

**Bollman Bridge Elementary School
PTA Meeting
Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2009**

Present were: Jonathon Davis (principal), Tina Ferguson, Michelle Poindexter, Heidi Maxa, Raquel Braithwaite, Diane Dombeck, Beth DiMeo, Leah Williams, Tricia McCarthy, Mollie Baer, Lisa Thompson, Kathleen Smith, Jann Gartside, Erika Simpson, Maricela Rodriguez, Theresa Brook, Beth Stein, Olamiyo Olaoriju, Cindy Good and Adrienne Dawson.

Introductions

Tina Ferguson opened the PTA membership meeting at 6:00 pm. The agenda and sign in sheet were distributed.

President's Update

Tina Ferguson welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the PTA meeting. She remarked about the great turnout this month and hopes that it continues.

October has been declared by Governor O'Malley, "Parent Involvement" month. Next October the PTA plans to have events to celebrate that theme.

Copy paper for the PTA is in the coat closet in a box marked only with Tina's name on it. She's hoping that others don't inadvertently use it thinking it is general school copy paper. Also, the code for the large copier is 20794. This copier is to be used only to perform BBES PTA business.

The BBES PTA bylaws have been submitted to the Maryland PTA Board. They've not been approved or finalized yet but are being processed.

Treasurer/Budget Update

Leah Williams is still working with the previous treasurer to determine the current budget. However, we have earned approximately \$1300 from memberships. She's asking each group/committee evaluate their current budget and notify her if the amount seems appropriate for the upcoming year.

Delegate Report

See attachment.

Committee Reports

Reflections:

The theme this year is "Beauty Is". Entries are due by mid November for BBES and are due to the Reflections Program by early December. This earlier due date for BBES allows time for edits/changes to our submissions as required by the program while still meeting the official entry deadline. Flyers have been made and will be distributed to parents by next week to explain the program. This week teachers will be contacted to enlist their help in submitting work recently completed by current students, particularly from Art or Music classes. Next year, we may explore adding this program to the curriculum to try to promote getting more entries into the program. There is minimal cost for this program. There is no copying cost this year as the PTA is using the school copier. If the allotted \$100 budget isn't spent in administrative requirements, one PTA member mentioned using the money to thank the judges with a luncheon or to create certificates of appreciation, as has been done in the past. If enough submissions are obtained, we may attempt to get outside judges from Howard Community College.

Cultural Arts

The cultural arts coordinator provided a handout regarding funding used for past cultural arts events as well as the costs anticipated for this school year. The budget was cut to \$2500 thus it was proposed and voted on that we allot each grade \$250 (totaling \$1500). This leaves \$1000 for a school wide event or two. This proposal was voted on and approved during the meeting. Next steps are to decide on the school wide event. One member mentioned a hands-on school wide activity because these types of events tend to keep the children interested and has a better response. In discussing hosting an author as a school wide event, as has been done in past years, it was noted that we need to find a less expensive author. Last year it cost \$1200. Ms. McCarthy and others suggested we look for someone from the Speaker's Bureau and/or consider local authors who may be willing to come to the school for much less or for free. Another idea was to solicit ideas from PTA members to find a school wide event. If the response to that request is low, we could potentially offer an incentive to encourage ideas such as offering the person whose idea "wins", a 6 week paid membership to a local gym. Mr. Davis mentioned that because the funding for this program comes from the PTA, the PTA can make the final decision on the school wide event.

Regarding the Bread Make program for the 3rd grade, it was asked whether this program should continue or be cut. If we continue it, we must find ways to decrease costs as each grade will only get \$250, much less than the \$800 that program usually costs. Many members offered ideas to decrease costs such as having parents volunteer to help with the activity as well as buying the ingredients in bulk. Mr. Davis questioned how this program fits into the curriculum and whether we needed to keep it if not. If teachers really wanted to keep this or other programs costing more than \$250, Mr. Davis is willing to consider adding funds from other sources to supplement the \$250.

After School Activities

KidzArt is due to begin next Thursday. To date, only 1 child had registered. There needs to be a minimum of six to hold a class. One member mentioned showcasing some of the artwork created in KidzArt to try to promote in the program/increase enrollment. Many members offered ideas and thoughts about the purpose of having the after school offerings at all. We also discussed potential reasons for why these programs are not as popular lately. Some thought they may be too expensive and/or not very exciting. The initial purpose was to offer unique classes that are not available with the curriculum. It was voted that if there was not enough registrants for KidzArt this cycle, it will be canceled and put on hold until we decide what might be better less expensive options for after school or none to be offered at all. It might be useful to do a survey to see what parents/kids might be interested in and to try to determine what the lack of participation is related to. It was agreed that the survey would be a good idea.

Fundraising

The Sally Foster catalogue sale is not going as well as in years past. We've only made ~ \$2600 - \$3000. We've extended the sale date again until 10/16/09 and will push the fundraiser again via flyers to parents and announcements through the school. If people donate money we get 100% profit. There will be incentives for orders in the next two weeks, gift cards or a pen. The Entertainment Book Fundraiser will be starting in November. One member knows of another fundraiser through Lord and Taylor. She will explore that option and provide details to the PTA for consideration.

Staff Appreciation

This coming Thursday, October 8, 2009, the PTA will be providing a coffee cart for the teachers. At the PTA meeting tonight, taste testing took place to ensure the brand selected has a good flavor. We only want to offer the best as we show our teachers appreciation for their hard work.

Membership

We currently have 213 members as of 9/4/09 and more applications have come in. PTA membership applications will remain available on the website throughout the school year.

For those experiencing difficulty in locating PTA meeting information, it is located on the PTA website. Once you click on the link, scroll down to locate the time of the meeting. Future meetings will have guest speakers and seminars to increase participation. The seminar/speaker schedule is available on the website as well. In December, there will be no general meeting, only a quick update prior to the Strings Concert.

The school/student directory is almost complete and will be available to parents very soon. As a reminder, this year the directory will not be posted on the website due to safety and privacy concerns. The directory will be available via hard copy or email by individual request.

Grade Representative Report

Tina Ferguson has created and made available on the website, many templates to help Room Mothers to be successful in their classrooms. She's created a document to help room mothers understand their role, a template for planning the many holiday parties, reminder flyers, and a thank you template. Grade Reps, please motivate and assist the Room Mothers as much as possible. Room Mothers may also email Tina for copies of the templates/instructions if unable to access them on the PTA website.

Principal's Report

Mr. Davis spoke briefly about how impressed he's been with the staff in the 1st month of school. The teachers are meeting often, staying late and working hard to make this coming school year even better than it has been in the past. The 3/4/5th grade teachers are meeting weekly to plan new and exciting reading initiatives and curriculum. K/1/2nd grade teachers are working hard on their new phonics and spelling program, "Words Their Way". Biweekly, there are meetings to discuss math instruction to choose the most pertinent focus areas and to share best practices regarding instruction strategies.

Arrival and dismissal is improving but the school is still exploring options to find the best possible solutions. The County Executive Office, transportation staff, and engineers are all evaluating the school and roads to try to improve the process. Mr. Davis also welcomes other ideas to further improve the arrival and dismissal process.

As was initially announced in an update to the BBES newsletter, Mr. Davis again stressed the need for parents and caregivers to stay alert for strangers or unusual behavior on or just outside of the school grounds. There have been a couple of recent incidents to remind of us the need to keep the kids aware of 'stranger danger' and to notify the school and/or police when unusual or unsafe situations occur.

Upcoming Events:

1. October 8 and October 19, there will be a presentation for K/1/2nd grade parents to learn about the new "Words Their Way" phonics and spelling program.
2. Progress Reports will be distributed in Friday Folders this Friday, October 9, 2009.
3. Boy's Night Out organized by Ms. Torbit will occur October 15, 2009 for 3/4/5th grade boys and their father or a male significant other. Ms. Torbit is in need of funds for this program.

The September PTA meeting held on October 5, 2009, adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Submitted respectfully,

Michelle Poindexter
Recording Secretary
SY 2009-2010

Delegate Report September 8, 2009

Board and Superintendent Reports

- First day of school BOE members visited various schools and observed; kids are enthusiastic and working hard. Pep rally was organized for new teachers and lunch was included.
- 2010 redistricting plans are in process; planning meetings are scheduled at Hammond High on Sept 29th @7:30 PM and at Centennial HS on Sept 30th @7:30 PM.
- There are preparations for H1N1—collaboration with the health department. Vaccine may be available by end of October.

General Reports

- Family Involvement-Coat Drive. New or gently used, clean coats that are ready to wear (no need to repair) in sizes pre-K through; high school sizes. Hats and gloves are also welcome. Donations need to be clean and ready to wear. May be brought in bags or boxes to the Nov 2 general meeting.
- Treasurer: The council dues are reduced from \$190 to \$170 for this year.
- Wellness: Snack program is being piloted at Centennial Lane this year; to be throughout system next year. Requests for healthy snack suggestions by Wellness Committee.
- Executive VP: School policies are reviewed on a cycle and parents are welcome to be on the review committee. Current policy reviews include:
 - 5110 Students and DNR orders
 - 7030 Employee Discipline
 - 7040-7050 Employee Abuse Drugs and Alcohol
 - 9270 Student Assault and Battery on staff
 - Calendar Committee
 - Curriculum Committee – 4 subject areas

Resources and Upcoming Events

- PTA sharing session @Faulkner Ridge Center on Oct 29th @7:00 PM. Topics for the sharing session: after prom, family involvement, PTA presidents sharing session and open slot (to be discussed).
- Financial workshop is on Oct 17th, may be helpful for PTA treasurer. To register call 410-760-6221.
- National PTA (www.pta.org) website has a large collection of eLearning courses; reflections 101, PTA basic, national standards implementation guide, etc.