

RCV PTA Meeting Minutes: December 3, 2019

APPROVED

Rachel (President) called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. A motion to accept the minutes from November was made, seconded, voted on and approved.

Mr. Burns expressed appreciation for the pies donated by the community. He reported that the PEACE assemblies have been going well and are now focused on Kindness. More students are getting recognized at each event, with letters going home to parents ahead of time. The students responded positively to the self-affirmations effort, and these will be hung in the halls soon.

Report cards went home last month and RCV students as a body are now being measured on Science and Culture & Climate at a school level. MCAP assessments are looking at growth over time, and there is another measure looking at ESOL students and their growth. The school is currently rated as 4 stars out of 5 on these potential measures.

The RCV leadership team is meeting to discuss school environment, as well as community outreach (activities led by the school, separate from what the PTA already does). They are also looking into a parent survey in the future. Mr. Burns asked the PTA for feedback from the community about the kind of engagement they are looking for (coffee in the mornings? Grandparents Day? Information sessions?). The following is a summary of parent thoughts / ideas expressed during the discussion:

- Other schools have programs like Muffins with Mom, etc, and kids love it. It would be important to design it so that it would be inclusive of all family structures.
- Consider holding a Latino PTA meeting before the general PTA meeting (Wood MS did this with some success).
- Offer quarterly events at different times (morning vs. evening) for balanced opportunities.
- Could start by promoting that parents are welcome to visit at lunch hour to see what interest is there. Recommendation was made to target specific grades for lunch or other “unstructured times” to avoid having too many parents showing up all at once during the school day.
- Create a “veteran parent” mentorship for new parents coming into the school.
- Focus some of the events around a specific topic (like what’s happening in a specific grade, or activity) as opposed to a regular general meetup so parents can prioritize with busy schedules.

A question came up about the MCPS Boundary Assessment emails, and Mr. Burns noted that there will be a new high school built in the Seneca Valley district in the northern end of the county. It doesn’t appear that the RCV area will be affected by those shifts.

A concern from a parent was raised about a fallen tree that almost hit her house. The county let her know that there is no regular tree maintenance on school grounds, which is a concern with the ash-boring beetle in the area. RCV school administration does not have any autonomy to perform maintenance.

The FY2020-2021 MCPS calendar has not yet been approved. The choices were narrowed to 3 and the county has solicited community input. Attendance policies were discussed, and Mr. Burns noted that when students hit 10% absence rate (approx. 18 days), they are pulled onto a list and receive an automated letter from the school. Another letter and a phone call go out at 15% absence rate. For absences more than 15 consecutive days, the student is considered withdrawn from school, so families

are asked to communicate with the school when there are long trips. A question was raised about sick days—Mr. Burns indicated that parents should call the main office and then send in a note the following day or send an email to the office ([Carol A. Willems@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Carol_A_Willems@mcpsmd.org)) to count the absence as excused.

Mrs. Dingle mentioned the BeSMART program about gun safety, and a flyer will be coming home to families soon. There will be a table training event at Meadow Hall ES in January.

Rachel brought up the proposed Gun Safety Resolution from MCCPTA for input. Mr. Burns and Ms. Carr noted that RCV administration has already adopted some of the recommendations around language for safety drills.

Trisha (Treasurer) gave the treasurer report for November. The account currently has about \$2200 that is being considered for various spending projects.

Michelle (Fundraising) thanked Mr. Burns & Ms. Carr for being ice cream sundaes for the Buy Nothing Sell Nothing fundraiser. We're down a bit from last year's activity, and the point was raised that the \$25 price point might have prohibited folks from contributing more. Next year there was the suggestion to give the chance to sponsor an anonymous FARMs student.

The Villa Maya restaurant night fundraiser is coming up on Dec. 11, and MOD Pizza is in January.

Crystal (Social Activities) mentioned that the Family Dance is on Friday, with 2nd & 3rd grade families being asked to volunteer.

Rachel gave an update on the Reflections contest. Entries were displayed around the library at the meeting, and VisArts judges have selected 3 finalists from each of the K-2 and 3-5 divisions to move forward. Information will be sent home soon to all participants soon about how they'll be recognized. The PTA will make a donation to VISArts to thank them for helping judge the event.

Rachel opened the discussion of the Kirwan commission findings, which was a global study that determined the following key factors for student success:

- Add concentrated poverty weight to funding formula, increase funding for tutoring and other supplemental support services
- More advanced opportunities for students and alternate pathways for training
- Transform teaching into a high status profession through prep & certification, career ladder, and benchmarked salaries
- Invest in early childhood education, full-day school for 3 & 4 year olds, increase capacity of providers through private partnerships
- Rollout of programs would be governed by independent body to regulate funding and ensure effectiveness

Mr. Burns noted that RCV received money from the Kirwan Commission this year to have a paraeducator work on Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for reading skills, aka small groups. Rachel noted that there is still a funding gap to fully fund the pillars of the Kirwan Commission. The public needs to let legislators know that they expect support for the Commission, and Rachel shared postcards that parents can send in to their legislators.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.