



**Ben W. Murch Home and School Association
General Meeting Minutes**

September 3, 2024, 7-9pm

Participants: Matt Evans (Co-President), Allison Fitzsimmons (Co-President), Deneb Vasquez (Assistant Treasurer), Rebea Fiet (VP Development), Hayley Love (VP Family Support), Abbie Shawn (VP Communications), Sasha Taskier (VP Staff Appreciation), Ms. Hagen (Teacher Rep), Mr. C (Principal), Radhika Mohan (VP Community Engagement), Tianni (Secretary), Lee, Deena - LSAT, Collecca (PK3 mom), Elaine (1st grade mom), Arriane (4th grade mom)

Allison - The mission this year is to get more volunteers!

Mr. C Update - 1st week went well, 2nd week new new entry procedure is iffy

- Worked with GW & AU to have a service day Saturday before school started. Forty students were here to provide interior/exterior maintenance. Partnership with Casey Trees.
- Meeting with a union rep to change morning collab time for staff planning time from school day, is in contract for 8:10-8:40; looking to move it to..... would change morning entry time for students.
- Chronic absence is rate down.
- Enrollment - About the same as last year
- Database - DC Cape scores, ELA 66 to 75, shrunk below level; students are now above achievement levels since covid
- Looking forward to close work with HSA Engagement & Family Support
- First Grandparent's Day - effort to do more community-minded events for inclusivity
- BTS (back to school night) - briefer than in past, two sessions with teachers - can go to one or the other

Co-President's Report

- Financial - There are two people with credit cards - Alison & Rajiv; Matt can withdraw \$ in person.

- Portal - for tracking, go to HSAMurch > purchase req > reimbursement
- Ms. Miller - scholarships for CLS/Wonders, can spend for kids in need
- Trying to move from Basecamp to GoogleDocs - Ali will take lead on transitioning
- Shade on pre-k playground - looking at options, must be a certain distance from bldg, looking at a tent like the what is on the big playground. Ask Casey Trees if we can plant shade trees in the planters.

Allison - Recommends for certain temperatures we do a temporary tent; not a hot ticket item now while temps going down, prepare for spring; suggestion to ask Mary what we can and can't do for shade options.

BTS - Free totes & magnets will be available.

Allison - Make signing up for specific positions easier; hang QR code sign-up flyers, keep sign-ups displayed.

Room parent sign-up is set for BTS night; please help man the HSA table during BTS

SOS campaign - grade level champions; get room parents on board

HOW do we get more volunteers??? Tap people on a personal level, text your mom/dad-friends and ask them to help; more play dates within grades so parents get closer and automatically feel more included and ask for help.

Send room parent info to teachers, not just room parents.

Leigh is making a direct sign-up for the Fall Fair.

After School - Murch Plus Wednesdays, Amore Tuesday & Thursday class (language, tutoring, lego/coding); Chess on Mondays; possible lunch activity for students who can't stay after school.

Roles for HSA to finance some, DCPS some and some scholarships; start early October

Engagement - Spoke with Mrs. Rolling to get more features in the newsletter, some parents work with WaPo, helping to get features; art enrichment - have some of the kids' art made into merch; possibly holding a flag contest.

Allison - Spoke about the presentation budget and shared possible presentation idea: Bomani - local artist, art presentation; also got an estimate from NOAA on weather and climate change; also one from DOEE on recycling and trash program; also one from Patent Office.

Abbie- Weekly communications switched from Friday to Thursday; This Week at Murch is going well - notify Abi the day before to add anything; would like to add Murch Moments - share photos, etc.; share items for calendar - Abi can send out link for HSA to subscribe calendar; also managing website, meeting someone to possibly take over managing website; Bravo Zulu to Allison for crushing it on social media!; still trying to direct people to newsletter; Amy Turner is the

room parent coordinator, Lizzy Polk - get room parents started earlier; figuring out how to translate comms (website, newsletter, etc) into Spanish.

Rebeca - SOS campaign, every contribution is valuable - all amounts of money count; give examples - for this amount of money we can do xyz; appeal to people with personal language; Shareway - check out donations and grants, Allison reached out to someone at GW who writes grants; Fall Fair planning - email out to Deale for volunteers; we inherited a popcorn maker.

Sasha (Staff Appreciation) - Potomac Pizza for staff luncheon, send thank you note; donated breakfast from Call Your Mom; teacher's lounge restock, working with Alison Berkfeld, working on cleaning schedule, must re-look at budget for restocks; new teacher welcome swag bag; hospitality for grandparent's day, catering must be ordered 48-72hrs before event

Radhika - Anne is leading Nats Day, 16 of 40 tix sold; movie night - we have date, movie license, screen co, popcorn, time 6:30pm pizza 7pm movie; Radhika cannot be here for movie night, so a point person is needed to train for and run the event.

Java House - owner interested in hosting coffee on the playground; also owns a taco shop on Georgia Ave and offers for catering luncheons, etc.

Arianne - offered to host International Night

Hayley, VP of Family Support - eight babysitters booked for BTS, separating by grades and dividing spaces this year and having events instead of just running wild. New Family Breakfast - Hayley will send an email about it, need to pick a date, HSA members asked to come

Let's make sure budgets get used - some classes use over, some under

Basement cleanup - some folks started cleanup, VPs go down and see what to keep or toss.