board agreed to look into the possibility of combining these into one student support fee to be discussed at the next Board meeting.
  - It was suggested that there be a family sponsorship for those families who find it hard to pay dues and it was confirmed that there are membership sponsors for those families.
  - Some parents conveyed that they did not receive receipts after joining the PTA. Allison and Kate will take a look at the forms and follow up with donation receipts to everyone who joined. The Thank-You board listing members in the vestibule was also highlighted.

**Fundraising**

- 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Ross Tree Sale

- John Spears will chair with assistance from Dominic Sale this year and they are looking for volunteers for the December 4<sup>th</sup> weekend (and possibly again on December 12<sup>th</sup> if there are trees remaining) via a Signup Genius link. John highlighted the preorder link on the website and asked that flyers are passed around the community in hopes that we meet or exceed last year's 11-12K proceeds from the 350 Frasier Furs ordered.
  - It was asked whether children can go to the Ross playground while parents volunteer, which should be acceptable as long as they remain on the playground, neither near chain saws nor roaming in the building.
  - It was noted that Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> will be a fun day at Ross, with a donut sale; Tiny Chefs Gingerbread House Workshops; an Open House; as well as Ward 2 Ed Network representatives of MySchoolDC to present and answer questions about the Enrollment Lottery.

### **New Business**

- Toy Collection Drive
  - As it is the season of giving, we are looking for ways to give back to our community, so please get in touch with ideas. Parent Patricia Villamil has suggested a toy collection drive and found a local organization, the Center for Children and Families, that takes new or gently-used toys. Look for an announcement to drop off your items in the box outside the main office before Winter break.

### **Open Forum/Announcements**

- It was asked whether we will share our library books with H.D. Cooke, one school impacted by the 40/40 initiative, but the request was denied by DCPS. This is something that will be added to a future EB meeting agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

**Next PTA General Body meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.**