



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

October 7, 2025, 7:00pm Murch Library

Participants: Allison Fitzsimmons (Co-Prez), Leigh Fenner (Co-Prez), Mr. C (Principal), Sarah Krauss (Asst Treasurer, Auction Chair), Radhika Mohan (VP Community Engagement), Abigail Shawn (VP Communications), Rebeca Fiet (VP Development), Tianni Craig (Secretary), Mrs. Hagan (K teacher & teacher rep), Katie Dubyek (K mom), Kristin Davis (Fall Fair Chair), Bridget Lilley (K teacher & teacher rep), Hayley Love (VP Family Support), Jessica Armstead (Community Member)

Jessica is a Family Preservation Specialist w/Collaborative Solutions in Communities. She attended the HSA meeting to speak about an initiative they are leading to connect families in schools. Their goal is to keep the child in the home. They can help pay bills, work with a social worker, whatever a family needs. They offer parenting classes and fatherhood classes. The classes are a series with a graduation and are virtual and in-person. They run a children soccer team and the Safe Passage program (with the green vests). They serve Ward 1, 2 & 3. Alli asked if their company could do a talk with the parents here sometime about what they can offer, and we should do an introduction to Mrs. Miller.

Murch+ update from Mr. C - Talking to teachers now about what they want to teach, hoping to start on the 15th, parents should get sign-up by Thursday. 22 classes per session, puts us right under budget. New person running it, Rebecca Dufreine.

Sound system installation is scheduled!

Rebecca Fiet, VP Development Update -

- Out of kids hoodies, found a similar Hanes hoodie we can get on Amazon for \$27/shirt instead of \$49.

- Fall fair - instead of a million tiny plastic trinkets at tables, people can get stamps and then redeem them at a prize booth. Need someone to sell merch - Alli and Kristin Davis volunteered. We need more volunteers. Rebecca knows we're on the Deal site, asked Mr. C to put it on the Jackson-Reed site. Kristin asked if there is a volunteer sign-up other than the classroom sign-ups. Although we get middle and high school volunteers, we still need adult volunteers with them. We also need manpower to help build booths.
- Book Fair - Rachel Holy is doing it, looking good.
- SOS - we are at \$23,129 from 43 donors. Trying to increase visibility as to what HSA pays for, maybe do some teacher features. 2nd grade has exceeded goal, so far everyone else is behind.
- Auction is March 21st. Sarah is doing solicitations, Matthew is doing giftsmart, Claire Karr is doing the party, Christine is doing comms.

Sasha Takier, VP Staff Appreciation Update - Grandparents/Special Person's day was a great success, Teacher cooperation was great. There was a drop in communications with the 4th grade teachers, who had a meeting scheduled during special person's day and were unable to have grandparents/special persons into the class.

Hayley Love, VP Family Support -

- Food Pantry, always available, managed by Mrs. Miller. Fills bags on Friday mornings. Partnership with DC Food Project, who provides snacks and larger food drops, but they don't start until mid-November so we have a gap to fill. This happens every year. There is an Amazon wish list created, and families have sent things to the school. We need volunteers to unpack the boxes and move some of the excess down to the HSA closet. Hayley will get an organized volunteer plan together. Alli said we should put a line item in the budget next year for the food pantry because we know they don't start up mid-Fall so there is always a gap to cover. Also there should be a more consolidated way to get the food during the gap so there are not a ton of boxes coming to the school with no place to sit until they're needed. Abbi asked if we still need the wishlist in the newsletter - we do not.
- School tours start again in November, Mondays monthly. Brigitte made a note that the pre-k hall also has self-contained special education classrooms, and if you hear yelling or see a lot of staff or something of that sort, please take a detour and circle back.
- Screen Delay Working Group update - First meeting last month to talk objectives and how to connect with the Murch community. Alternatives to smart phones, ways to start to engage the community. First outward event will be at Fall Fair, will have a booth with info on the Wait Thru 8th campaign, raffle off tin can phones, books. Looking to plan a screening of "Screamagers" for parents and kids at Murch. Broader engagement with six feeder schools to Deal.

Radhika Mohan, VP Community Engagement -

- Movie Night recap - \$5k expenses, made \$4100, so it's a nice cost off-set. Rebecca said to make note of how many pizzas we ordered bc it was a perfect amount.
- Radhika met with Mrs. Walton who has some needs she needs helps with. She wants more term celebrations, first one is November 7th. She wants HSA help with goodie bags. Rebecca said this could be organized by room parents. Mr. C asked to table this conversation.
- Women's History Month career day. Alli said we do want to do more cultural/heritage events, but it's too much to do something every month. Maybe a cultural series. Washington Ballet will be doing a series of cultural dances leading up to International Night.

Abbie Shawn, VP Communications Update -

- Directory: We received a lot of handwritten forms for the directory. They have been added to the directory by Abbie.
- Rajiv and Abbie are working on finalizing the rosters for the directory with all classes, teachers, and room parents. Abbie is formatting for Rajiv to upload to the online directory.
- Rebecca asked if it's possible to print the online directory, and Abbie said it is a question for Rajiv.
- MailChimp: Grandparents were added to mailchimp, and there was an 82% read rate on their first mailing, which is awesome!

Housekeeping:

- Tipping at events - private security guards do not get tipped. Janitorial staff does.
- Met with Kristin, the new Treasurer, for two hours to clean up some accounting that is behind.
- One of the HSA goals this year is to set up policy & procedures such that anyone could step into our positions at any time and have a much easier transition for HSA going forward to ensure future success.