

PTA Meeting Minutes

Longfellow Elementary School (LoES) PTA

Date	Thursday, October 1, 2026
Scheduled Time	7:00–8:30 pm
Format	Hybrid (online meeting link at www.loespta.com)
Attendance	12 members present

Call to Order and Welcome

Opening Recognitions

- Hispanic Heritage Month: September 15–October 15
- Custodial Appreciation Day: October 2
- Principal Appreciation Month: October 1–31

Section 1: Follow-Up from Previous Meeting

The PTA vision and mission update will be presented at the November meeting.

Section 2: Reports and Business

Quorum and Approval of September Minutes

Twelve members were present.

Approval of September Meeting Minutes

Motion: Approve the September meeting minutes.

Moved by Margot Celano; seconded by Derek Winkler

Result: Approved unanimously.

School Administration and Community Updates

Administration Update

Ms. Beaman thanked the PTA for the apple-themed staff treats and encouraged families to attend the annual Title I meeting on Thursday, October 8, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at LoES to learn how funds are allocated.

Ms. Beaman also reported that many lost-and-found items do not have student names. Families will be encouraged through the school newsletter to claim belongings. Unclaimed items will periodically be placed in the yellow clothing donation bin near the parking lot and recess field.

Health Room Needs from Ms. Vilnit

- Gently used size 5 and 6 pants and shorts (gender-neutral or boys' clothing only)
- New, unopened boys' underwear in sizes 5–8

- Donations may be delivered to the office or sent in a backpack labeled “Health Room Donations.”
- Reminders:
 - Pre-K and kindergarten families should keep extra clothing in cubbies.
 - Older students may keep extra clothing in backpacks as needed.

Clothing Bin by the Recess Field

Donations of clothing and shoes to the yellow bin generate funds for LoES.

Parent Teacher Association Council of Howard County (PTACHC) Updates and Advocacy

Opportunities for Parent Involvement

- **PTACHC emphasized the need for more parent volunteers. Participation in budget and legislative committees is not limited to LoES delegates Jocinda Johnson and Faith Hammock.**

Members may support advocacy, budget, legislative, and technology initiatives, even if available for only part of the school year.

Technology, Screen Time, and AI

- Technology-related advocacy priorities include more intentional screen-time use, stronger artificial intelligence (AI) guidelines, and continued access to nondigital learning materials and assignment options.

Superintendent’s Remarks

- Superintendent Barnes emphasized parent and community involvement, transparency, and keeping students at the center of organizational priorities. He encouraged PTAs to share school successes and challenges and to use Board of Education public-comment opportunities to advocate for school needs.

Treasurer’s Report

Year-to-Date Financial Summary

Category	YTD Income	YTD Expenses
Operations	\$ 1,225.00	\$ (627.92)
Fundraising	\$ 1,020.36	
Recognitions & Hospitality		\$ (472.41)
Community Events		\$ (164.50)
PTA Events		
Student Enrichment Activities		
Community Grants		
Grade/Department Allotments		
Total	\$ 2,245.36	\$ (1,264.83)

Membership Dues Distribution

Membership	\$ 15.00
------------	----------

Givebacks Fee	\$ (1.54)
Free State PTA	\$ (2.00)
National PTA	\$ (3.25)
Total	\$ 8.21

For a standard \$15 membership, \$1.54 covers the Givebacks fee, \$2.00 goes to Free State PTA, and \$3.25 goes to National PTA; \$8.21 remains. Individuals in need may pay \$10 in cash rather than \$15.

Membership Votes

1. 2025–26 Financial Review

Derek Winkler, Brandon Glass, and Sung Hwa Bessell reviewed the 2025–26 financial records and approved the financial review submission in August 2026. The review was uploaded to Givebacks, a PTA compliance platform.

Motion: Approve the 2025–26 financial review.

Moved by Christelle Viauroux; seconded by Alexis Helsel

Result: Approved unanimously.

2. Electronic Payment Methods (Zelle, PayPal)

Members considered authorizing the PTA to send and receive funds through electronic payment methods, including Zelle and PayPal. During discussion, Venmo was described as unsuitable for the PTAs because the platform does not allow users to create business accounts.

Motion: Approve the use of Zelle and PayPal for electronic payments.

Moved by Derek Winkler; seconded by Margot Celano

Result: Approved unanimously.

Section 3: Participation, Events, and Announcements

I. Participation and Volunteer Opportunities

- Membership goal: at least 100 members by October 30. Membership stood at 85 as of September 30. Members were encouraged to join and invite others.
- **Membership and Staff Hospitality**
 - Marguerite Osei-Wusu was introduced as Hospitality Chair.
 - Members were thanked for supporting September’s apple-themed staff hospitality.
 - Thursday, October 22: “Thanks a Latte!” staff hospitality. Members were invited to contribute; a SignUpGenius link will be shared.
 - Monday, November 23: “We Are Thankful for You” dinner during parent-teacher conferences. Volunteers will be needed for setup, cleanup, and for donating several items; a SignUpGenius link will be shared.
- **Fundraising**
 - The PTA is seeking a Fundraising Chair for the Board of Directors. Interested members may email loesptainfo@gmail.com.
 - Restaurant Nights: MOD Pizza is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10.
 - The September 29 Chipotle fundraiser raised \$264.55.
 - [1st Place Spiritwear](#)

- Amazing Athletes offers rolling admissions and scholarships; a percentage of admissions benefits the PTA.
 - Spirit League Soccer
 - Spirit League Flag Football
 - Spirit League Basketball
- Direct donations from community organizations and individuals were discussed. Harper's Choice Community Association donated \$750 this year.
- Corporate Donations
- National PTA and local grant opportunities were discussed, including arts and mental health grants. A member noted that, if awarded, related projects would need to be implemented between January and the end of the year.
- Vendors/Partnerships: 1st Place Spiritwear, Amazing Athletes
- Read-a-Thon: the PTA's largest fundraiser; donation-driven and anticipated for mid-January through mid-February.
- Soccer Tournament
- Golf Tournament

II. Events, Committees, and Reminders

- Monthly PTA meetings are held on the first Thursday, alternating between in-person and online formats.
- Major Community Events
 - Back to School Bash — food trucks, lawn games, and a bring-your-own picnic
 - **Fall Fest — Friday, October 30: trunk-or-treat and chili cookout. Volunteer opportunities include:**
 - Chili makers
 - Trunk hosts
 - Food servers

Members were encouraged to identify school groups or local businesses interested in hosting trunks or donating candy or food.
 - Winter Wonderland — DJ dance party, crafts, cookies, and The Miracle on Hesperus Drive
 - Culture Con — participant-led celebration of cultures with informational tables, food, and giveaways
 - Spring Fair — performances, raffles, carnival-style games, and a cake walk
- Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, and AAPI intercultural showcases were also noted.
- Committees and Working Groups
 - Committee information will be shared by email, on the PTA website, and at future meetings as groups are formed.
 - The goal is to schedule committee calls for the remainder of the school year by November.
 - Additional information will be shared as working groups are formed.

III. Community Announcements

- **Announcements from the Community**
 - Cub Scouts Pack 61 meets on the third Thursday of each month, usually at Longfellow or Bryant Woods Elementary. Its **October 15** outing to a local tree farm will include a hayride, pumpkin

picking, camp songs, hot chocolate, and s'mores. Contact information for interested families appears on the flyer shared after the meeting.

- **Martin Luther King Jr. Poster Contest**
 - See the LoES newsletter for details
 - Submissions are due October 30, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern.
- **Health and Wellness Fair for Men and Boys**
 - November 21, 10:00 a.m.–noon
 - Harriet Tubman Cultural Center

Meeting Feedback

Members were encouraged to complete the “PTA Meeting Feedback and Follow-Up Request” exit survey.

Additional Comments and Questions

School Spirit Weeks

- Bullying Prevention Month Spirit Week will be held October 19–23, with themes designed around items families likely already have.
- Administration will announce school spirit weeks with as much notice as possible.

Redistricting

- Positive feedback has been received by families who transferred from Bryant Woods Elementary.
- School staff is making effective use of existing space to accommodate its full student roster.

House Celebrations

- Kindergarten students were assigned houses on Wednesday.
- The first celebration is planned for the following month.

Assigned Seating in the Cafeteria

- Assigned seating is not used in all grade levels during lunch.
- Some grades use assigned seating to support behavioral challenges and to provide structure for grades that need it.
- Students may earn open seating through positive behavior, including disposing of trash and following adult directions.

Meeting Closed at 8:04pm