



# PTA

**Date of PTA Meeting:** March 10, 2020

**Location:** Thoreau Middle School

**Attendees:** Rebecca Aguilar\*, Rachel Bailey\*, Dr. Cathy Cipperly\*, Natalie Duncan\*, Antigone Delaney, Dominique Deleage, Beth Eachus, Andrea Kramer, Stacey Leimbach, Sarah Lundquist, Karla Mihalak, Ravi Myneni, Wendy Pearson, Samantha Rayburn, Janet Samereie, Dawn-Marie Singleton, Irina Smirnoff, Lisa Williams, Brandy Wyatt\*                      \*indicates Thoreau Staff or Guest Speakers

Andrea Kramer called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Brandy Wyatt, of Town of Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation, introduced Natalie Duncan of Club Phoenix, Vienna's Teen Center. Natalie spoke to the group regarding upcoming programs at Club Phoenix and to remind us that a Shuttle Bus leaves from Thoreau on Thursdays. Natalie and another Parks and Recreation staff member, JC Campell, are coaching Thoreau's boys basketball players for the upcoming Crosstown Hoops program, sponsored by the PTA. She also announced a Club Phoenix St. Patrick's Day party coming soon as well as an April Showers event aimed more at the arts-interested students.

Andrea presented the minutes from the January 14, 2020 PTA meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Stacey Leimbach. Dawn-Marie Singleton seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

## **Principal's Report – Dr. Cipperly**

Dr. Cipperly introduced herself as Interim Principal and shared that she has been pleased that Thoreau lives up to its reputation as a wonderful school. SOLs are proceeding on schedule. FCPS is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation, thrice daily. That information is passed along to parents via email in multiple languages. A question was asked regarding "remote learning" in case of school cancelation. Those policies are being created as we meet. Hotspots will be available for students or families without internet access. She's been so pleased with the PBLs (project-based learning) in the library and 7<sup>th</sup> grade History Speak Easy event recently.

## **Student Services - Rebecca Aguilar**

SOL Testing is going on for 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Course selections for next year are being completed. Staffing projections will take place in a couple of weeks. Course selection sheets are reviewed one by one. An additional 50-70 students are expected to register this summer. Student schedules are visible online by looking at Course Requests tab. Parents can review what their student has selected. Questions can be directed to Mrs. Aguilar or the student's counselor.

## **PTA President's Report – Andrea Kramer**

Thanks to Jen Hallworth for coordinating the Spelling Bee this year. The winning word was *avocado*. Thanks to Hospitality Committee chairs Karla Mihalak, Missy Dixon, Mary Louise Nicklas and the many families that supported our Souper-Bowl Lunch in January and Valentine's Treats in February for Staff.

Staff grants were awarded for \$2305 this semester, \$7122 total this year. Of note, the Library Grant will assist them in creating a "Maker Space". Staff Grant Committee members were Andrea Kramer, Irina Smirnoff and Michelle Sullivan.

Courtyard Bricks projects was approved last month. As an Eagle Scout Project, Thoreau Alumnus Patrick Julian will be working on the installation later this spring. Bricks are still available for personalization and purchase. On March 31, the FCCPTA (Fairfax County Council of PTAs) is hosting an Advocacy Night. School Board Members and Elected Officials will be there to hear community interests and needs. Publicity is online.

### **Treasurer's Report – Amy Vernon (presented by Andrea)**

Budget reports were distributed today. This is a record of our current financial status and does not need to be approved by vote. Current Savings Balance--\$46,436. There are outstanding expenses. Update on the School Store budget: at the beginning of the year the initial budget was lowered from prior years due to the absence of a chairperson. The Store hours were reduced from three to one day a week, once a chair, Liz Kimball, was appointed. There has been both greater expense and greater revenue than originally anticipated. Expense cap was \$2,000. The store spent over \$4,000 on products. Recommend proposing \$6,000 budget for purchasing. Income goal was \$4,000 but over \$7,000 has been earned already. This budget change is going to be covered. A motion was made by Beth Eachus to change the Income Goal to \$10,000 and to change to a \$6,000 expense limit. The motion was seconded by Sarah Lundquist. The motion passed.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **By-Laws Committee: Stacey Leimbach**

Stacey Leimbach, Andrea Kramer and Dawn-Marie Singleton served on the By-law Review Committee. Every five years PTAs are required to review and approve by-laws. The most significant recommended revision is that term limits for Board Members and Committee Chairs be increased from 2 years to 3 years. A motion was made by Stacey Leimbach to adopt and approve the by-laws as proposed by the committee. The motion was seconded by Beth Eachus. The motion passed.

**Nominating Committee:** At this meeting we are electing the Nominating Committee. Karla Mihalak, Elizabeth Terry-Humen and Stacey Leimbach have agreed to serve on this committee. A motion to approve the Nominating Committee members was made by Beth Eachus. Dawn-Marie Singleton seconded the motion and it carried.

**New Business:** Brandy Wyatt from Town of Vienna, here as a representative in place of Natalie Duncan of Club Phoenix, introduced today's speaker Rachel Bailey, psychotherapist and parenting coach. Her topic is Fostering Internal Motivation in Students. Club Phoenix has co-sponsored this presentation with our PTA. Ms. Bailey explained that parents' interest in their students being motivated is really to get the student to do things the parent sees as important but the student doesn't want to do. Doing something we don't want to do requires energy, tools, and firmness/consistency. She described the concept of "Yuck," a way to express the idea of anything that makes us uncomfortable. When someone is in Yuck, they have no impulse control, logical reasoning, or motivation. We need to work with our student in recognizing when they are in Yuck and how to get out of the Yuck Curve, how to manage their discomfort since it is temporary and will pass. We can support our student with tailored tools that help them release negative energy and bolster positive energy, ensuring their emotional needs are met. Her two-page handout is posted on Thoreau MS PTA Facebook page on March 10 in the comments following the Live Stream of the meeting.

### **Adjourn PTA Meeting**

Andrea ended the meeting at 11:10 a.m.