

Minutes
Greenbelt Elementary School Parent & Teacher Association (PTA)
April 19, 2023
7 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting

- **Welcome and Introductions**

Jill Connor, President

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9629196956>
- Meeting ID: 962 919 6956
- Passcode: GESPTA

- **Introductions**

- **Approval of the March Minutes**

Eric McKenzie, Vice President

Corita Waters motions for approval. Seconded by Jessica O'Roark.

- 8 Ayes. 0 Nays. Minutes are approved.

- **PTA Board Nominations Committee**

Corita Waters and Jessica O'Roark

Corita notes that the committee is looking for candidates for next year's Board of Directors and she notes that the terms are only 1 year. There are two Board members returning, which will leave three slots open. The Committee is especially interested in parents of younger children, which will mean they can remain involved for longer and offer continuity of services.

- **Principal's Report**

Joel Nelson, Principal

- Principal Nelson thanks the PTA for all of its support and confirms it would be nice to have continuity
 - There has been several field trips, including to the Greenbelt Theatre and to a local farm. Mr. Nelson hopes that the school can get back up to a full regular schedule of field trips next year.
 - The MCAP testing has begun for 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. The schools' full focus is on that right now. In early to mid-May an email notification will go out about end-of-the-year celebrations that are being planned.
- Recorded presentation from Mr. Nelson about the results of the Maryland Schools Report Card for the 2021-2022 school year.

Q: Alex Barnes: Can you talk more about the enrichment programs being offered at the school?

A: There are after-school enrichment programs of all types, Mr. Nelson notes. Testing coordinator Ms. Jasmine Giddings states that there are specialized strategies being implemented for TAG students. Ms. Abuelito states that special interest projects are offered to the children to help them refine research skills.

Q: Alex Barnes: But how do these help improve the Report Card scores?

As: Kristen Hodge-Clark talks about programs her child has benefitted from, including Book Nook tutoring, which was advertised through teacher newsletters. She says she has also gained support for extra help by reaching out to teachers directly. Ms. Giddings also states that TAG students are supported in preparing for state testing.

Q/C: Brooke Kenny encourages all parents to look up the school's report card scores and consider the results. Some of the most concerning statistics are that only 20 percent of GES students are proficient in math and when you break that down further, only 12 percent of black or African American students are proficient in mathematics. It seems concerning and that there are a few options available for students to get help, but she would like to know more about whether the school is concerned about this or has a plan to address it.

A: Ms. Giddings states that the school has been intentional about skill building and about identifying where weaknesses are. The low test scores are also a district-wide issue, not just a GES issue. Mr. Nelson points out that it's important to put this all in perspective. He states that the school has work to do but that it has made a lot of progress this year and that it is excited to show its growth.

GAVA Report

Ingrid Cowan Hass

Ingrid spoke about the various art classes that she has arranged for each grade that have been completed or are in process.

Pre-K and K: The Apple Tree

1st Grade: Butterfly Wonder

2nd Grade: Dance Program

3rd Grade: Anansi and the Talking Melon

4th Grade: TBD

5th Grade: Rainbow Crow

Treasurer's Report

Sarah West

- o Sarah shows current detailed financial information. The PTA currently has \$24,695 in the bank.

- o Teacher requests are beginning to come in for items needed for the classroom. If you would like something for your classroom, please reach out.
- o We have an upcoming fundraiser at Franklin's on Tuesday, April 25. A flyer is circulating about this and the restaurant is offering a percentage of each purchase all day and evening, but you must ask for it.

- **Advocacy Committee Update**

Eric McKenzie

- o Eric researched state level legislative bills that were introduced this year
- o Silva Wells looked into Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training programs offered to school staff and found that there are several
- o Brooke Kenny researched Maryland School Report Card ratings and score results and presented the findings to the PTA. This led to an inquiry about the test results that was discussed earlier in the meeting.
- o Kristen Hodge-Clark is working on identifying the ways in which students are chosen for TAG programming.
- o Henrique Barbosa is working on a parent survey to get an idea of what parents think about the language offerings at GES.

- **Vice President's Report**

Kristen Hodge-Clark

- o On March 30, a business basics assembly was held for 4th and 5th grade students in preparation for the upcoming Entrepreneurship Fair. Bee Fusion Yoga owner Gretchen Schock gave an engaging and informative presentation. Kristen and Jill were able to raffle off a few gift cards that students can use as seed funding for their business ideas.
- o The deadline for applying to participate in the Fair has been extended to April 29. The application form is short and simple and should be intimidating.
- o Ms. Shock will be returning the 1st week of May to continue to work with the kids on building out their ideas.
- o The final PTA meeting of the year will be held May 31 and will feature a presentation by Ms. Peter, the school TAG coordinator.

- **President's Report**

Jill Connor

- o A school planting project will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday May 6. A flyer has been circulated. The kids will join with parents and neighbors to improve the pollinator garden in front of the school and to work on a storm water management garden directly across the street from the school.
- o The Spring Fair will be held from 1-4 p.m. on Saturday, May 13. There will be many attractions including the Entrepreneurship Fair, food, games, music, public works and police vehicles and informational booths for various community organizations.
- o There is also a question and answer session for 5th graders about the transition to local middle schools. 6th graders will be present to answer student and family questions about their school experiences. That event will be held Monday, April 24th from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the school Media Center/Library. It will also be on Zoom.

Jill asks if there are any questions, and with there being none, she reminds everyone that the final meeting of the year will be hybrid and will begin at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 31.

Meeting Adjourns.

2022-2023 Board Members

Jill Connor, President

Eric McKenzie, Vice President

Kristen Hodge-Park, Vice President

Sarah West, Treasurer

Brooke Kenny, Secretary