

PTA Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2017

Attending: Natalie Alvarado, Michelle Brayman, Nancy Butler, Robert Cavanaugh, Merylin Castillo, Yolanda Mercado Ceano, Alfredo Colon, Alvin Crawley, Jose Cruz, Graeham Dodd, Julie Eile, , Sandra Fadaona, Kathryn Farmer, Maura Flores, Ana Fuente, Keri Henderson, Jadira Hernandez, Heidi Hunt, Ronke' Hughes, Anna Jaeger, Erica Jones, Lorraine Keir, Seth Kennard, Kate Knish, Becky Kotuby, Chris Lang, Sharon Lang, Lidia Lopez, Yahaira Lopez, Margaret Lorber, Elizabeth Macintosh, Kevin McGrath, Sandy Marks, Carlos Martinez, Cindy Martinez, Patrick McNabb, Kelley O'Dell, Lisa Piehuta, Sabrina Reilly, Marta Rivas, Beatriz Romero, David Sadoo, Candi Sparrow, Jennifer Topping, Kiban Turner, Rosa Ventura, Kevin Viney, Kristen Weber, Meredith West, Alison Wines,

Agenda:

- I. Welcome
- II. PTA Announcements
- III. Treasurer's Report
- IV. Principal's Report
- V. Superintendent Crawley's Presentation

I. Welcome

Kristen Weber, PTA President, welcomed Dr. Alvin Crawley, ACPS Superintendent, Margaret Lorber, School Board Liaison to Charles Barrett and Lisa Piehuta from ACPS Central Office.

II. Announcements

PTA is seeking three parents to serve on the Nominating Committee to select the officers for the 2017-2018 PTA.:

Adopt-A-Gym (Dance-A-Thon) fundraiser will be February 24th from 5-6:30 pm in the gym. This event, in its third year, raises money that helps purchase equipment to schools. In its first year a school in DC got equipment and last year we supported a school in Brooklyn and El Salvador. This year we are supporting a school in Virginia and in El Salvador. A dance a thon teacher from outside of Richmond will be co-teaching with Kevin and then lead the participants. Parents can donate via a link on the website or write a check (put adopt a gym in check memo line).

Spring events coming up include the Talent Show (3.24), Scholastic Book Fair (3.13-16), Gallery Night (4.27), Heritage Night (4.21), and the Carnival (5.6).

The meeting minutes from November and December 2016, were approved.

III. Treasurer's Report-Patrick McNabb

We actually have more money on hand than we would love we want to disburse it to the community. The Barnes and Noble Giving Tree effort brought in \$2,486.74. Some families are still joining PTA and CB is waiting for matching donations to be completed that were pledged for the fall appeal. CB also continues to collect donations for the Carpenters Shelter dinners. \$4k in teacher grants were requested and are in the process of being fulfilled. CB covers unpaid lunch accounts as part of the food nutrition services. Unpaid balance was close to \$1,800 but a lot of these students have left school. Some students were

waiting to qualify for free lunch, some are kids whose parents let their lunch accounts get too low. CB PTA and school wants every kid to get a hot lunch.

IV. Principal's Report

Started 8 years ago, the ACPS Food Services Division has to make a profit or break even so they have to give out cheese sandwiches and a drink if a child does not have a lunch. Charles Barrett covers 90% of this expense but most parents pay us back. Seth wants everyone to know he appreciates parents supporting the hot lunch program so no child has to go without hot lunch if they don't have money.

60 people attending the CETA Arts and Integration Conference from Kennedy Center came to visit Barrett and had such great feedback for us.

Next Friday, there is a 5th grade trip to see to Jeff Houston, a trip kids have to opt in for. Susan Price will be the chaperone and we are sharing a bus with George Mason.

100th day of school has passed and this Thursday and Friday, is early dismissal day. And don't forget the awards assemblies: 3-5 grades from 9-10 am and 1-2 grade is from 10-11 am.

We are inclusive and we care about everyone-when someone is in jeopardy or in trouble we reach out. Charles Barrett is committed to education and reached out to immigration lawyers and is furnishing materials in Spanish—"Know Your Rights," along with local contacts. We are working with Ms. Bonilla to coordinate and want children and parents to know CB is a safe place

V. Dr. Crawley Presentation

It was his fourth time at Charles Barrett. ACPS is all about students and helping them grow and give back in powerful ways. Most CB 5th graders are going to GW. ACPS wants to develop confidence to take care of themselves and stay healthy and provide them with opportunities for leadership and movement. ACPS is moving in the right direction. We want to create experiences to help students make good choices and create the framework for high performance and identify and foster relevant characteristics to become an excellent school division. Our strategic plan includes six goals

2026 student projection: 553

Charles Barrett has 485 students in 2016-2017 and had 477 in 2015-2016. 14% are special ed and 20% are ELL and 14% are TAG.

The question is how are we going to accommodate middle school and high school growth?: From 2017 through 2022, we are projecting a 2.37% growth in middle school and expect to go from 3,715 to 4,697 students in high school, though TC Williams was built for 2,700 students.

The strategic plan has six goals and each goal has many indicators.

1. Academic excellence and educational equity (this has 74 indicators alone)
2. Accountability
3. Family and Community engagement
4. Facilities and learning environment
5. Health and wellness
6. Effective and efficient operations: accountability

93% of KPIS were met, improved or stayed the same the first time out, and that is pretty good.

Washington Area Boards of Education conducted a key indicators comparison and our division is highest in region in terms of eligibility. 58.7% of our population is eligible for free and reduced price meals; 10.8% are special ed and 28.5% are English language learners.

2018-2019 budget looks at all levels and is especially looking at safety systems and access to buildings and maintenance and equitable outdoor spaces.

1000 seat deficit in elementary now so how do close it? What is ACPs going to do to create more seats?

ACPS needs to consider creative use of space-spaces that were not originally designed as classrooms that have become used for instructional space, such as old art studios, science and band rooms—to create learning spaces, though we have to have labs and good music and band rooms.

CIP projects: we are looking at include a new West end school and we are in the process of negotiating acquisition at 1701 North Beauregard to house 638-650 K-5 students and we hope to have it resolved in coming weeks. Some schools are going through a modernization to right size classrooms and improve spaces and additional solutions are happening but it takes time. We will also add relocatables to a number of school sites. If you drive through Fairfax and Arlington, you will see that they use a lot of relocatables and while it is not the ideal situation, it is feasible.

Relocatables are not trailers. Rather, imagine a “learning cottage/condo.” We need to work with the city to go through the permitting process as most school property is owned by the city not the school. The Hanover Research Group has helped with feasibility studies related to schools with an urban challenge like ACPS. Things that work include more flexible scheduling and other housing options for schools such as converting office buildings to a school. Most parents in Alexandria don’t have experience with this. Take a look at the Bailey’s Crossroads School to get a feel for this. It is a great space.

ACPS also needs to look at creative programming such as dual enrollment programs and opportunities at secondary level off campus options. ACPS is heavy into planning for an early college program starting in 2019 that allows high school students to attend school off campus at NOVA and graduate with their diploma and an associate’s degree then go to a 4-year college as a junior and graduate in 2 years with a 4-year degree.

ACPS needs to find swing space—this is a big strategic plan priority. It is harder to build a new building on an existing campus as you have to move students out of a building for 18 months and keep everyone together and move them back into the building.

The Lee Center and city is in conversations with ACPS as it used to be a school years ago but when enrollment dipped, ACPS lost a number of school buildings (don’t ever give up your school bldgs!). We are also exploring developing a joint pre k program with John Adams and staff is developing a redistricting roll out plan for March to ensure a good transition. We will be working with PTAs to give orientations to create a welcome environment and ensuring we keep putting out information as it comes.

Middle school monitoring—a few years ago, ACPS consolidated middle schools to strengthen them. We have added good transition activities and improved school governance and are monitoring systems in all three middle schools, as well as closely monitoring academics; student support; attendance; discipline; transition planning; program of studies; professional development (gifted certification training); school visits by counselors and principals. We also keep a close watch on attendance and suspensions. In terms of what we have to offer the program of studies book lists 300 courses, like a college catalog.

In terms of professional development, we are focusing on differentiation of instruction and requiring teachers to go through training to become certified in gifted education or go thru special education training.

The ten-year CIP budget summary calls for ACPS not having a deficit in any division. In previous CIPs we have not gotten full funding. We cannot get out of our current situation without funding.

As a parent, as soon as the city manager releases the budget to council we can see where we are at. ACPS gets 83% of its funding from the city.

Thanks to Charles Barrett for all it does. You have excellent leadership and stability with Seth Kennard. He is a very committed principal and has good tenure here. In order to remain competitive for teachers to stay in our system we need funding. For teachers who have been here in ACPS for 10 years and longer, we drop down to a 6th or 7th ranking in the region in terms of salary and benefits. New teachers out of school with a master's degree may not come here due to the high cost of housing, and Arlington, Falls Church and Fairfax are competitors. New teachers are also leaving as they are overwhelmed.

Questions from audience:

Q: How are you going to support the stability of our school given how redistricting is going to disrupt our school?

A: ACPS is looking at differentiation and variability and the things that make each school unique. Here at Barrett you have the CETA program. We need to focus on leadership development and how we make principal's meetings more about developing their skills by seeking their advice in the work we do in an effort to maintain competitiveness.;

Increased numbers in our enrollment in an issue. We need more math specialists, more reading specialists and more ELL support. ACPS is always looking at the planning pattern to decide school staffing and how to layer that. We've done some looking at special ed and ELL at the elementary level but no changes were made this year, but maybe next year they will. The reality is that all of this comes at a cost. This last year ACPS showed \$13,508 per student appropriation but in 2008-2009 it was \$15,000 so it has gone down while costs have gone up. More staff need to be paid for but we have limits.

A: Why should anyone be forced to go to an unaccredited school?

Q: Talking about Jeff Houston- we have spent a lot of time to meet state accreditation and it is moving in the right direction. Mr. Crawley goes there monthly to make sure they have the right resources and support and academic focus. It will at some point meet the standard.

A: I have kids who are attending Charles Barrett. It is arbitrary and capricious the way grandfathering has been handled. Why should my child be forced to go to this unaccredited school. What is the logic behind this? ACPS has alienated families as it has undergone redistricting and why not just let kids age their way through versus upending things.

Q: In regards to redistricting, the more you grandfather, the longer it will take to deal with crowding. Currently 1,000 students have to be assigned to other schools because they have not had the space in their local school; redistricting is not the only option; CIP is another way. We are capacity reassigning kids all over the space; the longer you keep this practice of grandfathering up, the worse it gets. 90-110% utilization rate is ideal but still high. We have to work ourselves out of that. By the fall of 2018, does all of this get solved? No, we move in the right direction in 2018 but won't solve it.

A; What are ACPS's plans to reconcile communications difficulties based on the recent bomb threat. We want to make sure we have the right info before putting it out.

Q: ACPS deployed a team to Barrett and we are trying to get better on security and communicating and emergency situations, such as the best way to put communications out. A lot of info was going out and a lot of rumors. We had to relocate the entire school. We are reviewing what went out and know it could have been better.

In addition, with the change in immigration policy there is an impact on our school district. We have not been impacted in terms of students and are providing cultural competence training so we can let students know they are safe in school and they are ours when they enter school. Students need to be kind to one another and we are wanting to foster anti-harassment and anti-bullying and make sure communications are available in multiple languages.

The meeting concluded at 8:15 and some parents stayed behind to ask Dr. Crawley and Margaret Lorber more questions about sibling transfers for administrative transfer children.