

Bates MS PTA November Minutes

November 19, 2020

Guest Speaker

Sen. Elfreth was a surprise special guest (Sarah.Elfreth@Senate.State.MD.US).

- Education – Gen. Assembly passed a new education bill. Funding formula revised first time since 2001, result of Kirwan Commission. Gov. Hogan vetoed the bill.
- Efforts to improve MD education continue in the State House. Concerned about internet access for education, this is an equity issue
- Infrastructure maintenance backlogged. Bill proposed for 2.2 billion per year for school maintenance and renovation
- Open questions
 - Ray F: How difficult is it for you to be productive in this virtual environment? How different and or difficult will it be to do the legislative session?
 - SE: Plan is to start Jan 13. Senate has 47 members; floor configured for distancing. Legal obligation to be in person for votes. Committee hearings will be zoom. Virtual hearings may be more accessible for citizens. Challenge will be to remain accessible when life returns to normal. Will have open office hours for citizens. Bill pre-file deadline is Nov 20 (tomorrow), so work has been busy in anticipation of deadline.
 - No other questions were asked

Assistant Principals

Assistant Principals Kere Boyd (6), Jessica Alvear (7)

- Ray F: How challenging is the virtual environment for relationship buildings with students?
 - KB: We are proactive and participate in various classes and communities. Getting to know the 6th graders despite the unusual environment.
 - JA: Lucky to be in 2nd year of knowing the 7th graders. Participates in classes and activities to continue to interact with them.
 - RF: notes there are some silver linings in terms of appreciating the people who do important societal work, like teachers and school admin.

Treasurer's Report

- JC Johns presented current accounts
- Membership dues are lower than last year, probably due to COVID and not seeing people in person to ask and remind
- Two fundraisers going, goal is to finish the year at \$5900.
- PTA is providing funds to teachers on request, such as the software for the Cougar Chronicle.

- Budget approved

Principal's Report

- Send any items to Amy Beller (abeller@aacps.org) for Cougar Chronicle. This is also a viable avenue for raising awareness for PTA memberships.
- Thanks and acknowledgement of K&B True Value, Bay Ridge Liquor and Suntrust Bank (?) for a large donation to area schools, including Bates.
- Some money used to add 8 raised garden beds to the school grounds. One bed for each team, when students return they can decide what to plant. Sarah Ford leads that effort.
- Have applied to get a kitchen restored so students can cook some of the food they grow in their garden beds. Sort of a return to Home Ec, now called FACS.
- Still waiting to hear about construction timeline for the vestibule. This will be a check-in area and more secure than current arrangement. The current office will be re-configured – big changes will be made to that area of the school.
- Outside classroom, a grant through Arlington Echo. Between annex and main building, area will be renovated, tables added. Teachers will be able to hold class in that area.
- FLEX period: it's mandatory, but not all students are attending.
 - 6A is 1st 20 minutes
 - 6B is 2nd 20 minutes
 - There have been conflicting messages from other schools, and school board, etc.
 - Our principal will issue a schedule for Bates. There is no conflict between PVA and others anymore!
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- Yearbook is being produced. Every child should take a picture of themselves. Information will be sent on how to submit.
- Food pantry: has existed at Bates for 10 or so years, food comes from MD food bank. 1st delivery is first Wednesday in December. Thinking about how to distribute food safely.
 - Will people volunteer as family bubbles? Come pack food into bags that will be distributed at set times. Volunteers requested.
 - Families need holiday help.
 - We have 50 turkeys that were donated. Some set aside for identified families. Remainder will be given first come, first served
 - Gift cards welcome. Send to Bates, attention counseling office. Please give to help the kids!
- Ray F. asked attendees if they have concerns to address?
 - Marion Brenner thanked the teachers for going above and beyond, helping students during virtual learning. Victoria Schoen seconded that!
 - K Hicks notes that a climate survey will be conducted in December to get info from the school community

New Business

- Fundraisers
 - Restaurant nights: restaurants leery because of changing county rules. Ray F. will continue to monitor what's allowed.
 - Wreathes across America: Ianthe Saylor leading this effort. We'll send info to Chronicle. For every wreath purchased for the veteran's cemeteries, PTA gets \$5.
 - Believe kids: we'll keep pushing info. This will take effort from the PTA community to sell items and make funds.
 - Donate! People can just direct donate if they don't want to participate in other efforts.
 - Fun run? Not sure if we'll be able to do that with COVID precautions.
 - Teacher appreciation activities will continue.
 - PTA will follow county and state guidelines while planning
- Still need a VP for PTA. A possible volunteer, Kenyatta Rowel, isn't in attendance tonight, so we won't vote on him at this time. We'll follow up with him
- Plan for a short PTA meeting in December to get Principal's report and any info on changing mandates from county. Thursday, Dec 17 is possible date, at 1900.

Adjourned at 8:18pm.

If there are any requests for future speakers, please tell Ray. We're happy to invite and host anyone the PTA is interested in.

Attendees



Jaye Falls (Me)



Ray Feldmann (Host)



El



Matt Chasse for Diane



Senator Sarah Elfreth



Greg Crites



Amy Beller



Brian Shallcross



Carrie Assar



Elaine Lodge



Elizabeth King



JC Johns



Jennifer Adkins



Jennifer Wright



Jessica Alvear




karen




Keré Boyd, she/her

 Keré Boyd, she/her

 kmhicks

 Lisa Lyman

 Patricia Winters

 Sandy Crosier

 Victoria

 Martin Egna