

Bells Mill Elementary School (BMES) Second PTA Meeting on 11/5/13

BMES Media Center

The second BMES PTA meeting was called to order by PTA President, Mandy Lemar, at 7:00 p.m. at Bells Mill Elementary School. The Following PTA Board Members were present: Mandy Lemar, President, Stacy Ganz Kahn, President-Elect, Kakki Lewis, Vice President of Student Affairs, Cristin Caine, Vice President of Fund Raising, Lang Lin, Delegate, Diana Gallagher, Delegate, and RobBee Fredricks, Secretary.

Ms. Lemar thanked Amy Stolker, Directory Chairwoman, and Kurt Shanfield, Membership Chairwoman, for all of their hard work in distributing the PTA Directories. Only PTA members will receive directories. Ms. Lemar also thanked Cristin Caine for a successful Walk for the Homeless, which raised over \$3,700 for the Stepping Stones Shelter. She further thanked Cathy Cardno and Kysha Pierre-Louise, Club Bells Mill Chairwomen, for a great, first Club Bells Mill this past October.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mandy Lemar presented for Kurt Shanfield, Treasurer, in her absence. The Book Fair was a great success. The Media Center and BMES staff will have \$7,500 in Scholastic Bucks to spend. Spirit Wear sales broke even, which was the goal since it was not a fundraiser. The Amazon portal has given \$115 to the PTA. Please use the portal when entering the Amazon website. The portal can be found on the bellsmill.org website under the Get Involved Tab and then click on Earn while you Shop.

PTA revenues are \$1,500 over budget, but the payment from A to Z Directories (our directory provider) still needs to be made. Please remember to tell vendors that you saw their advertisements in these directories. Club Bells Mill is on target to meet its annual budget of breaking even. The PTA has provided an Enrichment Scholarship from the Kids in Need. As of now, the PTA has only spent about 11% of the budget expenditures.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Ms. Lemar also reported on behalf of Kurt Shanfield, Membership Chairwoman, that there are currently 690 PTA members thus far. This is a 29% increase from last year, or 156 more members than last year.

FUNDRAISING REPORT: Cristin Caine, Fundraising Chairwoman, reported that the PTA started the year with a budget surplus, and that it was left untouched to use as a cushion in case the direct appeal campaign did not work. The combined surplus (including excess funds raised this year) is now being re-invested back into the school community with events such as a "Fun-Raiser" Math Night scheduled for this winter. Anybody who wants to get involved in planning this should contact Cristin, cristin.caine@gmail.com. The PTA membership will vote on other proposed ways to spend the remaining surplus at the next meeting.

MCCPTA DELEGATE REPORT: Lang Lin reported on the MCCPTA (Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations) Delegate Assembly. Mr. Lin explained three items discussed at the meeting: Standing Rules for building up and debating MCCPTA positions, the Capital Improvement Program to fund each school, and the Operational Budget. In addition, Mr. Lin reported that Friday, November 8th is the date applications are due for 3rd graders applying to the Highly Gifted Center and 5th graders applying to Magnet School Programs. December 16th is the date for the Bell Time Changes Forum at Richard Montgomery High School (the proposal for adding 30 minutes onto Elementary School day, delaying the start time of the High School day, and postponing the start time of the Middle School day).

PARENTS RESOURCE GROUP: Special Needs Chairwoman, Diana Gallagher, introduced this new resource group. The idea for this resource group is for parents to discuss concerns, hear about community updates, learn about support groups for both students and parents, listen to guest speakers, etc. Ms. Gallagher will also have an opportunity to report back to the county with the group's concerns. This group will meet monthly, with the first meeting occurring on 11/14/13 from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Media Center.

SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT: Leslie Kenna, Safety Committee Chairwoman, reported on follow up information from last month's meeting regarding busing issues. Ms. Kenna called and spoke to Hazel Greg, Transportation Cluster Manager for the Churchill Cluster. Ms. Greg encouraged parents to remain calm and wait 10 to 15 minutes before calling the dispatch office at 301-469-1140, if your child's bus is late. The office can reach the driver by 2-way radio. There is no policy about driving in bad weather. Schools will make the decision to hold buses or drivers might pull over, if necessary. There are no seat belts on the buses because they found 35 years ago that they could only ask kids, not make kids, wear them. Buses are now designed in an egg crate fashion, with seats higher and closer together to hold the kids in.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: Mr. Meiners, Acting Principal, reported that Mrs. Oglesby has extended her medical leave. She will be back the week of Thanksgiving. He is really enjoying his time at BMES, and is impressed with the many, popular after school activities that are offered.

The salad bar is now available to all grades except for Kindergarten. The three walks at BMES have all been successful (the Walk for Homeless, Walk to School Day, and the Halloween Parade). Mrs. Vinson, music teacher, had her last day today because she will be having a baby in two days. A substitute teacher, who has been at BMES before, will be subbing for her. We welcome Jennifer Han, the new art teacher, who is taking Mrs. Kirby's place.

This year's staff development focus will be on small group instruction, especially in the area of math. This effort is to challenge children where they need to be challenged. This morning's staff meeting discussed ways to effectively give feedback to students to help them reach their goals. For example, praise that is not specific or genuine is not helpful. Feedback needs to be tied into specific, measurable items.

UPCOMING EVENTS (see calendar on-line for additional updates)

- Nov. 6 Principal's Tea for 2nd and 3rd grade Parents, 7:00 pm, All Purpose Room
- Nov. 11 & 12 Early Release, 1:00 pm (parent conferences as scheduled)
- Nov. 13 Report Cards Distributed
- Principal's Tea for 4th and 5th grade Parents, 7:00 pm, APR
- Nov. 14 Parent Resource Meeting, 7pm, Media Center
- Nov. 15 PTA Sponsored Bingo Night, 7:00pm, APR
- Nov. 27 Early Release, 1pm (Thanksgiving Holiday)
- Nov 28 & 29 No School – Thanksgiving Holiday
- Dec. 3 PTA Meeting #3, 7pm, Media Center – PEP speaker Patti Cancellier, Director of Education for PEP topic: *Raising Responsible Children (aka this is not a hotel and I am not your maid)*.

In addition, Bells Mill Bar-T will hold Wacky and Tacky Night on Friday night, November 8th from 7 to 9 pm. It costs \$15 before hand and \$20 at the door. It is a drop-off night, which includes a DJ, moon bounces, prizes, arts and crafts, popcorn, cotton candy and more. It is open to the entire school. Come dressed in your wackiest and tackiest clothes! Please contact Justin at bellsmill@bart.com with any questions.

IMPORTANT INFO

- Bells Mill PTA Website – www.bellsmill.org,
- Friend BMES on Facebook www.facebook.com/bellsmill
- Friday is Spirit Wear Day/School Colors – Show your BMES pride! Wear your blue and white! Email Mandy pictures of your kids in school colors if you want them posted on FB! SGA is running a class spirit contest.
- Sign up to volunteer for recess and lunch. We are especially in need of volunteers in the Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 4th grade slots.
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044DAAA92AAA8-recess>
- Please take the Enrichment Survey - <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZXQW2HW> – to help make decisions for winter classes. Art and guitar classes will continue, but all other activities are suspended until winter.

- 2nd grade Brownie troop #2794 is having a food drive to benefit A Wider Circle. A donation bin will be placed by the entrance until 11/19/13.
- Reflections, the arts program sponsored by the PTA, deadline is November 27. For details contact Stefie Heideman, Bells Mill PTA Reflections Chair, at stefie@artescapades.com or look for more info on the BMES website.

GUEST SPEAKER: Present-Elect, Stacy Ganz Kahn, introduced Stacy E. King, M.S.P.T., O.C.S., C.I.M.T., C.S.C.S., Board Certified Orthopedic Clinical Specialist who discussed overuse injuries in adolescents. For more information, please visit www.stacykingpt.com, and coming soon www.aspireptandwellness.com. You can contact Stacy at Stacyeking@verizon.net.

Questions? Contact PTA president – Mandy Lemar – mhlemar@verizon.net, 301-204-1393

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

RobBee Fredricks, Secretary