

PTSO MINUTES

Ardrey Kell High School

October 21, 2019 / Meeting called to order by Chris Bucher at 6:02PM

In Attendance

T. Edmunds, L. Bowden, K. Kaplan, G. Greene, C. Bucher, K. Mayfield, K. Meekins, Q. Shen, M. Caplice, A. Canafax, H. McAfee, S. Hepworth, L. Simpson, R. Sentlinger, K. Stovall, C. Lasater, S. Bereis, P. Price, J. Gyoerkoe, L. Vaughn, Ms. Ritch and Mr. Switzer

Minutes

The minutes from the last meeting, September 9, 2019 were presented. They had been posted in draft form via a link on the PTSO website for the past several weeks. A motion to approve the minutes as written raised Angel Canafax and a second motion to approve made by Kisha Meekins.

Treasurer's Report

Suzanne Bereis shared printed copies of the current income statements.

- The AKPTSO Capital Campaign has continued to receive donations. Funds donated to date total over \$23,000.
 - The PTSO has submitted for the sales tax refund and the refund has been paid.
 - Insurance premiums have been paid.
 - A letter has been filed with the IRS dated 9/12/19, with the goal of resolving the late filing fees from last year. A volunteer (Tori Collins) has been identified to file this year prior to the November 15 deadline.
 - There are three outstanding checks to CPCC related to a single-year scholarship award; Chris B. has made contact with CPCC and the checks have been received and should be applied to the students' accounts soon. The fourth CPCC scholarship was not requested by the recipient.
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President's Report

- There has been a change in the Monthly Birthday Cakes effort made by the PTSO for the staff at AK. Thank you to Sophia and Katherine who will be Co-Chairing the responsibilities for the remainder of the year.
 - There is a new vacancy in the Fundraising Chair position. If anyone is interested, please see Chris for more information.
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Principal's Report

Assistant Principal Bridget Ritch presented:

- A reminder that mid-term exams are scheduled this week. There is an effort being made by the faculty to limit other homework and testing to allow for exam prep.
- She reports that Homecoming week was successful; she reports that many students participated in the school day spirit activities such as dressing for the daily theme and that the dance had a much higher

turnout than in recent years. Approximately 800 tickets were sold. Ms. Ritch recognized the good work by the Student Council.

- Mid-Year Graduation date is February 6, 2020. End of year graduation for the class of 2020 still TBD.
- One financial request made by Dr. Marder – AK's school psychologist. The request is for approximately \$250 for an instrument that will give students some biofeedback while attempting meditation/relaxation exercises. There was a concern raised the use of such a strategy but assurances given that there is good communication between Dr. Marder and parents. Overall, the idea supported by meeting attendees.

Mr. Switzer also presented:

- A call for feedback from parents regarding the home/school life balance that parents and caregivers observe with our students. Mr. Switzer emphasized the importance of this feedback as teachers and administrators plan for the future.
- There was a request made by Mr. Switzer for PTSO to recognize the efforts of the multiple PE teachers and Coaches that staff the parking lot areas each day. These dedicated staff receive no additional compensation but are subject to the elements and work hard to keep our students safe.
- Mr. Switzer offered to attend neighborhood meetings held in common areas such as a clubhouse, as a way to increase his availability to more parents associated with AK. He recognizes that the meetings held at school may not be convenient for everyone.

Mr. Switzer and Ms. Ritch took questions from attendees:

- Regarding "late buses": There is no funding for late activity buses. However, Mr. Switzer offered that there may be an opportunity for the PTSO to finance the cost of a driver for an activity bus in the future. He also suggested that the communication resources of the group may help support networking among parents to share rides after clubs, etc.
- Regarding programming related to addiction- specifically the film "The First Day" screened by a concerned parent. There was discussion about the possibility of offering a screening in a small group setting; there are some significant costs with a large-scale screening but in general the group agreed that the topic had merit. Mr. Switzer spoke candidly about the conversations he and the staff have with teens regarding smoking/vaping/marijuana use. He shares with the group that students consistently say "everybody is doing it" and he encourages parents to remain aware.

Committee Reports

Website

A website navigation demo was provided by Jen Kaplan using the media center Smart Board for all to see; well received by attendees. Several parents of new freshman indicated that it was helpful.

- Angel C. requested that a link for the Hospitality Committee be added so that volunteers may sign up to help with hospitality events right through the website.

School Picture Day

- Karla reports a successful event. All underclassmen photographed in one day (vs two last year.)
- Many thanks to the parent volunteers who assisted.
- Students were given a form with a QR code; the gallery should be ready to preview prior to make-up day, November 1.

Harris Teeter/Publix- no update this month.

Hospitality

- Positive feedback for the October "Grab and Go" event held prior to the staff meeting.

- The November “Grab and Go” will have a tailgating theme and the sign-ups have begun. Parents interested in helping can contact Angel and/or look for the hospitality link on the website.
- There will be a catered Holiday lunch for December. No event in January.
- Angel has changed the request for gift cards to be purchased in any amount. Angel wanted to ensure that families could contribute at any level comfortable for them.

Student Leadership Team (SLT)

- Kisha reviewed the acronym SLT is for new attendees.
- Current work goals include: Solidifying the school mission statement, minimizing achievement gaps between standard and honors classes, increasing cultural proficiency, advocating for a duty-free lunch for all teachers as dedicated planning periods.
- The group is also focused on promoting a positive school climate and addressing Title IX issues; specifically the group has addressed empowering those who speak up against harassment.
- There has been suggestion to offer an opportunity for parents that may coincide with the summer “Knight Camp” for incoming freshman.
- There has been a rotation in the Administrator responsible for SLT- if any parents would like to attend a meeting, please contact Ms. Morgan in advance. See representative Kisha M. with concerns/ideas.

Monthly Teacher Recognition

- Meeting attendees given opportunity to write a note in recognition of an AK teacher this month. (Notes collected later and a winner drawn for this month’s PTSO gift card- thank you Mr. Corey Miller!) All other notes will be distributed to staff mailboxes by Ms. Ritch.

Communications

Megan reports that website updates have slowed but will be ongoing, particularly the cue sheet for navigation AK as needs arise. PTSO has a Facebook page as well.

Winterfest/Springfest-no update this month

Misc./Open discussion:

- Parent Heather MaAfee introduced a Thanksgiving project- “Ballantyne Families Helping Ballantyne Families.” Over 100 families identified by local school counselors; local families that may need assistance with their Thanksgiving meal. Other local school involved as well. Please contact Heather for more information, there is a significant need for grocery gift cards. heathermcafee@mac.com
- There was some group discussion regarding other efforts at AK to assist with those food insecure; particularly involving the Student Council and charitable causes that they may choose to support. Also a group discussion regarding ways to communicate positive community outreach.
- A question was raised regarding the “Knighly News” and Mr. Switzer reports that it is not a mode of communication at this time due to the new CMS website overhaul.
- All attendees were invited to participate in a group photo at the conclusion of the meeting. Attendees were informed that the photo would be uploaded to the website.

Next Meeting

Monday, November 18, AK Media Center at 6:00 PM

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM by C. Bucher

