

Minutes
Greenbelt Elementary School Parent & Teacher Association (PTA)
December 7, 2022
7 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting

- **Welcome and Introductions**

Jill Connor, President

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82215758832>
- Meeting ID: 822 1575 832
- Passcode: GESPTA

- *Jill Connor states that Becky Fulcher, PTA Board Vice President, has resigned from her position due to an imminent out-of-state move. Prior to the meeting, the remaining PTA Board members voted to install Kristen Hodge-Park as Becky's replacement.*

- **Approval of the November 2022 Minutes**

Eric McKenzie, Vice President

Jessica O'Roark motions for approval. Seconded by Sarah West.

- 13 Ayes. 0 Nays. Minutes are approved.
 - *Jill Connor reminds attendees that there is a way to reach the PTA through the school website and encourages people to contact us with any questions they may have.*

- **Principal's Report**

Joel Nelson, Principal

- December 2 the school held its first quarter honor roll assembly. It was the first time in a number of years that parents have been permitted to attend an event in the building.
 - The school completed the Benchmark 1, an early test that leads up to the state assessment test. GES outperformed other schools in the cluster and the county.
 - Upcoming special events include Gradparents Day, the Scholastic Book Fair, 3rd Grade Polar Express movie day and SGA sock drive.
 - Corita Water states that it was wonderful to be back in the school auditorium and that it was wonderful to see faces again. She asked if it would be possible to have a PTA fliers available at the next in-person event for parents. Ellie Twedt states that there are still fliers left in the PTA closet. Various PTA members agreed that those should be made available at the next in-person parent event. Jill Connor states that the PTA is only 4 members shy of this year's membership goal.

- **Treasurer's Report**

Sarah West, Treasurer

- Sarah shows current detailed financial information. She says this information is always available to the public and that the PTA Board is always happy to answer any questions.
 - The PTA is in the black with more than \$22,000. Expenses are good at this point, with the PTA having spent \$4,400 so far this year.
 - Details of how Principal Gaines spent the nearly \$5,000 the PTA provided were presented.

President's Report

Jill Connor, President

- o The PTA is still seeking volunteers for the Board Nominating Committee. There are some very involved PTA members who will be moving on next year due to their children entering middle school. Please let us know if anyone is interested.
- o Librarian Ms. Polston briefly mentions the upcoming Scholastic Book Fair and states that she does not need any more volunteers for that event. Parent Valentina Aquila asks what the book fair is, exactly. Valentina has signed up to volunteer but would like to know more about how it works. Ms. Polston states that classes come through and volunteers help kids pick out books and get their money ready while Ms. Polston works the register. Ms. Polston states that there will be Family Night at the Book Fair, which will be the same night as Grandparents Night. At that time, families can come together to shop for books. Kristen Hodge-Clark asks whether there has ever been an opportunity for parents to donate extra money to the book fair. Ms. Polston says parents have given extra in the past, but that this year the school has a lot of Scholastic money to help cover the cost of books for kids who do not bring in money. Also, this year, there will be teacher wish lists that parents can donate to. The lists will be posted in the library and teachers will circulate information about giving money through e-wallet.
- o Jill talks about the teacher and staff appreciation committee, stating that Jessica O'Roark is working on a gift card solicitation sheet, where parents can sign up to bring in \$10 gift cards for teachers to a store or restaurant. She will circulate a signup genius sheet in the coming days. Jessica can pick up the gift cards or people can donate through PayPal. Brianne Boylan asks if there is a way we can do gift cards for more than \$10. The PTA members seem amenable to the idea of \$15 instead, especially considering rising prices. Jill points out that would only be about an extra \$300. Ellie Twedt notes that prior to COVID there was a secure drop box in the school where parents could drop off gift cards. Jill states that the PTA will work on details of teacher appreciation efforts and circulate the information soon.
- o Jill gives updates on events the PTA has taken part in.
 - o The PTA purchased pumpkins and food for the Men Make a Difference event in October.
 - o The PTA also provided bins filled with non-perishable food items from money provided through the Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Education. That will be an ongoing resource for students in the school provided through Ms. Hudson.
 - o The PTA sponsored Walk to School Day.
 - o The PTA will also cater a special Principal's Honor Roll Luncheon that will take place in the next month or two.
 - o The PTA will have a booth at Winter Wonderland, an event put on by Venture Crew 746.

- **Request for volunteer support from PTA**

Ayla Slonaker, Teacher

Lynn Orrin, School Neighbor

Catherine, School Neighbor

- o A plan was presented to revitalize a patch of land directly across the school on GHI property. Lynn Orrin is applying for a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to plant native landscaping so that the land can better absorb rainwater. They are looking for a few GES families to commit to helping plant in the Spring. Specifically, they would like letters of commitment. They are not requesting any funds.

- o The PTA members gave positive feedback and agreed to get a few families to sign letters of commitment to help with this project.

Q & A

- Ellie Twedt says there was concern prior to Covid about how many sweets the kids were being offered at school. After some discussion, it was determined that a source of many of those sweets was birthday treats brought by families. Ms. Stagg explains that families may now bring treats, but with the following stipulations:
 - o They must be store bought and healthy
 - o Parents must coordinate with teachers from drop-off of goodies
 - o They must be individually wrapped
 - o Students must take the item home rather than enjoy it at school
 - o Non-food gifts like pencils are permitted
- Alex Barnes asks Ms. Stagg when parents will regularly be able to enter the school again. Ms. Stagg says they are slowly phasing parent entrance back in and that she will let Principal Nelson know that the PTA would like to discuss it further at the next meeting.
- Corita Waters asks Ms. Stagg when field trips will return. Ms. Slonaker says that parents can help the process along by getting fingerprinted and approved to be chaperones. Ms. Stagg states that there is a new system in the process of being implemented to get registered to be a chaperone. There is also a new system being implemented for schools to apply to the county for approval of field trips, and this is part of the delay in getting them started again. Jill Connor states that we will get the updated fingerprinting process information and circulate it at the next meeting.
- Kristen Hodge-Clark asks if Grandparents Day is only taking place in the evening this year. Ms. Stagg confirms that it is evening only and will be held from 5-7 p.m.

Jill Connor states that the next meeting will be held February 8 (not Feb. 1) and that it will also be hybrid. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

2022-2023 Board Members

Jill Connor, President

Eric McKenzie, Vice President

Rebecca Fulcher, Vice President (outgoing)

Kristen Hodge-Park, Vice President (incoming)

Sarah West, Treasurer

Brooke Kenny, Secretary