



YORKTOWN PTA MEETING MINUTES
Monday, January 11, 2021
7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

I. Welcome and Introductions: Dana Milburn, PTA President

Ms. Milburn welcomed all to the meeting. She provided contact information for PTA Board members as well as information for our website and “general questions” email.

II. Principal’s Report/Q&A: Dr. Kevin Clark, Principal

a. Happy New Year & Thanks!

Dr. Clark thanked all for attending and for the support of the PTA. Along with the help of the PTA, YHS was able to provide Amazon gift cards to all teachers prior to winter break. Also, thanks to Kenny Kaye for distributing up to 50 gift cards to students in need. Dr. Clark remarked briefly upon the events of the past week (at the Capitol building) and explained that all teachers were provided guidance on how to discuss the matter with their students.

b. Virtual Yorktown & Return to School Update

i. Hybrid model & Timeline

Dr. Clark reported that the superintendent, Dr. Duran, provided information to families last week on the status of reopening schools. There is no return date for students yet, however, staff at the secondary level will return to the building at the beginning of February to prepare to welcome students back. Teachers will prepare their classrooms and determine how they will provide lessons to students both in the classroom and home. YHS is continuing to work on logistics such as student arrival, bell schedule, lunch hour, etc.

ii. Return to Hybrid Town Hall Tentatively 2/3 & Orientations 2/8

The town hall will be held to help families understand the plans for reopening and the orientation will be held for students to help them understand the expectations for a return to school in terms of hygiene, moving about the school, etc. That said, most teachers and students have adjusted to virtual learning, however YHS has accommodated some students that need a bit more assistance to be in the school building. Dr. Clark asked that families continue to communicate with the school with any feedback, questions, etc. so that YHS staff can be sure to address any issues that may come up.

c. Academic Planning on Naviance – Danielle Dessaso, Counselor

Ms. Dessaso explained that YHS will no longer be using paper forms for academic planning and is now using Naviance for online academic planning. Students will be able to see all courses online in Naviance. Please reach out to counselors if you have any questions.

i. Program of Studies published end of January – The course descriptions are now available online.

ii. Student presentation 1/25 Patriot Period – The students will have a presentation in Patriot Period on this date to ensure they all understand how to complete their academic planning in Naviance.

iii. Parent presentation early February – The school will be holding a parent presentation on this in early February.

iv. The counselors will start working with their students on this at the end of January.

Questions for Ms. Dessaso:

- 1) How will counselors work with the rising 9th graders? Counselors will be reaching out to them through their middle schools and helping them to plan their courses through Naviance.
- 2) Will summer school classes also be in Naviance? Ms. Dessaso responded that APS is not sure of how summer school will be run yet this year, so, those courses are not in Naviance yet. Once it is determined, those courses will be appearing in Naviance.

d. Introduction to Mental Health Presentation - Bethany Banal, YHS Psychologist

Ms. Banal is one of the two YHS Psychologists and she works with students in grades 9 and 11. Ms. Banal encouraged parents to attend the Wednesday, January 13th 2:00pm presentation of Stress and Mental Health. The presentation will address:

- Monitoring Mental health/well-being
- Recognizing signs of anxiety and depression
- How to respond when your student seems stressed
- Strategies for listening to your student in a helpful way that doesn't inflame their anxiety
- How to figure out how to help your student
- What to do if you believe that your student may be having suicidal ideation

The presentation will be recorded, and a link will be provided in the parent resource section of the PTA Website. The link to join the presentation on January 13th is in the School Talk from this past Friday and this week's PTA Newsletter.

e. Athletics & Activities Update

Dr. Clark reported that YHS has 70+ clubs running this year. There are twenty new clubs that have been established this year alone. Dr. Clark encouraged parents and their students to look into the club options. As of now, YHS has 330+ students participating in the following sports: swim and dive, track, basketball, gymnastics, and dance. Season two is likely to be underway at the beginning of February. Football, Volleyball, Field Hockey, Golf, and Cheer will be participating. Outdoor conditioning has started for these teams. Dr. Clark advised parents to download TeamApp on their mobile devices and to sign up for any teams their student might be interested in participating so that parents can get notification about conditioning days, upcoming tryouts, etc.

f. APS School Budget

Dr. Clark reported that he has no new information beyond what Dr. Duran presented at last week's school board meeting. However, he emphasized that we are having budget shortfalls and they are anticipated to continue into next school year.

g. Questions & Answers

- 1) Will the courtyard be available for lunch? Dr. Clark indicated that YHS is making as many outdoor spaces available for lunch as possible. Locations include in front of the school, the courtyard, and other possible locations.
- 2) Do you have a rough number of students and teachers that have chosen hybrid/virtual? Dr. Clark reported that just under 75% of students have chosen hybrid. He did not have the actual number of teachers that will be teaching hybrid

versus virtual yet. He will make that information available to students and families when the school has it.

- 3) What will it look like for students in classes when the teacher is teaching from home? Students will be allowed to go to various locations of the school to take that class virtually.
- 4) How many students will be allowed in a classroom? Dr. Clark stated that 12-15 students will be allowed in each classroom.
- 5) Will students be able to work together? Yes, teachers will try to ensure that the students who are in the building will be able to work together in a socially distanced manner.
- 6) Where can parents see the mid-term exam schedule? Dr. Clark indicated that mid-terms are optional; teachers can decide if they want to administer them or not. He indicated that he would provide information to parents about any scheduling for mid-terms.
- 7) If a teacher is in person and the amount of hybrid students in the class on a given day exceeds the allowed amount by the health department, what will happen? Would in theory a student be at the school but in a different room than their teacher? Dr. Clark responded that there are some classes in which this might be the situation and the school is looking into how to manage it. It is possible that YHS will need to split hybrid kids into 2 different groups and the teacher will go in between the 2 different classrooms. Alternatively, there might be outdoor space that half of the students can work from and then halfway through the class, the students can switch.
- 8) When the students are in hybrid, will there still be asynchronous time? Yes, teachers are making plans for how exactly to do this. All of this will be worked on as teachers return to the building and will be addressed through the town hall and orientation.
- 9) Is there any possibility that a student who has chosen hybrid will be told that they cannot come due to lack of space? No, every student that has requested hybrid will be accommodated.
- 10) YHS had an English teacher retire over winter break – are there any updates on a replacement teacher? Dr. Clark responded that they have identified a candidate and the school hopes to have her start after the next school board meeting on January 21.

III. Approval of December 15, 2020, Meeting Minutes: Berrin Ozbilgin

Ms. Ozbilgin stated that the minutes from the December 15, 2020 PTA meeting were provided in this week's PTA Newsletter and asked if there were any questions or concerns. With no questions asked, Ms. Milburn moved to approve the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. Financial Report: Dan Sennott, PTA Treasurer

Ms. Sennott reported that the current balance of the PTA budget is \$74,014; the PTA paid out about \$6100 for grants and had incoming funds in the amount of \$575 from the no frills-fundraiser.

V. Announcements: Dana Milburn and PTA Leadership

Ms. Milburn thanked each Board member and the chairs of each committee for their work this year. She then reported on the holiday gifts that the PTA helped to provide to faculty and staff before the winter break. Each teacher received a \$25 Amazon gift card that was provided by both the PTA and YHS. In addition, for the senior staff, the PTA donated to the following organizations in their names:

- National Capital Treatment and Recovery (Phoenix House)
- Neediest Kids

- NAMI
- AHC – Brighter Holidays for First Generation Teens enrolled in AHC’s Teen Tutoring and College & Career Readiness Programs
- Bridges to Independence

Ms. Milburn also reminded parents of the following upcoming events:

- **Wednesday, 1/13, 2:00-3:00pm: Student Stress and Mental Health** – APS presentation by YHS Psychologists, for all APS secondary parents
- **Thursday, 1/21, 7:00-8:30pm: Student Mental Wellness: Addressing Student Stress, Depression, and Anxiety** – PTA/YHS event with Arlington DHS Psychologists and YHS Social Workers
- **Saturday, 1/30, 7:30-9:30pm: Student Virtual Trivia Night** (Invitation link coming soon)
- **Movie Night, TBA**, both movie and date to be determined by survey responses. Whole families will be welcome to watch on your devices.

Ms. Milburn also reminded parents about the surveys that are available for parents and students to fill out to address general issues/needs/event ideas as well as specific surveys asking for input on the Trivia Night and Online Movie Nights. Links to all of these surveys can be found in the PTA Newsletter. Ms. Milburn also told parents to feel free to email her directly with any general comments/concerns at dmdb@rcn.com.

Ms. Milburn’s last announcement was regarding the APS FY 2022 budget. She provided detailed information of where parents can go to find out further information about the upcoming budget shortfall (<https://www.apsva.us/budget-finance/>). She also suggested that parents reach out to share any concerns they have regarding specific programs in terms of budget allotment to APS leaders: the School Board at school.board@apsva.us and Dr. Duran at Francisco.duran@apsva.us. She also suggested that parents consider including Dr. Clark on any communications just to keep him informed; his email is kevin.clark@apsva.us. For any budget-related thoughts that parents might want to share at the county level, parents can email the County Board at CountyBoard@arlingtonva.us and countymanager@arlingtonva.us.

VI. Survey Results thus far: PTA Board

Ms. Milburn presented the following results of the parent/student surveys that have been completed to date:

- General Issues/Needs/ideas, top tier concerns:** Stress regarding school (37), loneliness (30), mental/emotional wellness (25), uncertainty/anxiety (22), more college planning (20)
- General Issues/Needs/ideas, second tier concerns:** Executive functioning (18), academic achievement in Covid-world (17), SEL (16), other organizing (15)
- On-line Entertainment/Fun/Connection, top tier:** Movie night (30), trivia night (25), discussion with professional sports figure (22), discussion with media figure (22)

In follow up to the above responses, Ms. Milburn asked that if any parents had contacts in any of these worlds (sports or media), to please let her know how we may be able to reach out to these individuals.

- d. **Online Entertainment/Fun/Connection, second tier:** Among Us game night (21), discussion with our Congressman 20), chats by grade (15)

Ms. Milburn reported that we have written to Congressman Beyer to see if he might be able to speak to our students. She also asked for feedback on the possibility of an Among US game night. She indicated that the PTA is leaning away from doing this since it is based around the concept of a murder and participants trying to figure out who did it. If parents have any ideas of other online games, she would welcome their input.

Overall, Kate Sheehey explained how the above items in sections C and D and are attempts to address items in sections A and B. She also provided an explanation of the movie night – each movie night would cost \$150 and the movies options are chosen by the organization providing the movies, but, then we have the choice to pick one of their options.

VII. **PTA Events/Potential Events Stemming from Survey:** PTA Leadership/Dr. Clark

Ms. Milburn provided information on the following upcoming events that the PTA has planned/is planning to address some of the results from the PTA surveys:

- a. **Student Mental Health: Addressing Stress, Anxiety & Depression** – This event has been arranged through the YHS Counseling/Student Services Staff, to help address top concerns from surveys so far for both students and parents/guardians. **It will be held on January 21, 2020 at 7:00pm.** A link to this presentation will be provided in the upcoming PTA Newsletter.
- b. **Executive functioning event** – the PTA Board discussed holding a presentation to help students get organized in the world of virtual learning. The PTA is working on options for this and will hopefully be able to hold an event in early February.
- c. **Substance abuse/addiction event** – The PTA is working with Kim Chisholm, Mike Krulfeld, and Phoenix House (will ask Partnership for Children, Youth, & Family, too) to hold an event focusing on this issue. The goal is to hold the event in February.
- d. **Events for fun and connection for our kids** – These events are being planned to help address the loneliness many said is a problem in survey answers:
 - i. The PTA held a well-attended/well-received **Trivia Night over Break**; the PTA has scheduled second **Trivia Night for Saturday, 1/30, 7:30 p.m.** Ms. Milburn explained how it worked with students being broken down into teams and going into breakout rooms to discuss answers to the questions. Ms. Milburn thanked Susan Land for recommending the trivia company and she thanked both Ms. Land and Dan Sennott for helping to chaperone the event. Ms. Milburn emphasized the positive responses to the event and how kind the students were to each other during play.
 - ii. The PTA has researched **Movie Night** options and created **survey** to choose movies/best times. Please see the PTA Newsletter to complete the survey to help the PTA choose the movie that may be most appealing to our students!
 - iii. The PTA has contacted **Congressman Don Beyer's** office to schedule a **chat with our students.** More information to follow.
 - iv. The PTA has also begun researching **media and professional sports figures for chats** with students -- let us know if you can **help with contacts!**

VIII. **Other No-contact Ideas (Small Gift?) to Lift Kids' Spirits:** PTA Leadership

Ms. Milburn asked if parents had any other ideas to contribute as no-contact activities/small gifts for students. The following items were suggested and discussed:

- Online chess lessons – perhaps have the chess club give a presentation on the “introduction to chess”. Perhaps include a raffle of a couple of chess boards for students? Dr. Clark said that we do have a chess club and Mr. Krulfeld is the sponsor, so he would be a contact for this idea.
- Free digital escape room – this would be a family-friendly activity and they are curated. To do this, we would need right-sized groups and chaperones.
- Ms. Milburn emphasized the need for parent chaperones for any online events where there might be breakout rooms or collaborative activities.
- Valentines treat distribution – possibly give out a small box of valentine’s candy to the students close to Valentine’s Day. Students would need to come to the school (or a satellite location) to pick up the treat. Mr. Sennott said that there is funding in the PTA budget for such an item as long as it is kept under \$2.00 per student.
- Cooking event -- Give the students a recipe in advance so that they can get all the ingredients and then cook the item together on screen? One suggestion was teaching participants how to make hot cocoa bombs. To go along with this idea, YHS could include a little “Nailed It” event where students can send in their pictures of their finished product. Janet Pence offered to research this idea and will reach out to the Food and Fitness teacher to see if she has any thoughts or could help.
- Nice/fun way to teach life skills – perhaps a focus on personal finance, sewing simple items, conflict resolution, college night with YHS grads.

IX. Adjourn: Dana Milburn

The PTA agreed to continue to pursue some of the above items and with no further business, the meeting was adjourned.