



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

May 6, 2025, 7-9:00pm (virtual)

Participants: Matt Evans (Co-Prez), Allison Fitzsimmons (Co-Prez), Sarah Krauss, Rebeca Fiet (VP Development), Kimi Wetterauer (past-Prez), Leigh Fenner (Auction), Abigail Shawn (VP Communications), Hilary Zwerling (Treasurer), Deneb Vasquez (Asst. Treasurer), Sasha Taskier (VP Staff Appreciation), Leigh Fenner (Auction Committee), Tianni (Secretary), Mrs. Hagan (K teacher & teacher rep), Maia Daniels (3rd grade mom), Marnique Heath (1st grade mom)

Check with Matt on approval of minutes and get them to Abby to post.

Sasha said teacher appreciation went well Monday & Tuesday. Some of the Support Staff (sped, ELL, Math, Reading, etc teachers) felt left out for Thursday's Special Treat day. An email went out asking people to adopt one of classrooms, but these were left off the list. Only the specialists were invited, no ELL, sped, etc. Kimi proposes taking away Special Treat day next year. Someone inevitably feels left out or gets missed. Hayley said she worked with the sped teachers two years ago to figure out what could be done to include them. Last year was better. Are specialists thought of as other teachers, and should be thinking of them as such? Or are they support staff? How do we best approach it in the future. Classroom teachers include sped. Mrs. Lily supports 35 students K-1 for example. There are some kids in every class that get special services but are not sped students. It's a gray area. Specialists don't have all the students, but they do have a big case load. Mrs. Hagan said it's best to just be as general and equitable as possible. Mrs. Hagan will make sure ALL teachers know there are treats in the Teacher's Lounge for them Thursday.

Murch Musical coming up. The current parents leading the musical are ready to hand over the baton for next year. Last walk thru will not be giving a pro bono approach to Murch for next year. Alli has gotten one quote for a full buildout of a new system and will get two more. One amp needs to be replaced, about \$3800. A plug & play system would not need a sound engineer or mixer. Stage Left is running the musical and has a tech team that could run a

system for us if we get our own system. Everyone agrees we do not need to pay to have the musical somewhere else.

International Night is June 5th. Haven't heard much beyond that it's happening. Need permits & security. Need to

HSA unanimously approves paying for remaining scholarships.

Agree to reduce Teacher Appreciation lunches to two as lunches have become much more expensive.

More money to Community Events. People are still interested in Coffee on the Playground. Let's keep it but definitely cap the budget.

We will pay for Murch+ supplies. Again the budget should be capped. Ally asked if any kids did not get in this year that wanted to. They did open an extra Lego class. Maia asked if pre-k kids can be in Murch+ going forward. Matt said he thinks it's getting teachers who are comfortable teaching kids at that age to volunteer to teach. Mrs. Hagan said she never saw anyone asking if the pre-k teachers wanted to be involved. Ally looked into Peace of Mind being offered as an after school program, maybe part of Murch+. It requires some teacher training. It's asking a lot of additional commitment for the teachers. Mrs. Hagan said every day she drops kids off at CLS, and the staff are on their phones, smell like pot, etc. CLS is not taking care of the classrooms they're in, etc. Ally also spoke with Washington Ballet and Imagination Stage for after school programs. Ally approached Kids Elite doing something in before-care. Hopefully we'll know soon what Mr. C is thinking for afterschool programming. Murch+ is free, and there is usually a spot for anyone who is interested. The program Mr. C is looking at is not free to everyone but can be paid for if needed. It sounds like it could get a little complicated with all of these options. Teachers for the most part love doing Murch+. Next year the money allotted for Natalie to organize after school programming. Does it need to be someone in the school? Yes, they have to know the classrooms, schedules, how to get kids where they're going, etc. If we created that position could we offer it to Mrs. Berger?

What is the money in the bank, the reserves, for? Maia asked why we have to have two after school programs. Her kids did not like Amore but like Murch+ bc they knew the teachers. If people want a certain program they might have to bring someone else in. Matt & Kimi said they have not needed to touch it. It was established as an emergency backup. Pre-k shade was quoted at \$50k, sound system \$15k. Kimi & Sasha suggested improving the Teacher's Lounge. Mrs. Hagan said it's good. Sasha has been doing clean-outs but not regularly. It might be nice to have a committee or sign-up next year for a monthly clean-up of the Teacher's Lounge.

Are there any HSA funds that can be contributed to Mrs. Hetty Cola's retirement party. Hilary and Kimi both said they do not remember HSA contributing to retirement parties. Mrs. Hagan said there is a staff committee to

HSA spent \$20k this year on scholarships versus \$15k as was allotted. In reference to overages, Kimi said historically if you're more than 10% over a line item you have to take it to a board for a vote. If it's under 10% the HSA can make a decision. Do we plan to keep Amore next year? Alli said it takes a lot of management, so if they kept it someone would have to be allocated to manage it. Amore was also the more expensive group. Keep karate and chess but likely not Amore. Are we getting more at-risk students next year in the enrollment predictions? Bc that would increase the need for more scholarships. There are fundamental disagreements about scholarships and how the HSA should play a role, so let's table this topic for now and focus on the bulk of the budget.

First item, went through Mr. C & Mary, they tell us what they need for the school (custodial, classrooms, etc.). Let's skip fifth grade programs for now.

\$30k is currently budgeted for Murch Plus, Girls on the Run, Girls Who Code, Student Council - 2024 budgeted for \$25k, currently spent \$13k with another round of Murch Plus to go will be about so \$7200. Is more or less interest expected in the after school options next year? Keep \$30k for now.

Auction came in under budget so far this year. Definitely don't want to drop budget. One year we ran out of food, another out of booze, people complained about having subpar food for a nice fundraising auction, etc. Let's do \$25k instead of \$21k.

Community programs: Radhika ran out of money this year. Coffee on the playground participation seems to be dwindling, and it's gotten too expensive. Either go back to the shoestring budget like it was before or get rid of it. Otherwise keep the budget where it is.

Fall fair budget will be spent this year. Rebeca said Fall Fair is split between the fiscal year. Fantasy World, where they rent games and booths, has gotten very expensive, \$8-10k. Lee & Rebeca would like to keep the same budget at \$15k and see if/where they can cut next year. They'd like to start buying some of the games and booths instead of renting them every year.

Hospitality - Will go over budget on Teacher Appreciation Week, but Sasha's been able to keep other events under so all together she should be on budget. This year Dr. Branch's lunch was part of this budget but shouldn't be next year. Mr. C had a big branch meeting in this budget

and probably should not be next year. Grandparent's Day (or Special Person's Day) should be budgeted for next year since it was so popular this year, and it was not in the budget. Mr. C originally said 50 people RSVP'd then the day before said 200 RSVP'd. So Call Your Mother order went from 50 to 200 and ended up being \$1200. But a lot of food was left over. Let's capitalize on it next year though by getting more structured information from grandparents/special persons in order to get more volunteers and future donations! This should probably be added to Community Events under Radhika. Hilary thinks we need to engage Mr. C on expectations from HSA in reference to things like Dr. Branch's Black History Month lunch that cost \$3,000 and was not budgeted for. There was also a request for \$1600 in scholarships to the steppers, two \$800 scholarships. It doesn't seem like it should be that much or maybe not fall under HSA.

Performing and visual arts events - production fee for musical will be about \$23k cost all in, expect to sell about \$15k in tix so cost is about \$8k. Up current budget to \$23k and can be adjusted if needed. Baba Bomani presentation was \$1800. Mr. Morgan was \$1200 for the talent show sound; . What is Mr. Morgan bringing that makes it so much more expensive, doesn't seem to need to be so much. Kimi said you can see the number in the portal for the last two years and see what was spent. Can we ask Dr. Branch why Mr. Morgan is so expensive? Mr. Morgan was a little confrontational with Alli when asked about fees. Lee works with him through Rebeca McGraw instead of directly with Mr. Morgan. It seems there is a relationship with Dr. Branch and Mr. Morgan, but the money spending is a question. Give Dr. Branch a budget for Black History Month, like \$1500, and tell him that's what it is, however he wants to spend it. Leigh asked if it's possible to put money toward getting a new system of our own instead of spending more for every presentation. Alli said she thinks it's worth looking into and also pricing other sound people.

Maia is on the board at Imagination Station and in with DGS and is considering further volunteer opportunities at Murch.