

**Bollman Bridge Elementary School  
PTA Executive Board  
Meeting Minutes  
August 17, 2009**

**Present were:** Jonathon Davis (principal), Tina Ferguson, Michelle Poindexter, Heidi Maxa, Raquel Braithwaite, and Heather Offenberg

***Introductions***

Tina Ferguson opened executive board meeting at 6:00 pm. The agenda and PTA goals were distributed.

***School News***

**Important Dates:**

August 27	Kindergarten Orientation/Class lists displayed
August 28	BBES Open House
August 31	School begins Schools Closed –
Sep 4	Schools Closed - Professional Development Day
Sep 7	Schools Closed – Labor Day
Sep 15	Back to School Night – 1 <sup>st</sup> – 3rd grade
Sep 16	Back to School Night – 4 <sup>th</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> grade

***Principal's Report***

Mr. Davis was introduced to everyone and was very instrumental in helping to set goals to ensure a great school year. His main goal is to have the best school in Maryland and the Nation. His motto for success is to “be intentional, be reflective and make sound decisions”. He’s committed to having an open door policy, working collaboratively with the PTA and other school staff, and to process improvement. He’s hoping to increase teacher participation in the PTA, increase reading success and scores, reduce transitions, use every minute of the school day, and hold quarterly coffee with the administration. Mr. Davis and his staff have also updated the school’s website and school’s electronic calendar to make it more interactive and useful.

***President's Update***

Tina Ferguson welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the PTA meeting and for volunteering with the PTA for the upcoming school year. Some of her goals are to boost morale, work together, streamline processes, and to have a democratic process when making decisions. She stressed that the executive board was vital to the PTA because per the bylaws, we can’t hold meetings or support the school without the executive board members.

***Treasurer's Report***

Heather Offenberg, last year’s Treasurer, updated the executive board as the current treasurer was unable to attend this meeting. She reported that there is a very tight budget this year. The PTA is beginning the year with \$13,000 whereas the year prior BBES began the year with \$20,000. (Last year we spent \$23K but only brought in \$15K.) The beaver store budget was cut but the discretionary spending was increased. Details on each change are on the treasurers report.

***Fundraising Issues***

A discussion was held to entertain the idea of changing the fundraising program. Parents have approached Tina asking for more edible item fundraisers instead of the catalogue/wrapping paper program. However, it was pointed out that we’d already contracted with Sally Foster for the upcoming year and couldn’t make changes. So, we discussed the potential for changing to different fundraisers for next year and beyond. It was brought up that some parents would prefer to donate money rather than to sell items for the fundraiser. So, the group decided to make it clear in the instructions sent home with the fundraiser, that the PTA is happy to accept monetary donations in lieu of selling fundraiser items.

The Harris Teeter and other store based fundraiser opportunities need to be publicized more. These types of passive fundraising programs bring in a lot of money for the school. It was also mentioned that maybe the PTA can take over the box top program so that the proceeds come back to the PTA... Apparently, whoever coordinates the program and sends in the box tops will receive the money. Currently the PTA collects the box tops for the school but the school receives the funds. From that the discussion, another ensued. The PTA and school have the same goal which is to raise funds for BBES... The question surfaced of whether the PTA's funds are used help certain areas of the school while the school's fundraising dollars help other areas of the school? Or does all of the money raised go into one general school improvement fund???

**Action Item:** Mr. Davis will check to see if school fundraising dollars are earmarked for certain things while PTA funds are earmarked for other things or if there is just one basket of funds...

### ***School Directory Issues***

The PTA discussed how we might distribute the school directory this year. Last year the directory was placed on the PTA website. This became problematic because it allowed strangers to obtain information about students/PTA members when searching the internet through general search engines. Many parents were very concerned about privacy and safety. It was determined that the directory would be removed from the PTA website. We will now begin to email it to parents via a PDF format. And to increase distribution and use, parents will be asked to opt "out" of receiving the directory rather than opting "in".

**Action Item:** Heidi will ask her husband if there is an even safer option than email/pdf. Tina is planning to talk to Mrs. Biggs and the directory POC about other potential options.

### ***Morale Ideas***

Ideas were discussed to increase the number of school volunteers and PTA members. The thought was to find better ways to thank volunteers which in turn might encourage others to participate. One idea suggested to increase the number of school volunteers is NSA's volunteer program. This is a program where NSA employees are allowed to volunteer in the school during the paid work day in the math and science programs. The next step is to find out which students have parents who work at NSA and to get more details about the program. An idea to increase PTA membership is to add value to the membership. The PTA card should entitle members to have discounts in the community. If this is possible, the community discount entitlement needs to be publicized better. It was also discussed that we should better disseminate information to the PTA members as to where their fundraising dollars are going. Last year, the goal for membership was to have 355 families join. One strategy was to ask each parent of the family to join individually. Mr. Davis asked many families are there in BBES? Tina was unsure but will find out. Some other ideas were to stress to the families that volunteering can be for short periods of time such as 1 hour and/or could be done outside of the school. It was mentioned that the request for volunteers should be consolidated so that parents are not inundated or confused at the beginning of the school year about what and who they are volunteering for. We should also ask about volunteering again at later periods in the school year. So, the plan is to consolidate the school's and the PTA's volunteer request form. It was also suggested that we survey parents regarding volunteering. Another consideration is to list all of the recurring events that the school typically requests volunteers for on the one request form. We also want to survey teachers to see if what the PTA has been doing historically for them is useful and if they have other ideas or needs. Mr. Davis is planning to ask the teachers what their needs are. It was also suggested that we continue to post the teacher's wish list on the PTA website. Tina suggested that we increase recognition and appreciation to the PTA board members/teachers via birthday recognition. Tina feels that small personal touches go a long way in showing that we appreciate folks for their efforts. Tina also suggested doing a quarterly or yearly raffle to help to increase PTA membership/participation. We can use unsold auction items as gifts and/or other small/inexpensive gifts.

### ***Printing PTA documents/flyers***

In the past the PTA was given a copier code to use the school copier... Due to budget constraints this was stopped. The PTA began using Kinko's or Staples to print but this was becoming very costly and using a lot of the PTA budget. Mr. Davis offered to give us a copier code again if we agreed to supply/purchase our own paper. The paper can be stored in the school. He said he'd work out the details with the school and make sure that the toner and paper issues wouldn't hamper our uses of the school's copier any longer. To get the copier code, please contact his personal secretary, Ms. Penny Close. The PTA is planning to make more ½ sheet size flyers to save money on paper and toner use. The PTA also wants to have one color used when sending home PTA information. This is to help alert parents and students about PTA notices, i.e. "brand recognition"... So, if you see "xx" color, everyone knows that it is a PTA announcement. The school is not to use this particular color for sending home information. It was decided that the new PTA color would be "neon orange"... A bright and cheery color!

## **Bollman Bridge Elementary School PTA Meeting Minutes August 17, 2009**

***Present were:*** Jonathon Davis (principal), Tina Ferguson, Michelle Poindexter, Heidi Maxa, Raquel Braithwaite, Heather Offenber, Jenn Palmer, Melissa Morley, Sandra Holt, Maricela Rodriguez, Lisa Anderson, Kathleen Smith

At 7:00 pm the Executive board meeting adjourned and the general PTA meeting began. The agenda and PTA goals were distributed.

### ***Treasurer's Report***

Same as above.

### ***Committee Chair/Grade Rep Folders***

Tina handed out folders to committee chairs and grade level representatives to help them better understand their roles and the purpose of the PTA. Within the folder were forms to assist the chairs/representatives in their new roles.

Grade Reps are new to the school this year. Their role is to bring issues from teachers back to the PTA board, assist current room mothers, help find additional volunteers on an ad hoc basis, be the liaison between the teacher and the PTA. The grade rep is also to sponsor one grade appropriate event per year to increase child/teacher/parent interaction outside of the classroom. Events could be an ice cream social, movie night, etc. Funding for these events should come from the PTA or from community donations but that they should not be too costly. If donations come from the community, please keep everyone in the PTA informed so that that particular donor isn't called upon too often (i.e. again for the auction or fun run) which could potentially damage the relationship...PTA members currently have relationships with Dryers ice cream, Edy's and Rita's. Also when scheduling grade events, please confer with Ms. Kunzel to ensure the activity doesn't conflict with other school events.

### ***Membership/Volunteerism/Morale***

Same as above and...

Another idea to increase membership is to give prizes or incentives to the first 100 people who sign up for the PTA, offer homework passes to the children of parents who come to PTA meetings or to offer educational seminars to parents at the beginning or end of PTA meetings.

There is a database to track parents' time spent volunteering and used to contact volunteers. Heidi will get the tracking database from Jenn.

***Directory Issue***

In light of the safety/security concerns, Jenn Palmer has removed the BBES directory from the PTA website. Some children and PTA members' information may still be visible on search engines for a while but since the link is now removed, strangers will not be able to get continued or new information.

***Green Dot Program/Electronic Friday Folder Information***

This year those who opt in for the "green dot" program to receive their PTA/BBES notices electronically rather than in the Friday Folder, will now have 1 click access to the information. There were problems last year with the program so those who opt for the green dot access should be surveyed mid-year to see if they'd like to continue in the program. Also, it was suggested that we identify what is being sent home electronically in the weekly Bridge newsletter. Some very important things will continue to be sent home in paper/hard copy format in addition to the electronic format.

***Back to School Picnic***

Mr. Davis would like to continue with this tradition but was unsure of who paid for what and who sponsors the picnic. The PTA's family fun committee sponsors the picnic, pays for the DJ, and advertises the picnic. The kids' families bring their own dinner.

***Communication Update***

Jenn Palmer asked that every member check the website for old news or areas needing revisions. Please send dates needing to be posted to the PTA events calendar to her. Ensure that Pat Kunzel is aware of events so that the PTA and school calendar match. If there is a big event planned, make sure that the event is on the calendar, rooms are reserved and that the event is approved as early as possible. If anyone has a past volunteer in mind to be highlighted for exceptional service, please get that person's name and a short synopsis of the exceptional act to Jenn to be highlighted in the PTA newsletter. The PTA newsletter can also be used to send words of thanks to others as well. If anyone has any ideas or articles for the newsletter, Jenn is happy to receive those. The newsletter is sent out 3 times per year. Jenn will email everyone the PTA calendar website link and password to use when adding items to the calendar.

The general PTA meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm. The meeting times and dates will be shared in upcoming communications.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Poindexter

Recording Secretary  
School Year 2009 - 2010