



# PTA

**Date of PTA Meeting:** May 26, 2020

**Location:** Virtual Meeting hosted by GoToMeeting

**Attendees:** Rebecca Aguilar\*, Stephanie Bollini, Kathleen Canedo, Dr. Catherine Cipperly\*, Buck Condill, Beth Eachus, Sarah Espanol, Fran Furr\*, Emily Korff, Andrea Kramer, Sarah Lundquist, Erin Lynch, Karla Mihalak, Wendy Pearson, Samantha Rayburn, Jeannie Suarez Reyes, Kristin Root, Irina Smirnoff, Elizabeth Terry-Humen, Christ Torregrossa, Amy Vernon, Cindy Weinberg \*indicates Thoreau Staff

**Welcome:** Andrea Kramer welcomed everyone and reviewed how to use controls within the GoToMeeting platform. She called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. and indicated that the meeting was being recorded.

**Old Business:** Andrea presented the minutes from the January 14, 2020 PTA meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Beth Eachus. Amy Vernon seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

**Election of 2020-21 PTA Board:** Candidates were presented for the Board as follows: President Andrea Kramer, Vice President Cindy Weinberg, Secretary Chris Torregrossa, Treasurer—Vacant. As there was not a formal slate presented 30 days in advance, candidates will be voted on them as a group. PTA members at the meeting were instructed to vote either Yes or No via Chat Box to Emily Korff, former PTA President, who is serving as a neutral party to receive and count the votes. Andrea confirmed that we have a quorum of 10 members, as required.

**Principal's Report:** Dr. Cipperly thanked PTA members for their support and patience this year. She noted that the PTA has always loved to feed the Staff, which was not possible, but even while socially distanced, the PTA provided recipes and student messages. Parents also sent notes of appreciation to many teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week. On behalf of those teachers, she conveyed her thanks.

She shared that FCPS is considering a variety of schooling scenarios for the fall, dependent upon how the virus progresses. Distance Learning is a possibility. Schools re-opening with Social Distancing is also a possibility. Included in those scenarios is also "what happens if specific students and/or teachers are unable to return?" Predicting these outcomes is very difficult. Thoreau may be asked to provide Parent Feedback on some of these ideas.

She added that next year it was intended that Middle Schools go to One to One with laptops. She is still hopeful that will take place. She asked Mr. Condill to speak on this topic.

Mr. Condill shared that teachers have learned a lot about using technology to teach during this time period, especially in light of the plan of going to One to One with computers in the future. Teachers have been creative in the classroom. He discussed computer programs such as Newsela, Learning Ally and Peardeck. These resources are interactive and adaptive, working on literacy, critical thinking and more. Teachers are embracing the mandated swap to technology-based teaching. Jeannie Suarez shared, via Chat, that she endorses these resources and believes they are excellent and thanked Administration for making these available at Thoreau. Dr. Cipperly concluded by thanking Mr. Condill for sharing about the programs.

**Student Services Report:** Mrs. Aguilar commended staff for doing a great job emptying lockers so that students could receive their personal belongings. Counselors are continuing to work with individual students one on one, with parental permission. Counselors are beginning to plug into English and Science classes to provide some Naviance Lessons. Naviance is a State mandated program that seeks to help schools align student strengths and interests to postsecondary goals. Eighth graders begin to work with this planner and

continue through high school years. Excellent information is available in the Naviance Student Planner, accessible through students' Blackboard Account.

Thoreau's summer program, Excellence in Action, has been canceled, so they are looking for ways to welcome rising 7<sup>th</sup> graders in different ways. Counselors are creating engaging videos--school tours, introductions to various staff members, etc.

The Counseling Department will be sending out Course Verifications as they always do. It is a list of the courses that students are signed up for. This gives families a chance to verify what is listed. She is planning, in June, to send the lists hard copy, as email is overwhelming right now and might be missed. They are still doing regular end of the year processes.

Lastly, as the PTA has always supported Mindfulness Programming, Mrs. Aguilar shared that Corinne, a private clinician from McLean, has offered to give a Free Parent Session, virtually, "Parenting through these Times of Transition and Uncertainty". She asked for feedback on that idea. Several parents indicated, via Chat Box, that they thought the presentation would be welcome and beneficial.

**Treasurer's Report:** Amy Vernon indicated that there is \$46,158.76 in the treasury. PTA is in a great position financially partly due to not getting to do several events that were planned, due to COVID-19 restrictions. There are no outstanding reimbursement requests that she is aware of. She requested that any outstanding requests be sent to her ASAP, treasurer@thoreaupta.org.

Beth Eachus asked if there is anything we can do for the eighth graders in light of the absence of an 8<sup>th</sup> grade. A few ideas were shared, such as offering a gift card raffle during the last week of school. Ms. Aguilar mentioned they are working on an Online End of Year Awards Event. Virtual Meeting Platforms limit the size of meetings and prevents Thoreau from creating a single Whole Community Event. Teams are working on End of Year Functions. Counselors are reaching kids through the Core Classes. During the last week of school teachers are being encouraged to create celebratory things to do during class time as it would usually be Eighth Grade Picnic and other fun events. Andrea said she would continue discussion of this topic with this year's PTA Board and the Incoming Board, as well as touch base with Committee Chairs for the Eighth Grade Party.

**PTA President's Report:** Andrea Kramer recognized Sarah Lundquist for her work with the Newsletter and Eblasts. She also thanked the Hospitality Chairs, Missy Dixon, Karla Mihalak and Mary Louise Nicklas for the wonderful March Hospitality event. They did a Spring Cleaning of everything in the Teacher's Lounge. They were tasked with figuring out new ways to show hospitality for Staff Appreciation during Social Distancing. They rose to the occasion.

Andrea thanked Club Phoenix for partnering with Thoreau PTA this year and expressed a desire to continue that partnership in the future. She thanked the Current PTA Board and highlighted the contributions of each Board member. She thanked each Committee Chair for their contributions as listed here for Volunteer Appreciation and Year in Review:

**Communications:**

Newsletter: Sarah Lundquist  
Website: Mike Pauley  
Online Directory: Seema Javeri

**Events:** 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Family Dinner: Krissy Griepentrog, Regan Morgan and fifteen parent volunteers  
Spelling Bee: Jen Hallworth and four parent volunteers  
Crosstown Hoops: Sarah Espanol, Alessia McIntosh  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade Party: Jennifer Bacon, Dawn-Marie Singleton

**Community Spirit and Fundraising:**

Box Tops: Megan Pauley  
Dining 4 Dollars: Missy Dixon

No-Fuss Fundraiser: Stephanie Bollini  
Spirit Wear: Natacha Moore  
School Supplies: Mary Louise Nicklas  
School Store: Liz Kimball and 24 parent volunteers

**Student & Family Services:**

Courtyard: Alecia Pflughardt  
Courtyard Bricks: Stephanie Bollini

**Staff Support:**

Staff Grants Committee: Andrea Kramer, Irina Smirnoff, Michele Sullivan  
Hospitality: Missy Dixon, Karla Mihalak and Mary Louise Nicklas and over 100 parent and student volunteers listed by name on Power Point slides

**PTA Support:**

Membership: Stephanie Bollini  
By-Laws Revision Committee: Andrea Kramer, Stacey Leimbach, Dawn-Marie Singleton  
Nominating Committee: Stacey Leimbach, Karla Mihalak, Elizabeth Terry-Humen

**Announcement of Election Results:** Emily Korff announced that there 17 yes votes and 0 no votes for the Candidates for PTA Board for 2020-21.

**Adjourn PTA Meeting**

Andrea ended the meeting at 8:45 p.m.