

Minutes of the
Beall PTA General Membership Meeting

February 4, 2014

DRAFT

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by PTA Board President John McKirgan. Mr. McKirgan distributed copies of the minutes of the December General Membership Meeting, the Financial Report, and an Opportunity for Advocacy form.

1. Approval of the December 2013 Minutes – A motion was entered to approve the minutes of the Beall PTA General Membership Meeting on December 3, 2013. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.
2. Reports of Officers and Standing Committees
 - a. School Update
 - i. School Principal Elliot Alter thanked the parent volunteers who covered in the office while Mrs. Hardy has been out.
 - ii. MSA Testing – Mr. Alter reported that many advocates are arguing against conducting Maryland School Assessment (“MSA”) testing this year, as it does not align with the current curriculum. Mr. Alter agreed that the MSA does not provide a good picture of students’ progress with respect to the current curriculum. At this point, the school is obligated to move forward with MSA testing for third, fourth, and fifth graders. Testing is scheduled for the first two weeks of March. Two Beall classes will be piloting new standardized testing. Parents of children in those classes will be provided with details.
 - iii. Mr. Alter urged parents who received a link to the MCPS Bell Times survey to complete that survey.
 - iv. Mr. Alter reported that Beall fifth graders are beginning the process of transiting to middle school.
 - v. Mr. Alter noted that vision and hearing screening will be conducted at school for all kindergartners, children new to MCPS, and certain other identified kids. Any parent who would like his or her child screened should contact the school office. Parents will be notified if the screening results note any red flags.
 - vi. Mr. Alter reported that the Pennies for Patients fundraiser currently is being conducted by the student government. February 24 is the deadline for turning in money.

b. Fundraising Report

- i. The Chipotle Dine-Out was the school's biggest ever. The next Dine-Out event is scheduled for February 11 at Giuseppe's and Ben & Jerry's.
- ii. Beall Elementary was the January recipient for Winter Quarter donations from Dawson's Market. The total amount of funds raised is not yet available.
- iii. The PTA is looking for someone to donate the prize for the March Madness Raffle.

c. Financial Report

- i. PTA President John McKirgan reviewed major components of the PTA's most recent Financial Report.
- ii. Mr. McKirgan offered thanks to all of the volunteers who worked on the Beall Science Expo. Mr. McKirgan noted that the event came in within its budgeted expense amount.
- iii. Mr. McKirgan noted that the final \$2000 budgeted for Bella's Wish list has been disbursed. Anyone with questions regarding the Financial Report should contact PTA Treasurer, Jon Walsh.

3. PTA Capital Improvements Committee

- a. John McKirgan reminded members that the PTA budgeted money early in the year to provide school with funds for capital improvements. A committee of parents and staff members met to discuss potential capital improvement projects.
- b. Mr. McKirgan showed a site map outlining a proposal for outdoor tables and benches that will serve kids after school, classroom teachers, and the community at large. The goal of the project will be to promote a park-like setting.
- c. Mr. McKirgan noted that the Capital Improvements Committee is working with Montgomery County Public Schools ("MCPS"), which would have to oversee installation of outdoor equipment funded by the PTA.
- d. Mr. Alter explained that there was quite a bit of interest in the idea of a fence for the upper playground, which would have taken up the bulk of the available PTA funds. Mr. Alter submitted a request for MCPS funding for a fence. He noted that the school district wants us to demonstrate that there is a safety hazard involved.

4. Unfinished Business and General Orders

a. MCPS Capital Improvement Budget

- i. Tida Violante informed PTA members that testimony regarding the MCPS Capital Improvement Budget will be heard at the County Council meeting on Thursday, February 6 at 7:00 p.m. The County Council makes the final budget decisions and disburses money. Ms. Violante noted that there is precedent for the County Council pulling out funding for "RMES #5," the fifth elementary school for the Richard Montgomery cluster. Beall families are encouraged to write to council members and to attend the meeting on February 6 to show strong support for our cluster and RMES #5.
 - ii. Ms. Violante explained that it is her understanding that the County Executive plans to ask the State of Maryland for additional money (\$700 million for FY 2015-20) for MCPS capital improvements. Baltimore City received extra money for their school construction last year. We need to demonstrate our need for extra funds to state legislators from other areas. One possible way to do that is to note that Maryland's high educational ranking is dependent in large part on MCPS student achievement. Beall parents are strongly encouraged parents to attend the rally in Annapolis on February 13 to lobby state legislators for additional funds for MCPS construction projects.
- b. Ms. Violante noted that it is our cluster's turn to host Board of Education members at an event on March 20. This opportunity occurs only once every four years. She encouraged parents to attend this meeting, where community members will have a chance to speak to talk to Board of Education members one-on-one.
- c. Multicultural Night is scheduled for February 21 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. This event takes place every-other year at Beall. An online Sign-up Genius is open for participants.
- d. The Dragon Men are holding a Skate Night event in Rockville Town Square. The first hundred people get in free, all others will be charged \$2.00. The Town Square Rink has capacity for 230 skaters. All PTA families and staff members are welcome to attend.
- e. The screening of "Race to Nowhere" was postponed due to weather and will be rescheduled. The new date has not yet been determined.
- f. Mr. Alter reported that orientation for incoming kindergarten students is scheduled for May 1 and 2 – two days this year instead of three. Current kindergarten students will not have school on those days. PTA Vice President for Communications, Sunny Hedgecock suggested coordinating PTA Directory information with incoming kindergarten registration information.

- g. A "Beyond the Bake Sale" group is forming to build partnership between schools and community. Ms. Hedgecock will resend the eblast asking for parent volunteers.

5. New Business

- a. PTA Board Nominating Committee - Volunteers are needed for the Nominating Committee for next year's PTA Board of Directors. The PTA Bylaws stipulate that a nominating committee must be formed to solicit volunteers to fill Board slots. Each Board member serves for a 1-year term, with a 2-year term limit. Tida Violante reviewed the roster of Board positions. PTA members were encouraged to participate on the Board and to recruit their friends to participate. Anyone who might be interested in volunteering for the Nominating Committee or a Board position should contact John McKirgan or any other current Board member. Nominations will be announced at the April PTA meeting.
- b. Global Child Care will be conducting summer camp at Beall. The dates have not yet been finalized. Brochures will be available soon.

A motion was entered to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Gorant

Secretary, Beall PTA Board of Directors