



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

September 2, 2025, 8:00pm Virtual

Participants: Allison Fitzsimmons (Co-Prez), Leigh Fenner (Co-Prez), Mr. C (Principal), AP Hawkins (Asst Principal), Sarah Krauss (Asst Treasurer), Deneb Vasquez (Asst. Treasurer), Kimi Wetterauer (past-Prez), Radhika Mohan (VP Community Engagement), Abigail Shawn (VP Communications), Rebeca Fiet (VP Development), Sasha Taskier (VP Staff Appreciation), Tianni Craig (Secretary), Mrs. Hagan (K teacher & teacher rep), Mrs. Richmond (K Teacher), Arianne de Govia (International Night), James Keller, Bridgett Lilley, Darob Malek-Madani, Francesca Alesi, Katy Bartelma, Koleka Masimini, Lexi Crawford, Matt Krauss, Yana Vierboom

The newly elected Treasurer, Christine Kidwell, had to resign over the summer. Rebeca said Kristin Gifford is a CPA who does accounting for non-profits and has volunteered to fill the role. The vote was put out, and a quorum of 30 voters approved the vote. Voting quorum: Allison Fitzsimmons, Leigh Fenner, Sarah Krauss, Deneb Vasquez, Kimi Wetterauer, Radhika Mohan, Abigail Shawn, Rebeca Fiet, Sasha Taskier, Tianni Craig, Mrs. Hagan, Mrs. Richmond, Arianne de Govia, James Keller, Bridgett Lilley, Darob Malek-Madani, Francesca Alesi, Katy Bartelma, Koleka Masimini, Lexi Crawford, Matt Krauss, Yana Vierboom, Ronald Flores, Craig Solars, David Korkoian, Frank Kelleher, Tien Pasco, Brandt Pasco, Yoni Tedese,

First Coffee on the Playground (COP) is this Friday 5/5. There has been discussion around COP Fridays turning into HSA community engagement meetings and see if people are interested in that going forward. Mr. C is working on agenda items for this Friday.

Next Coffee on the playground is scheduled for 10/3 which is also movie night. Need to move COP. Check against holidays. The next Friday school is closed, so Friday 10/17 makes sense.

New parent breakfast on 9/16 at 9:15am. Hayley is organizing. Alli asked if someone could help sell merch there. Rebeca said she doesn't think it's worth it based on low sales at the breakfast

last year, and we are waiting for new merch to arrive. Recommend folks buy merch at movie night and fall fair.

Grandparents Day - 9/25, This year we need to get signups and collect contact information in order to recruit folks to help!

Radhika, Community Engagement - Movie night: The movie vendor is slammed. Radhika will have more info on it next week. Rebeca said the permits are in. Reminder we need more pizza and popcorn this year! Alli said we're going to try to sell more trinkets this year, asked if we have anything in the storage unit to sell - we don't. Leigh will create an Amazon cart of items to order items and send to Sarah Krauss for purchase.

Room parent meeting next Wednesday 7-7:45pm in the cafeteria.

Request by Mrs. Sessoms, curriculum item - Mr. C asked to put this on hold.

Merchandise update, Rebeca - New merch should be in by Fall Fair. Radhika said Mr. Hayden had a really cool Murch shirt on that he made himself, would love to ask if he would let us use his design. Alli and others agreed they would like to do a run of a different shirt than what we've been doing. Rebeca said hoodies are more expensive to purchase than what they sell them for so no longer running.

Fundraising, Rebeca - Kimi is going to be SOS chair this year. All fundraising was moved to Giftsmart to track easier. Three Auction chairs, possibly four, are already secured! Clair Carr, Matthew Harkins, Sarah Krauss & Christine Koronides.

Wonders & CLS babysitting, Hayley - There was a lot of interest in babysitting for Back to School (BTS) night. Could it be beneficial to advertise in the newsletter for Wonders, CLS & Murch staff to connect with families for babysitting opportunities? Alli asked Mr. C if there are any issues with that. Clearly Murch can't vouch for them outside of school. Abbie asked if the Murch Family Forum would be a better place to list.

Delaying smart phones, Hayley - Hayley has been speaking with a group of Murch parents who are interested in leading an advocacy effort at Murch to delay smart phones for students. There is a larger group, including all of the six feeder schools to Deal. Hayley noted Mr. C mentioned The Anxious Generation in his first newsletter. Hayley is interested in hearing how Mr. C and AP Hawkins if and how we could integrate this effort into our school. Would HSA fund a speaker to lead a community discussion? Wait Until 8th Campaign - we could get families to sign. Kimi sent a past newsletter message where Murch hosted a screening of "Screenagers" and a following

community discussion. The movie is for the kids and the parents, so the kids are included. Alli added in chat: <https://www.ooma.com/>. Sasha added in chat:

https://tincan.kids/?srsltid=AfmBOopVE-pMcHUp8T5Zcb5YrldAKSlk4syXYh1FBr1b_qffSt78MrO

Alli asked Hayley what the ask is. Is it to pay for a speaker, a movie screening, host a parent discussion, sponsor something, etc? What is the cost of hosting an event like this? To keep staff after to put chairs out, etc. Alli asked Hayley to identify a little bit more what she's looking for.

CannaArt - Rebeca - Back in June we were contacted by the ANC that covers Murch to notify us that CannaArt applied for a license to dispense cannabis. The ANC and several surrounding businesses have organized to protest this application, not bc they are against cannabis but bc the owner was selling illegally initially and then lied on his application. The HSA at that time opted to not to get involved in the situation. This business is not within 400ft of the school but is on the direct route that many students commute to school, which is the concern. The question is, should the HSA say something, put out an informative letter to parents in case they are concerned about this being on their commute or wondering if anything has been addressed on it? Alli said the ANC member who asked for our support protesting was clearly disappointed that we did not want to get involved. Kimi said the ANC member was helpful when we asked for help with funding, so it might be worth offering an olive branch in another way. They have asked us to have someone come to the meetings and have some representation. Not that we should be quid pro quo, but let's keep the lines of communication open. Maybe put out something more along of the lines of dispersing the ANC information to Murch community, some of their agenda, some things going on in the community, other ways to be supportive of the ANC. Most HSA members agree the HSA should stay out of saying anything specifically in reference to the CannaArt situation. The ANC also works on traffic safety for example, but we have not dispersed any specific comms irt that. We should not be cherry picking ANC items that we speak about to Murch families. We can invite the ANC to a meeting or COP, share their info, etc. Abbie suggested ANC info might be better shared on the Murch Family Forum (MFF), and she shared the link in the chat to MFF: <https://groups.io/g/MurchFamilyForum> Alli asked Mr. C if he thought it was a good idea to invite ANC members to a meeting or COP, and he asked to table that question and talk to Alli offline.

Props to Leigh for putting out great HSA flyers in the Friday Folders!

Alli said our new sound system is shipped and will be installed soon! The sound guy is coordinating with Mary to get that completed. We're looking forward to having the school musical in the gym in the spring!

Wonders scholarships - Mr. C will talk to Alli outside of the meeting about this

Arianne - Thank you so much for International Night! It was a huge hit. So many people raved about it. Alli said we are trying to add some sort of Washington Ballet or dance portion to it for this year. Arianne is looking for volunteers for a co-chair this year! Her child is a 5th grader this year, so someone will need to take over for next year.

Radhika said Anne Pizer is looking for someone to take over the volunteer role she has held for the last two years. Anne coordinated community sporting event outings, local restaurant & business promotions such as Potomac pizza nights, etc. Anne has a spreadsheet of events and flyers to turn over to whoever volunteers, and she is happy to pass along any helpful information to get them started successfully.

Litter patrol is back! Tianni is leading. Help us kick off the week on the good foot! Join the litter patrol at 8:15 Monday mornings before school starts to help collect trash after the busy - and often messy - weekends. Kids will sign in for credit and a small token. Trash will be documented & reported to the National Wildlife Federation Clean Earth Challenge / Million Pieces of Trash campaign.

Action items:

- Schedule next COP for 10/17 in all necessary comms
- Leigh create cart of trinkets to sell at movie night and send to Sarah to purchase
- Mr. C & Alli talk offline about CannaArt discussion and ANC/HSA interactions
- Identify volunteer co-chair and future replacement for Arianne for International Night
- Identify volunteer replacement for Anne Pizer, community sporting & neighborhood fundraising events