



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

October 8, 2024, 7-9pm

Participants: Matt Evans (President), Cassie Chappell (LSAT), Rebeca Fiet (VP Development), Sasha Taskier (Staff Appreciation), Hayley Love (VP Family Support), Abigail Shawn (VP Communications), Allison Fitzsimmons (Vice President), Mr. C (Principal), Radhika Mohan (VP Community Engagement), Kimi Wetterauer (past-prez), Abby Bluestone; Tianni (Secretary), Lee Connery (Fall Fair/Auction Chair), Lesle Kaufman, Adrian (3rd grade dad); Stacy Linden (3rd grade mom); Nicole McGoohan (K/2nd/4th); Hilary Zwerdling (Treasurer); Gabriela Grinsteins (K), Deneb Vasquez (Assistant Treasurer)

Matt's update

There's been a tragedy in the community - DeAndre Pettus, a Murch kindergartener was allegedly murdered by his father. There was a history of abuse. MPD investigation is ongoing. Mr. C's input: We will not make a determination on who is responsible; that's up to the law. We are working on providing services for the kids on how to deal with this very sad occurrence; the mental health team is available. His two sisters are still here in school. The father is also still around; there are safety concerns. Sign-ups will likely begin next week to help cover lunch duties so the teachers can get a break. Multiple communications will be sent out next week. Food for staff is always welcome and helps in times of need. There will be a celebration of DeAndre's life. Mr. C will figure out who is a point of contact in the family we can reach out to to offer support, gifts, memories, etc. Murch currently has 22% at-risk students, which is a 60% increase in at-risk students in the past year. Murch is not labeled a Title One school, so we don't get a lot of resources from DC to help with this like Title I schools. Mr. C is wondering what he missed? We are all wondering how we could have helped more, how we can help more going forward. We need to make more of an effort to include more families in all school events, make more inroads with diverse families, help each other more and be more of a community to everyone at the school, etc.

Shout outs!

- Haley, well done on BTSs! Baby sitting was a huge success.
- Coffee on the Playground went well.
- Grandparent's Day was a huge success - way more attended than expected. Rebecca commented that grandparents could be an untapped resource to help with things at Murch. Unfortunately we did not get a sign-in/contact list that day, which we should do.
- Nats Game Day sold out.
- Sasha handed out teacher welcome gifts, much appreciated!
- Matt, well done on getting chess and Amore set up. More will be added for the next season. We need to figure out a way to monitor and determine how chess/Amore are working any changes that need to be made, etc. Spanish has not been as popular as expected - a few folks mentioned they didn't know what level it would be, there wasn't enough information provided, some wanted more advanced than entry level.
- Movie night was great!
- Green scene: We can't plant new trees bc there are stumps in the ground from previous trees. But Casey Trees is donating trees.
- Per Ali, the shade company came out and provided quotes; must be approved by DGS. We also need DGS to fix the lock on the garage, cost is \$375.

Presentations: Who is in charge of the musical? Got dates for Bumani but didn't want to send in light of recent events.

SOS: Raffle for two free pizzas and water, but the pizzas were gone when they showed up. Please note it in accounting to move the payment for the pizzas from SOS to HSA budget.

All inflatables were cancelled for Fall Fair due to new DCPS policy of no inflatables. Rebecca now knows how to shut down the street for next year so we can have inflatables in the street off of school property. Room parents next email contact Mrs. Miller that this is a community event and we want everyone to attend. Let's sell Murch merch at the HSA table during the fall fair. Dan Golden, will take books after the fair. Hayley, mentioned someone collecting books for Ward 4 schools. Need to coordinate Dan and Hayley's efforts.

Abi says she is happy to help with flyers and getting things in Friday folders. Flyers should also be sent in Spanish.

Staff lunch is on the 15th.

Hilary is putting out a one-pager budget for each HSA department and willing to sit down and go through it if wanted. Taxes are done! Please use the online form to submit expenditures for

reimbursements and keep receipts. Rajiv's HSA credit card handles all of the Amazon purchases if anyone has any questions about those. We need an HSA phone number to get security codes for the cards.

Hailey recommended putting the extra snacks from movie night in the teacher lounge for added support this week.

Sasha now has custom stationary for the HSA if anyone wants to use it for thank you notes, etc.

Radhika's feedback from movie night: We need more popcorn/pre-popped, more pizza, need more law enforcement/security next year.

If anyone knows anyone who owns a restaurant, send it to Sasha for staff luncheons.