

RCV PTA minutes
10/1/19
APPROVED

Rachel (President) called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year and made introductions.

Mr. Burns began the meeting with the Principal's report. He mentioned RCV is fully staffed now and is able to keep the 3rd kindergarten teacher. We currently have a total of about 430 students enrolled. The school is encouraging qualifying families to fill out the form for Free or Reduced Price Meals (FARMS) – qualifying students receive free or reduced-price meals, and the overall percentage of students in the FARMS program affects how many resources our school gets (more FARMS = more support). The percentage of RCV students in the FARMS program decreased from about 34-35% to 28% last year.

Math, reading, and phonics assessments are taking place for kindergartners.

Mr. Burns also touched base on the graffiti. The culprit has been identified and he is working with the family. He confirmed that it is **not** gang-related as some of the community has expressed concern about.

Columbus Day (10/14) is parent visitation day – drop in to visit your child's classroom anytime throughout the day. Mr. Burns reminded us that parents are always welcome to visit (not limited to 10/14), but it is suggested to give the teacher a heads up if planning to visit or help on other days.

A notice went home for child abuse training. **All field trip chaperones** and anyone who routinely volunteers during the school day **must** complete the online child abuse course at least once every 3 years. MCPS employees do **not** need to complete the training (since it's already covered as part of their job), and certain types of government employees may be exempt from background checks and/or fingerprinting. Volunteers who want to help with one-time events (such as classroom parties or career day) are encouraged (but not required) to complete the online child abuse course.

Mrs. Davies, the new counselor at RCV was introduced and gave an overview of the Kindness Counts program. She advised that last year, RCV 5th graders were asked what was of value to them, and they repeatedly stressed the importance of kindness. Based on this and research that shows that being kind increases well-being, the Instructional Leadership Team decided to focus the Peace Program on the idea of Kindness Counts:

- 4 central pillars - Kindness to Self, Others, Community, and World.
- Quarterly peace assemblies
- School-wide quarterly events
- Classroom activities/lessons
- Guidance lessons with focus on pillars
- Daily kindness quotes during morning announcements
- Deliberate focus on common language by all staff.

Mr. Burns pointed out that all the staff are wearing pictures of hearts around their necks as a visual reminder to be kind to others and themselves. Instead of talking at students, they are facilitating to help them move forward.

Trisha Armstrong (Treasurer) gave the treasurer report and presented the 2019-20 budget for discussion. A question was raised of the cost of the 4th grade writing workshops, which amounts to about ¼ of the total cultural arts assemblies budget being spent on just one grade. Rachel made a motion to create a new line item of \$1,000 (out of deficit) for 4th grade workshops. This motion was seconded, voted on and approved.

The teacher Wish Wall was discussed. The PTA is also reimbursing each teacher up to \$50 for classroom back to school expenses, and mini-grant applications are being collected for review at the November meeting.

Remember to set your Amazon Smile account to benefit "Rock Creek Valley Elementary PTA". You can shop Amazon Smile a few ways: 1) use the link posted on the PTA website or 2) from any Amazon webpage, just replace "www" with "smile".

Trisha reported that the 2018-19 audit was performed by Ray Hodges, Jeremy Smyth, and Bill Watkins and no issues were found. Rachel reviewed the audit and if anyone would like to see it they are more than welcome to look at it. Crystal made a motion to approve the audit report. This motion was seconded, voted on and approved. Trisha will submit the audit report to the Maryland PTA.

Crystal (Social Activities) discussed Family Fun Night on October 16th, which coincides with the Book Fair. Enrichment programs also start next week, except for STEM After School Academy which was cancelled due to low enrollment. 7 of the 11 enrichment programs met the minimum requirements and will be offering student scholarships as part of our partnership with Enrichment Matters.

Kaitlyn (Book Fair Coordinator) advised that the Book Fair starts next week- need helpers, during lunch break or whenever you can stay a little extra to help. A sign-up genius is posted on the PTA website and RCV Facebook page. Preview day is October 11th and 14th. This year there is an "e-wallet" option that will preauthorize an amount that will be linked to each child. Whatever is not used will go back to your account. So far, people have found it to be easy to use and recommend it as easier than sending in cash.

Michelle (Fundraising) gave an update on the Buy Nothing Sell Nothing fundraiser – the top 6 classes in no particular order are Miller, Ferrick, Berman, Connelly, Iraheta, and Zhu. While one class is far in the lead, the other 5 are very close and any amount donated could make a difference in tipping one over the other.

For Advocacy, Rachel mentioned that there will be a Safe Routes to School forum on October 19th (8:30AM-12:30PM) at Northwood High School. It's open to anyone who is interested in bus stop safety, sidewalk improvements, crosswalk safety, etc. Also, Vivian Byrd made a motion to approve the MCCPTA resolution to allow up to 3 excused absences per year for student civic engagement. This motion was seconded, voted on, and approved.

A motion to approve the June minutes was made by Trisha, seconded, voted on and approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00.