

**Bollman Bridge Elementary School  
PTA Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
November 18, 2009**

**Present were:** Jonathon Davis (Principal), Tricia McCarthy (Vice Principal), Tina Ferguson (PTA President), Michelle Poindexter, Letha Jackson, Keith Berning, Raquel Braithwaite, Tricia Walls, Bawi Hu, Tum Kheng, Hlei Sung, Boi Ihar, Zang Kang, Kham Bami, Siang Hup Lian, Cindy Good, Carmela Saavedra, Catherine Hester, Lisa Anderson, Leah Williams

***Introductions***

Tina Ferguson opened the PTA membership meeting at 6:05 pm. The agenda and sign in sheet were distributed.

***President's Update***

Tina Ferguson welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the PTA meeting. To accommodate our speaker's schedule, Tina announced that we'd stop mid-meeting to allow our guest speaker Delegate Shane Pendergrass speak and then the PTA meeting would resume.

The BBES PTA is having an art contest for the Memory Book! The theme is "School". For example, you could draw a picture of Bollman Bridge Elementary School, Wendel the Beaver, the Bollman Truss Bridge, your favorite class or any other picture related to school. Younger children could also draw fun at recess. Please create the picture using crayons, markers, paint or colored pencils on a 8.5 x 11 in. piece of white paper. Please do not glue, staple or attach any items such as feathers, pom-poms, etc. There will be 3 winners chosen per class. The winners will have an image of their artwork shown in the BBES Memory Book this year. The Grand Prize winner will have his/her artwork used as our Memory Book/Yearbook Cover!!! Please write your name, your teacher's name and your grade on the back of your artwork. The deadline is Friday Dec. 4th. Bring your artwork to school and ask your teacher to send it to the PTA mailbox bin. We will try to return artwork to students, but cannot be held responsible if lost at school. Please send any questions to [memorybook@bbespta.net](mailto:memorybook@bbespta.net). Have fun!!

***\*\*Soup Donations***

We are still in critical need of soup donations for the teacher dinner on Monday, November 23, 2009! Please contact Kathleen Smith at [timkaths@verizon.net](mailto:timkaths@verizon.net) for more information.

***Treasurer/Budget Update***

The updated budget is on the PTA website - [www.bbесpta.net](http://www.bbесpta.net). Many items have been revised. An increase of \$100 was given to the wellness committee; the memory book was given an increase to \$200 to help defray the costs of the book to BBES families. The budget has different priority levels assigned. Priority 1, 2, and 3 are things that we must budget for while priority 4 items are discretionary and can be funded as needed. All staff members were allotted \$25 per person for costs to purchase items for the classroom. If staff members want refunds, please fill out the PTA refund form and attach receipts to the request. The revised budget will be voted on at next months meeting.

***Delegate Report***

- Board of Ed announced that education will not longer enjoy its "untouched" status related to budget cuts. K-12 cuts likely to be severe over next few years
- 2011-wide elementary redistricting planned
- PTA should review policy 10020 regarding facility use; charges will apply per policy

- PTA members encouraged to participate in Board of Ed in person, online or on television.
- Centennial Lane supported a successful Community Supported Agriculture Partnership. People are willing to guide us through the process if there was interest.
- Wellness committee chair/Fulton PTA president eager to speak with other PTA's about the Wellness Initiatives.
- Fine Arts Council/advisory committees, Board of Education entities, invite PTA involvement in its activities.

### ***ESOL Presentation –***

Laurel Conran, BBES' ESOL coordinator gave a presentation about our English Language Learners (ELL) at the school, many of whom are from Burma. Also visiting tonight was Philip Hrengling, our Burmese interpreter who visits the school every Friday for 3 hours to assist with interpretation. After the presentation a discussion was held to determine what the school and community could do to help to further welcome and integrate the Burmese parents and students. One parent recommended potentially having an exchange program where the Burmese taught us a skill and we taught them a skill. We also explored the potential for having a cooking or gardening program similar to the pilot program at Phelps Luck Elementary school. Tina Ferguson also mentioned the PTA exploring opportunities to offer English classes on Sundays at the library (Sunday was discovered as the universal day off for most double shift workers) Catherine Hester, the FIRN/Club LEAP coordinator offered to obtain additional information for us.

### ***Guest Speaker Delegate Shane Pendergrass with Board of Education member Ellen Giles***

Delegate Pendergrass is a past PTA member, parent of BBES children, former teacher and current Delegate for Howard County. She and Ellen Giles addressed each of the concerns presented from parents. She stated that she loved her job and she initially ran for office to fight to build new and better elementary schools, specifically BBES.

- Thoughts/suggestions on how to prevent what some have called the "brain drain" from our school. More and more of the families in Huntington who place an emphasis on education and who have the resources to make education a high priority in their children's lives, are opting to send their kids to private school or to home school their children over sending them to Bollman Bridge (and PVM and Hammond High). I'd like her to discuss if she sees any way to reverse this trend, and if so what those of us who have chosen to send our kids to our public schools can do to help. This trend has far-reaching ramifications from the breakdown of our close-knit community feel here in Huntington to how it affects the value of our homes. ((Additional note. The school performs at or below the state averages and 5<sup>th</sup> lowest elementary school in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade test scores and 3<sup>rd</sup> worst in 5<sup>th</sup> grade test scores in Howard County)).
  - Parents should remember not to judge schools based on test scores alone. There are many factors that affect scores. Parents should also work with the teachers and administration to ensure that children get what they need from the school before making decisions to move them to private school or home school.
- Huntington Deli and the liquor license issue. Parents are concerned about the deli obtaining a liquor license so close to the pool.
  - County councilwoman, Jenn Terrasa is working to ensure that this deli doesn't get a liquor license. She and the community are against it. There currently is no application for the liquor license and therefore very unlikely to occur, especially with so much opposition against it. If an application is put forth, the community will have to come together to testify against it.
- Recent rash of break-ins in the neighborhoods. How to increase a police presence in the community?

- Remember to keep valuables out of view when leaving your vehicles. Call police if anything suspicious is noticed in the neighborhood. Consider requesting that the police collaborate with the school by coming in to speak at a PTA meeting. Mary Clay in Jenn Terrasa's office is our point of contact.
- Bus routes. Recent cutbacks have forced more of our kids to walk to school. This is normally not an issue for the parents, but the route includes a steep hill, which in the winter will become very dangerous if not treated. Is there anything planned to handle this? Is there a way to get funding from the state or assurances to make sure our kids aren't put in danger?
- Delegate Pendergrass recommends that students walk as much as possible, if safe. Walking is the best for the health and wellness of everyone. However, if there are dangerous areas in the walking routes to the school, contact the walking route review committee (at the Board of Education) to request that they assess the route for safety. Conditions may have changed since the last assessment that the county is unaware of. Ellen Giles also volunteered to take those concerns and forward them to the appropriate contacts at the BOE. If more crossing guards are needed, one must contact the county through the police department. If the concern is icy patches on the steep hills those concerns should be directed to Jenn Terrasa at the county council office. Mr. Davis continues to work with the county, HCPSS, and transportation department staff to evaluate bus routes/walking/car riders.
- Do you have any unique experiences that you could share with our PTA members regarding development of community involvement supporting the advancement of student learning?"
- She said the most important thing is for parents to be present in the schools and in the PTA so she applauded all those in attendance. She also said that things haven't changed much in involving parents in the PTA/school. The best way to increase participation is to entice folks with food or by involving the kids.

### ***PTA Newsletter***

The PTA newsletter will be sent out on this Friday, November 20, 2009. If anyone has anything they'd like placed in the newsletter, please email Tina Ferguson.

### ***Principal's Report***

Mr. Davis and Ms. McCarthy discussed the following:

Mr. Davis is very proud of the accomplishments in the first 50 days of school... The school improvement plan is working through collaborative planning, high quality instruction and data collection. The reading scores have increased in each grade level from baseline. He's committed to making BBES the best school in the US.

Report cards went home this week. He's encouraging every parent to visit with teachers during the conference period. If additional conferences are needed to meet with Math teachers, please contact Dee in the office to schedule those. Unfortunately the on-line scheduling system wouldn't allow for more than 1 teacher to be scheduled. If parents are having any concerns with teachers, Mr. Davis stressed the importance of first contacting the teacher to attempt to resolve problems. Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Davis are always available as well and available to sit in on conferences with parents and teachers if needed.

**H1N1 Vaccine**

Bollman Bridge has NOT yet received any word of availability of vaccine for our students. The Howard County Health Department has lately been receiving ONLY injectable H1N1 vaccine that is used ONLY in the middle and high schools. There will be NO offering of injectable H1N1 vaccine at Bollman Bridge. We have NOT yet received a date for a BBES clinic. Supplies have been delivered from the vaccine manufacturers to the counties in an erratic fashion. The decision about what school in the HCPSS is determined on the type of vaccine (injectable OR FluMist) AND the number of vaccines received. The typical range of participation by HCPSS students in any one school has been about 50%. So, for example, if the HCHD receives only 400 injectables, then they will look at the size of the schools that can provide a 50% participation. Forms will be sent home with students as soon as we receive them from the HCHD. The letter attached to the form will provide specific instructions. WE WILL SEND NOTICE WHEN THOSE FORMS ARE RECEIVED AND WHEN WE EXPECT COMPLETED FORMS BACK.

Please continue to stay patient with the process. Updates are posted frequently on the HCHD web page (see below). Continue to speak to your health care provider if your child is unable to receive the FluMist [http://www.co.ho.md.us/health/healthmain/health\\_homepage.htm](http://www.co.ho.md.us/health/healthmain/health_homepage.htm) .

Mr. Davis is still in collaboration with traffic pattern experts to address the parking/traffic congestion problem. He presented one idea being considered regarding removing the lower basketball court and creating a larger parking area/driving area but still welcomes innovative ideas from parents to address the issue. If anyone has any ideas to share with Mr. Davis, please forward those ideas to PTA President, Tina Ferguson.

***Upcoming Events:***

November 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> - Parent/Teacher conferences

Jan. 7 - School Planning Mtg./Redistricting – 6:30 pm

Jan. 20 - Coffee with the Principal - 8:45 – 9:45 am

Feb. 4 - BINGO Night - 6:00pm-8:00pm

The November PTA meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Submitted respectfully,

Michelle Poindexter  
Recording Secretary  
SY 2009-2010