

SVES PTA Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The September 13th 2016 meeting was called to order by PTA President Dorie Howell at 7:00 PM. She introduced herself as the new PTA President and thanked everyone who helped out over the summer.

1. Approval of Minutes

Julie Lele moved to accept the June meeting minutes and Kara Manton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

2. Principal's Report

Mr. West reported that the year is off to a great start and provided updates on upcoming events.

- 2.1. The school will hold a lockdown drill on Thursday. This is a procedure to keep everyone safe if needed. A new state law now mandates four lockdowns each year, with the first two taking place in the first 20 days of school.
- 2.2. Wednesday next week is Back to School Night. There will be two identical sessions offered in each classroom from 6:30-7:00 pm and 7:10-7:40 pm with a ten minute break in between.
- 2.3. On September 23 at 8:30 am there will be an AAP (Advanced Academic Program) parent information meeting led by Ms. Balancoff, the school's Advanced Academic Resource Teacher. She will provide an overview of the four levels of programs for parents interested in learning more.
- 2.4. September 29 is fall picture day. Look for order forms coming home with your child.
- 2.5. October 6 is the referral deadline for transferring students who want to get into AAP.
- 2.6. October 7 will be a teacher workday so there will be no school for students that day making it a four day weekend over Columbus Day.
- 2.7. There has been a spike in enrollment well past projected numbers. There are 583 students currently enrolled. The new construction alongside the Silver Line station is within the school's boundaries so there may be additional students when those buildings are completed.
- 2.8. The new "No Parking" signs in front of the school on Cross School Road were added after the neighbors requested them and VDOT conducted a safety assessment and agreed they were needed to increase safety and site lines. Additionally, trees were taken down along the walking path and there is a project underway to increase the landscaping of that area.
- 2.9. There is a new positive behavior program called "RISE to Success" which will be used to frame discussions with students around expected behavior. RISE stands for Respect, Independence, Safety, and Empathy.

3. Treasurer's Report

- 3.1. As of August 31, we have \$20,000 available for operations.
- 3.2. The big deposits included yearbook money and memberships.

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- 3.3. Over the summer we did a lot of work handling outstanding bills to ensure everything is in order.
- 3.4. Also, the bank account was moved to the BB&T in the Safeway shopping plaza so it will be easier to make deposits and conduct business.
- 3.5. An email for the Treasurer will be set up.
- 3.6. Forms for reimbursements have been reworked and will soon be posted on the new SVES PTA website.

4. Officer Updates

- 4.1. Membership (Colleen Elliott) – Elliott encouraged PTA members to spread the word that we want everyone to join the PTA and remind everyone that all students benefit from the PTA. The PTA has set a membership goal of 60% this year. Typically only 40% of families join. Most families should be able to afford the \$25 membership fee. We don't hold time consuming fundraisers but rather ask for a one-time \$25 membership fee. As of today we are \$100 behind in membership dues collected compared to the first PTA meeting last year which was held on September 15. We are currently at 90 memberships representing 85 families.

A discussion was held regarding how to spread the word about the PTA and what it offers. The bulletin board at the school entrance showcases the PTA's programs as does the PTA website. Examples of PTA funded initiatives which benefit all students include Grace Arts, buses for field trips, and substitute teachers while teachers engage in enrichment programs. Mr. West reported that the PTA provides experiences for kids we wouldn't otherwise be able to offer. The PTA general fund benefits every child and reduces the cost of checks parents would otherwise have to write to fund these initiatives. The PTA also pays for new technology. Last year 20 new laptops were bought. A suggestion was made to hold contests to increase memberships but Mr. West responded that we don't want to interrupt the school day with things like contests. Former PTA President Shallon Hartke remarked that an increase in membership from 40-60% would make a huge difference in what the PTA can offer all students. President Dorie Howell remarked that parents should be reminded that by joining they are not going to be roped into doing things they don't want to do.

- 4.2. Communications (Julie Harris and Kara Manton) The new PTA website (www.svespta.com) will be up and running very soon. Anyone can post to it. We also encourage everyone to like our posts on social media or add a quick comment to help increase the visibility of our messages. We also want people who are not members to be on the Facebook site. We have decided to use this tool as a means to share communication among family members and not with the school administration.
- 4.3. Enrichment Programs (Gamble Gilbertson) We used the results from the survey conducted last spring to put together a nicely rounded offering of before school enrichment programs this fall. These programs start in October and are offered Monday-

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Friday from 8:15 – 9:10 am in classrooms. PTA members receive a \$10 discount on these programs and early bird registration. We need a minimum number of students in order to hold each program but we expect to meet those minimums once enrollment is opened to the entire school. All vendors have been approved by FCPS and go through a regular recertification process. We are offering 15 programs from 3D Printing to Zumba. The fall session is not open to kindergartners but they will be offered programs in the spring. For most of the classes it will be possible to take them in the spring if you didn't take the same program in the fall. Not all will be offered twice though. Vendors whose programs haven't yet sold out will attend Back to School night to answer questions. A suggestion was made to have laptops at Back to School night so parents could register on the spot. Another round of surveys will be conducted at the conclusion of these programs. Registration for the spring enrichment programs will open sometime before winter break.

5. Grace Arts Program (Phoebe Avery) This is a program funded by the PTA and offered to all grades. It costs \$1,200. A different artist is picked each month for 5 months. Parent volunteers present the artist for the month in the classroom and the students then get to do a project related to that artist. You do not need to be an artist to help and you can commit to help for just one month for about 1.5 hours. To simplify the process, this year I will prepare a brief Powerpoint presentation on each artists to make it even easier to present the artist. We will create a google group for everyone who has been a volunteer in the past and want to join and will add new volunteers as they sign up. We will need help sourcing affordable materials. In particular we will need compressed sponges.
6. Back Pack Program (Dorie Howell) This is a program to help families in the school community who may not be able to afford enough food in the home. We collect food and donations in order to fill backpacks that are sent home with children at the end of each week who have been identified as needing assistance. You can add a donation to your PTA membership to help fund this program. We are in the process of seeking an outside grant that may help support this program.
7. Spirit Wear (Dorie Howell) Spirit Wear is only offered for a limited time at certain times of the year. Orders must be submitted by September 19 so be sure to check out the website and order shirts, socks or other spirit items for your child. Extra Facebook messages will be posted to remind everyone of the Spirit Wear deadline.
8. Amazing Earth (Shallon Hartke) This program is a wonderful opportunity for the kids in all grades to do hands on science. Studies prove that if kids are introduced to hand-on science early they are more likely to pursue careers in science. This is another program that relies on volunteers and it is very easy to help.
9. New Business
 - 9.1. Volunteers are needed for the following:

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- Show What You Know: A science fair like expo held in the spring. Andy Gallagher is stepping down from helping. We will need someone to come forward by November 15 or we will not be able to offer it this year.
- Poetry Anthology: A collection of poems from all the students that the PTA produces at the end of the year for each student to take home a copy. Last year it was done at the last minute which created a lot of stress. A volunteer is needed by November 15 or we will not produce the Anthology this year.
- Yearbook. This is produced by a team of two people, one of whom will not be doing it next year. We would like a volunteer to shadow her this year in order to take over next year.
- Directory (Missed this- what is needed here?)
- Box Tops. This is not a complicated role it just requires someone to sort and submit the Box Tops that are collected in the front office.
- President Elect position is still open. It requires shadowing the President for the year in preparation for serving as the 2017-2018 PTA President.
- Hoe Down: Nancy Darmory is always eager for volunteers to help her with this school wide event which takes place in 5 weeks.
- Bingo Night: Another fun school wide event which requires volunteers.

11. Closing

Dorie Howell thanked everyone for attending and suggested that at the next meeting we could solicit thoughts from attendees about the programs and what else they might like to see from the PTA this year. It was also suggested that we should solicit more input from teachers on what they need more help with and what they need in the classrooms. A suggestion was made that the PTA could offer a “Welcome Gift” to new teachers to the school each year to help them with their needs as they set up a new classroom. Mr. West said there are 7 new teachers this year. A suggestion was made that the PTA could develop and publicize a wish list of new things like the new teacher “Welcome Gift” that could be funded should we reach the goal of 60% membership. This might encourage more families to join.

Julie Lele made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Phoebe Avery seconded it. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 pm.