

September 2019 Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at 6:30 PM in the Dr. Skarbek Library at Relay Elementary School

Attendance: Jossie Flor Sapunar (notetaker), Yung Hunter, Heather Agler Roth, Emily Mullinix, Brian Gunn, Ms. Chara Pitarra, Dayana Bergman (parent advocate, special education advocacy, fourth grader Ashton), Aubrey Young (daughter Joan Y.), Amanda White (daughter May White), Melodie Smith (Andrew Smith 1st grade)

Not present: there was no teacher representative. No teacher report given.

Welcome and Introductions

Each person went around the room and introduced themselves to the group.

Dayana Bergman mentioned the following in her introduction: She is working on a community beautification project - the schools that filter into Lansdowne High School can participate - project to paint inspirational messages into parks ready to go in the spring - high school students to design their own message to replicate it and go around the local parks - starting off with Hillcrest Park - link together with other orgs to beautify the sites - with Jill Savage (community school liaison coordinator at Lansdowne High School) - more information coming soon.

Mandy White - daughter in kindergarten

Aubrey - kindergartener Joan in Ms. Blood's class

- **PTA Meetings this year**

First Tuesday of every month. Held at 6:30 in the Relay library.

- **Working Meetings/Event Planning Meetings**

Third Wednesday of the month - Working Meetings are a time to plan upcoming events. Like the November Working Meeting will help plan the International Festival held on January 22. Held at 6:30 in the Relay library.

Treasurer's Report

- **New Items to the budget**

Treasurer's budget will be presented once it is complete at the PTA meeting in October

New four tables for the open rooftop space - paid for completely by Relay PTA

Sponsoring fifth grade committee at a higher rate from Relay PTA budget

Stocking the nurse's suite - purchase clothes according to size for children whose clothes are soiled for any reason

Question: why not accept donations for the nurse's suite? We've tried. We are short on support to sort/organize clothes and in the end, the PTA and others just end up buying the supplies anyway. Now, we are being intentional about buying supplies.

Field trip budget will also be expanded.

Fundraising

- **Yankee Candle is the fall fundraiser.**

Selling Yankee Candle has always been our most successful, profitable fundraiser. The Relay PTA has a big operating budget where we spend more than \$20K, there's more in the bank, which we're trying to use/save for big purchases, like when the PTA purchased the rooftop tables for the school. If we do well with the Yankee Candle, then we may not do a spring fundraiser such as candy bars.

There is a packet and an online option. The flyer explains how to use the digital purchase option, which offers faster delivery straight to your home for orders larger than \$75, text messages, and better sales (like \$5 wrapping paper on clearance).

40% of all purchases go back to the Relay PTA. So when you're spending lots of money for wrapping paper, remember how much \$\$ helps the PTA.

Parents/guardians who have not received the Yankee Candle packet can email the Relay PTA for a packet at relaypta@gmail.com

Yankee Candle orders - no tax - Relay PTA is a 501C3. Teachers want to know if they can participate in the prizes. They can earn prizes just like the students.

Question asked about buying children's art for a fundraiser: Artsonia is a program run in the past where art teachers scan in a child's artwork and parents can purchase artwork on the digital platform. Proceeds go to the art program. Not all parents' children got their artwork scanned in, though some did. The PTA will check with the art teacher to see if they will do it this year. This is not a PTA program.

- **Chick-fil-a Nights**

Second Monday of the month. Start in October. Please go to the Lansdowne Chick-fil-a for dinner and mention that you're there for the fundraiser. A portion of proceeds go to the Relay PTA.

- **Other restaurants to be more inclusive**

To be more allergen friendly and inclusive, we are looking into other restaurants. Jossie will organize at least one Chipotle night. McDonalds and Peace a Pizza were also brought up.

- **Spirit Wear (5th Grade Committee)**

Closes September 22. Link for purchases:

https://relayelementary19.itemorder.com/sale?read_message=true&fbclid=IwAR0ry6a2JhdWOMfN1a0kqWEQrEWf_WFpvG_1ZE9VFKPPGxFcOfdTnc1d4

Purchase Relay-branded clothes and other gear for children and adults. Proceeds help the Fifth Grade Committee and the activities they lead for fifth grade students.

Upcoming Events

- **Kindergarten Meet and Greet**

October 7 6:30-8 pm: kindergarten meet and greet at the Arbutus Library. Librarian reads a book to the kids in the room. Relay PTA provides a snack. Librarians explains that the student ID provides students with a library card - with no late fees. Kid gives the librarian their name and they can check out five books with no late fees. Up to five renewals.

A parent, Brian, said that CCBC Catonsville offers free planetarium shows, just need a bus to get there. Speak to Angie, administrative assistant for physical sciences. Ms. Pitarra will look into Star Labs.

- **Trunk or Treat**

Thursday, October 24: we need volunteers to help organize it and put it together. We also need people to decorate cars and hand out candy. We usually have games, which we also need volunteers for. Middle schoolers can get volunteer hours and sign up with the Sign Up Genius platform, which will be emailed out. Open to Relay students and families. Trunk or treat is free.

- **Book Fair**

November 18-22:

No school on the 22nd because there are parent conferences. Ms. Wymer left it up to us if we wanted to open book fair. Four people said it was a good idea to keep the book fair open.

Wednesday night book fair is open.

- **American Education Week**

November 18-22

Administration Update

Ms. Pitarra: thank you everyone for coming. Author Tyler Nobleman comes on September 23.

Picture Day is October 8. Info will be coming home.

Administration will start MAP testing for grades 1-5. Grade 3 starts tomorrow Sept 19-20; Grade 5 23-24, G4 24-27.

MAP G1 and G2: we aren't one-to-one. There are only six computers in K, 1,2 classrooms. Will need to combine computers, get from older kids, etc. BCPS evaluates how much kids grow, so administration will try to get that in right away. G1&2 will be tested after the other grades.

Last year there were issues about testing, some kids didn't get to test in the fall. Working to avoid that this year..

Ms. P wants students to take it seriously. Test features an alert to teachers if student goes too fast, for example. Teachers are setting goals with students to help grow students. A lot of resources in the room to make a positive test environment.

Countywide the data is flat for PARCC - data went down for Relay in mathematics, down with reading. The data for the kids should be better because we have amazing kids. We have implemented a lot of extra resources - math resource teacher, two reading specialists, new IEP chair Ms. Heather Shipley (behavior specialist last year), which frees up Ms. Pitarra to be in the classroom helping teachers. It's been good so far.

Question: does the administration look at red flags?

Answer: MAP shows us if they know the skill. We can't wait until we get to third grade to have these type of tests - it has to start in kindergarten.

MCAP this year, not PARCC. Slightly shorter - 40 minute testing session. Fewer questions, so they're worth more.

660 students are enrolled in the school year. Relay enrollment last year was above 700, and enrollment is lower than last year.

Eco-explorer starts tomorrow. Ms. Pitarra hasn't received a list of students confirmed for this club and will reach out to the coordinator for more info.

Teacher Update

Who will be the teacher rep this year? No report as no teacher representative present.

5th Grade Committee Update

Emily Mullinix: first meeting is next Tuesday, September 24. Spirit Wear due Sunday night, September 22 by midnight. Fifth grade parents are welcome to join.

New Business

- **Class Parents/Classroom Champion**

A resource for the teacher to help the teacher.

Communicate with other parent/guardians and coordinate volunteer activities in the classroom or grade

- Opt-in Directory - Mr. Barnett supports the idea. We are looking into it for this year. Connect Ed, phone call, even a google form, to gather submissions. Some teachers currently provide a class list if parents agree.
- Recipe book as a fundraiser idea - gather recipes at International Festival and make a book over the summer. Ms. Pitarra can bring in the recipe book for the next PTA meeting. Jossie leads international festival.
- **Other**

International Festival - Dayana shared that her old PTA/old group charged for food trucks for parking spaces, food trucks have samples

Ways to message the Relay PTA: FB Messenger, email, note to school in mailbox

Q: Have we have a representative to participate in the Baltimore County PTA? No. Not in the eight years Heather has participated. Dayana Bergman is available to attend and volunteered to do so. When the legislative session starts in Annapolis, we as the Relay PTA can advocate for certain issues. The PTA wants you to be aware of policy at the state-level and encourages your attendance at the local meetings beforehand.

We should communicate that children can come to the PTA meeting. Children are welcome.

Jossie to put together a survey for parents to help understand barriers to participating in and joining the Relay PTA. 'Bring a friend - get a prize' idea was suggested.

Mindfulness Night - April 1 6:30 pm.

Dr. Seuss Day - read across America

STREAM Night – March

Meeting was adjourned.

Next PTA Meeting: October 1, 2019 at 6:30 pm in the library

Upcoming PTA Events

September: Yankee Candle, Spirit Wear

October: Kindergarten Meet and Greet, Trunk-or-Treat

November: American Education Week

December:

January: International Night

February:

March: Basket Bingo (TBD)

April:

May: Teacher Appreciation Week

June: End-of-Year Dance