

# GENERAL MEETING 1/24/23

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6:00PM, CARY ELEMENTARY MEDIA CENTER

## ATTENDEES

PTA Board members: President Viviana Valle, Vice-President April Farley, Treasurer Beth Dickerson, Secretary Katie Richards

Stacey Beard, Rod Stanton, Stacy Wilson, Tara Huntley, Nicole Sandvig, Karen Thomson, Valerie Carothers, Megan VanHook, Ashley Graney, Mary Buckner, Jessica Mapes, Katie Herndon, Julia Findley, Ben Murphy, Henry Solorzano, Lauren Tannenbaum Whittaker

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## AGENDA

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT: VIVIANA VALLE**

#### **1. New Year and Fresh Perspective: Hearing from CES Families**

Viviana spoke to the General Membership about how a main mission of the PTA Board for the second half of the school year is to gain input from school families about how they wish to see the PTA function in our community. The Board, along with input from school administration and others, has put together a paper survey for families and school staff/teachers to complete which should be coming home with your student (s) in the coming week. This survey, available in English and Spanish, is being distributed by paper to ensure that all our families (not just PTA members, or families with internet access) can participate. There are lots of opportunities on the survey for open-ended answers. We appreciate the PTA membership's help in encouraging families to complete the survey. There is also a \$50 Amazon Gift Card drawing to help incentivize participation.

#### **2. 2023-2024 PTA Committee Chairs**

In planning ahead, we are also looking forward to collecting new committee heads for next school year and new volunteers for the remainder of this year and the 22-23 school year. April Farley, Vice-President, will be reaching out to all current PTA Committee Chairs in the beginning of March to see if they wish to return for the 2023-2024 School Year in the same volunteer capacity. Openings will begin to be discussed at the next General Meeting.

### **3. Next General Meeting**

Tuesday, Mar. 28th - 6pm

#### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: MR. ROD STANTON**

Mr. Stanton reported that he recently had an opportunity to share about Cary Elementary School during the Area Advisory Board for District 9. We have a new district school board member who seems very interested in getting to know and be involved in our school community.

Mr. Stanton noted that it was a real joy for him and the teachers/staff to see all the fun activities going on around the school right before our Winter Break. The choir performances were definitely a highlight.

Looking ahead to this semester, the Cary Arts Center has reached out to us for some free shows in the coming weeks. We are really lucky to have a great relationship with our close neighbor. We have already sent a few classes on field trips since coming back from Winter Break - we are happy to have this element back! I'm sure you've seen lots of field trip forms coming home, our teachers and students are very excited about all the field trips.

Our Music classroom recently implemented a new software program called QuaverMusic. This is a comprehensive, fully-digital music curriculum, packed with engaging content that meets national curriculum standards. It has been great seeing the students enjoy this new program so far.

#### **NEW BUSINESS - INFORMAL/SOCIAL PTA EVENTS: KATIE RICHARDS/APRIL FARLEY**

##### **1. Coffee Chats**

Katie reported that we had very low attendance during the three PTA Coffee Chats scheduled during the fall. We are not going to continue these for the spring, but we are looking forward to other ways to have more informal gatherings.

##### **2. Potential Social Event**

April informed the membership that the Matthew's House, a local event venue in downtown Cary that is owned by a Cary Elementary School family, has offered to host a social event for our PTA. The proposed date is February 22nd. This would be an adults only event that would

allow for families to network, learn more about the PTA, and hopefully garnish some interest for PTA Committees. Look for some communications to come out as we finalize the details for this event!

### **NEW BUSINESS - COMMITTEE UPDATES: APRIL FARLEY**

April reported out on the committees with current updates, mentioning that if the Committee Chair was present he/she also has the opportunity to report further.

1. **5th Grade Graduation:** Graduation event details are being finalized with the committee. Shirts were provided to each 5th grader before the Winter Break - giving them the opportunity to wear their 5th grade shirts for field trips and other 5th grade special events/days. If you have a 5th grader and you want to join the committee, please reach out to April Farley (caryesptavp@gmail.com).
2. **Advocacy:** The PTA was able to provide spirit wear shirts for all students, through working with the school social worker, to promote school pride and bring back "Wear it Wednesday." Katie Herndon also informed the membership that the partnership with Cary Methodist Church for the Christmas Store was very successful. The store was able to collect around 600 toys, and 214 children were serviced. The Church noted that this event provided an opportunity to engage community members with the Read to Feed program (which offers meals and free tutoring for students). She read a thank you email from the program which included a touching story from one of the families served. Thank you to all our families who participated in this program.
3. **Bookstop:** Karen Thompson reported that the Book Stop is running well, but they are always looking for more book donations. They are entertaining the idea of a carpool drop off drive for books. A flier has been created and will be sent home with all the students, explaining what the Book Stop is, giving the dates for each of the classrooms, and asking for book donations.
4. **Communications:** Currently we are sending out a newsletter, emails, fliers, and Facebook posts! Ben and Val Murphy said they are hoping to do a regular cadence for a (possibly) weekly email digest to send each Sunday. This would mean that all the information would need to be collected from the Board & Committees by the Wednesday prior. Ben has also gone through a lot of the PTA record cabinet to get some history of the PTA. He would like to put together something to see how the organization has developed and changed throughout the years and is digitizing some of the archives of the PTA. If you're interested in helping with this endeavor, please reach out to the communications team!
5. **Cultural Arts:** The Cultural Arts Committee is responsible for organizing a special cultural arts program for each grade level that the PTA pays for (along with some grant

money). Typically the programming includes an artist who comes into the classroom to work with our students in a variety of events. A couple of the events this year might need some volunteers - if you have a child in these grade levels you should hear from the teachers regarding volunteer opportunities. PTA members who attend any of our cultural arts events should take some feedback surveys since our Chair, Lauren, cannot go to any of these this year. Lauren will compile the dates, times and general information for our PTA membership to best allow parent involvement.

6. **Events: Talent Show:** This is an April event, most likely the second week after spring break. The date has not been set, but please note that it is coming up!
7. **Fundraising: Passive:** With AmazonSmile going away we will try to promote some of the remaining Passive Fundraising opportunities.
8. **Fundraising: Spirit Nights:** We just completed a spirit night at Red Hot & Blue that was a bit unique in that it went over multiple days. Additional spirit nights are planned for the remainder of the school year - next is Sweet Fare (Platinum Sponsor, and owned by a CES parent); City BBQ in March (CES parent is the manager); April is not set up yet; May is eSports again (Diamond Sponsor). Thank you to all our families who have participated in these fundraisers!
9. **Fundraising: Spirit Wear:** Devon is going to step down from Spirit Wear after this school year. This is a part of our survey to see how the ordering process goes. There will be a sale of what is left in our PTA closet, including the 'vintage' collection :) Update quantities on MemberHub to have online orders.
10. **Hospitality:** Teacher luncheons will be coming back soon!
11. **PawPatch:** Planning a spring clean up day for the grounds. Would like to encourage all the teachers to plant in the spring for classrooms to use the Paw Patch.
12. **Membership:** Julie Finley is leaving after this year so we are looking for someone to take over for next year. Ideal membership numbers are around 150 members.
13. **Teacher Appreciation:** Comes in May - will be reaching out for volunteers to help with time and supplies. Look for this as we get closer to May.
14. **Sponsorship:** Raised \$9,000 in sponsorships this year, most are local and have families here at Cary Elementary. New feature this year is a window sticker that says they are a PTA sponsor.
15. **Additional Committee Reports:** None brought to the floor.

### **NEW BUSINESS- COMMITTEE HOW-TOS: VIVIANA VALLE**

The Board is also working to put together a PTA-How-To for our Committees. This How-To would allow for easier transitions between school years and when a Committee Chair transitions out of a position. If you are a Committee Chair this year, please look for this request

in the coming weeks. The Board hopes that this will enable more new parents to become involved in the PTA.

## **NEW BUSINESS- TREASURER'S REPORT: BETH DICKERSON**

1. **Current Income & Expenses:** Reports through the end of December are on the tables for meeting participants to view. Beth highlighted the following:
  - a. Each of our teachers receives a mini grant of \$100 to use in their classrooms, many of these reimbursement requests have come in this last month. Thank you to the school administration for helping us get the word out to teachers so they can take advantage of this program.
  - b. Our fall Fun Run was a very successful fundraiser for the PTA - thank you to all the families who participated!
  - c. Current checking account balance is \$17,741.25
  - d. There were no questions brought from the floor.
2. **Amendment to budget:**
  - a. During the 2021-2022 School Year the PTA purchased air purifiers for each classroom. These machines require replacement filters annually. The budget amendment brought before the membership tonight is for purchasing air filter replacements for each of the classrooms in the amount of \$1,072.
    - **Motion to Approved Budget Amendment: Lauren Tannenbaum Whittaker**
    - **Motion Seconded: Katie Herndon**
    - **Present body voted verbally, there were no 'Nays'**
    - **Budget Amendment approved.**

## **NEW BUSINESS - UPCOMING EVENTS: VIVIANA VALLE**

Spirit Night: Sweet Fare, Feb. 10th

## **FLOOR OPENED FOR OTHER BUSINESS**

Katie Herndon, Chair of the Advocacy Committee, noted that the **Wake County PTA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council is hosting two free events in March** that might be of interest to our members. When more information comes out from Wake County PTA we will advertise on our website. Both programs are free and available to all families.

1. Saturday March 4th 9-2:30 DEI Council and Family Academy - lunch is provided and it is free, diversity equity and inclusion topics. The speaker has not been announced yet.
2. March 12, 9-2:30 a virtual conference DEI Speaker is from the Whole Body Literacy and Education Organization.

**Motion to Adjourn: Katie Richards**  
**Motion Seconded: Julie Finley**  
**Meeting Adjourned**