



YORKTOWN PTA MEETING AGENDA
Monday April 19, 2021, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

1) Welcome and Introductions: Dana Milburn, PTA President

Ms. Milburn welcomed all the PTA meeting and presented the agenda for the night's meeting.

2) Approval of March 8, 2021, Meeting Minutes: Berrin Ozbilgin, PTA Secretary

Ms. Ozbilgin stated that the link to the minutes from the March 8, 2021 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 called for a vote to approve the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3) Financial Report: Dan Sennott, PTA Treasurer

Mr. Sennott reported that the PTA currently has a balance of approximately \$68,700. In the past month we had incoming funds in the amount of \$1,130. The PTA made a payment of \$94 for dues to the Virginia PTA. We will be cutting checks in the coming two months to reimburse teachers for their grants.

4) PTA Grants Committee Proposal and PTA Vote on Funding for YHS Students at Arlington Tech: Meg Sharp, Grants Committee Co-Chair

Ms. Sharp reported that due to the unusual circumstances of Covid, the Grants Committee met three times this year. In the spring grants round, the Committee allocated approximately \$7500 to YHS teachers. After the final requests had been made, the Committee found that they still had some funds that could be allocated. At the same time, they were informed by a knowledgeable committee member that approximately 200 YHS students attend partial-day classes at the Arlington Career Center, which has unfunded needs and expenses. This committee member suggested, and the Grants Committee agreed unanimously, to use part of the remaining Grants Committee budget line-item to send funds to the Arlington Tech Advisory Committee, to cover expenses that arise for the CTE classes at the Arlington Career Center. (Such expenses as field trips, which ATAC cannot otherwise cover.)

Ms. Sharp provided the following details:

- There are numerous CTE (Career and Technical Education) classes at the Arlington Career Center.
- About 20% of the CTE-only students come from Yorktown for 2 or 4 periods. That is about 200 Yorktown students for this academic year.
- The CTE program has no dedicated parent funding source or grants committee; the work-around has been an Amazon wish list that is monitored by the school and a parent volunteer; it is only partially filled each year. Thus, this would be a huge benefit to the CTE program.
- There is not a PTA at the Career Center, but the Arlington Tech Advisory Committee is a 501 (c) (3) that can receive any grant funding from Yorktown and can target requests to CTE teachers only with no problem.

As a result, Ms. Sharp said that the Grants Committee asked the PTA as a whole to approve providing this one-time funding in the amount of \$1000 to the CTE at Arlington Career Center. Ms. Milburn reported that the Board had discussed this in detail and felt it would be appropriate to provide this funding. Ms. Sharp and Ms. Milburn both recommended that we provide this funding because Arlington Tech doesn't have a PTA and therefore, does not have the funding that Yorktown has, and it would be reasonable for us to provide some funding while we have students incurring expenses there.

Currently, the YHS PTA has a full \$2000 left in our Teachers' Grants account; the PTA could give the full \$2000, but we the Board is recommending that we provide CTE with \$1000 in case our PTA needs a bit of funding left over for the beginning of next school year.

With no questions, Ms. Milburn called for a vote and the item was approved unanimously.

Ms. Milburn thanked Ms. Sharp (and Ms. Jennifer Gold), both of whom are rotating off their positions as the Grants Committee's Co-Chairs, for their years of work on behalf of our community and asked that if anyone is interested in Co-Chairing this committee next year to let her or Jamie Pilot know.

5) Proposed Budget Modification Vote: PTA Board

Ms. Milburn explained to the PTA members that the Board had put a large amount of funding into the Board's discretionary fund this year since we did not know exactly how much the PTA might need for various activities/events this year. Currently, the Board was asking that we move \$2500 from this account into the Staff Appreciation account in order to provide a boxed lunch for the teachers during teacher appreciation week. We cannot do the typical approach of asking for parents to bring in and donate food so, as a result, our needs for staff appreciation this year require more funding to keep everything Covid safe. Mr. Sennott also discussed the reasoning behind this and emphasized that the current revenue is on target for what we had budgeted, so, this does not cause us to go over budget, it just transfers funds from one line item to the other

With no questions, Ms. Milburn called for a vote and the item was approved unanimously.

6) Announcements: Dana Milburn and PTA Leadership

Ms. Milburn reported on the following announcements:

- Reminder that the YHS PTA is a qualified 501c3 and therefore, we can receive matched donations from companies. If you are making a donation to our no-frills fundraiser, please consider asking your company to make a matching donation.
- Upcoming June events: June 2nd – College Selection in the Era of Covid and June 10th College Essay Writing
- Welcome to our new VP Communications, Christine Shelly
- We have found a volunteer to fill the role of PTA Secretary. The full slate of officers will be presented in an upcoming Newsletter and will be voted upon for approval at our June meeting.
- Other Chair openings for next year include: Advisory Council on Teaching & Learning (ACT&L) Representative; Family Network Chair(s); Fundraising Chair(s); Graduation Boat Party Co-chair (with Berrin Ozbilgin) for Class of 2022; Grocery Receipts

Chair; Hospitality Chair(s); SAT/ACT Prep Test Chair -- rising 11th grade parent; Science Fair Liaison/Chair; Social Work Liaison; Spirit Wear Sales Chair; Teacher of the Year Chair; - Teacher Grants Co-chair; Vision Screening Chair - rising 10th grade parent; Rising 9th and Rising 10th grade parent representatives.

Please consider volunteering for one of these positions; they are all a great way to be involved in your students' school!

7) Member Discussion on Needs PTA Can Fulfill: What/Can/Should YHS Do for our Students, Families, & Staff in this Year's Homestretch? Looking Ahead to Next Year? PTA Board

Ms. Milburn provided an updated review of the results of the survey that the PTA sent out in December and January. The categories were developed from feedback provided by parents and students as to what their largest concerns were this year. Stress was the highest ranked item; other highly ranked concerns were mental/emotional wellness, loneliness, social isolation, uncertainty and anxiety more broadly (not just school). Overall, many concerns seemed to be somewhat related to stress. Ms. Milburn then provided a review of what activities and events the PTA planned and held to address the concerns of students and parents. She also stated that she anticipates the 2021-2022 school year to come with its own stresses in that many students have not been in the building for over one year and some of the younger students have never been in the building at all.

After presenting this material, Ms. Milburn asked the PTA members if there are additional needs that parents would like to see addressed this year. There were no comments and Ms. Milburn asked that if anyone has any additional thoughts, to reach out to the PTA Board.

8) Principal's Report/Q&A: Dr. Kevin Clark, Principal

a) Return to Hybrid and Virtual Yorktown Updates: Dr. Clark

Currently 1600 students have returned to YHS to participate in the Hybrid model. YHS has been able to make accommodations for some change requests of virtual to hybrid and hybrid to virtual. The school is still open to students wishing to make changes, so, let the school know if you are interested in a change. A small group of students have been invited back for school four days a week; these are mostly students with special needs, some with IEPs or 504s and others that might be struggling for various reasons. Let YHS know if you would like your student to be put on the list to try and come 4 days a week.

Last week, Dr. Duran came to YHS to see how the classrooms are operating right now. He was impressed with how teachers and students are adapting and adjusting. Dr. Clark holds a principals advisory board with some of the students which also helps him to see how things are going with hybrid learning. Next year APS is planning for in-person 5 full days a week. There will still be a 5-day a week virtual option however, that will be a stand-alone program with a combination of APS teachers and Virtual Virginia teachers. This option may be chosen by students that have thrived in virtual learning or by those who choose it for health reasons. Students in this model will likely not have a YHS teacher unless the APS teacher staffed happens to be from YHS. In addition, except for possibly a few AP or DE courses, it looks as though most YHS staff will not be teaching classes in hybrid and virtual mode concurrently as

they are this year. Dr. Clark reported that they are hoping that school will look as normal as possible next year, though there still may need a for mask wearing and some social distancing.

Dr. Clark provided an equity team update: The school provided some surveys which followed up on issues presented from the Your Voice Matters survey of last year. Dr. Clark also thanked the John M. Langston Citizens Association for their work with YHS. They are working on an oratorical program for next year in collaboration with YHS to address some of Arlington's history and social justice issues.

Dr. Clark reported that YHS now has firm plans for graduation. It will be held on Friday, June 18th at 10:00am. The plan is to hold graduation in the football stadium and currently, the governor's orders only allow for 600 people to be in attendance given the size of the stadium, however, APS does expect some of these restrictions to be lifted which will hopefully allow each graduate to have 2 guests at the graduation.

YHS is also currently working on a prom activity for first week of June. It will be held at the school and right now, it will be limited to 100 students. In addition, the PTA is working with YHS to hold an end of year picnic for the senior class. More information to follow on all of these events.

Dr. Clark said that he is looking towards next year and trying to achieve our goals of equity, excellence, and empowerment. We will be collecting some information from families in order to plan for next year and beyond in these areas, so keep an eye out for that.

Dr. Clark's final report was that the falls sports season has wrapped up and we are no holding spring athletic events. These include soccer, lacrosse, and outdoor track. The school is allowing for limited spectators which mainly consist of athletes families.

b) Questions and Answers: Dr. Clark

- **Since AP exams will be held later this year, is YHS taking into account holding the Prom event in the middle of them?** Dr. Clark responded that the Prom is planned to be held on Friday, June 4th, so hopefully students can participate in prom and still have Saturday and Sunday to prepare for their exams. Also, the timing of the AP tests are at 12pm and 4pm, so, none are too early in the morning.

9) Talk with Cristina Diaz-Torres, School Board Member and YHS School Board Liaison:

Ms. Milburn provided the PTA members with a brief introduction. MS. Diaz-Torres is a former teacher and education policy specialist with experience in the classroom, who gets the data, and who believes every student has a right to succeed. She is a longtime advocate for students in Arlington and has previously served on several key Arlington School Board and County Board commissions including the Budget Advisory Council, Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission, and the Joint Facilities Advisory Commission.

Ms. Diaz-Torres began her presentation with a description of the APT Return-to-School timeline. She demonstrated that we have met all levels now, bringing back all students that chose to return in the hybrid model. APS chose not to increase this school year to in-person four days a

week because the county felt that students would be better served by focusing on a strong summer program and a very normal in-person 5-days per week fall next year. APS is hopeful that we will be able to get as many kids that want to return into classrooms full-time next year.

Ms. Diaz-Torres reported that APS is expanding in-person learning as much as possible as the CDC updates and revises their distancing guidelines. APS is working on taking the following steps:

- Admitting additional students for hybrid/in-person instruction based on each school's capacity and consideration of physical distancing guidance, while supporting changes from hybrid to full distance.
- Prioritize special populations for in-person instruction, including English learners, Special Education students and students having challenges in distance learning.
- Continue to provide four-day per week in-person schedule for students in countywide special education programs.
- Continue delivering quality full-time distance learning with targeted interventions and support for students needing extra assistance learning remotely.
- Prepare to offer five-day per week in-person and distance learning instructional models in summer and fall 2021-22.

Ms. Diaz-Torres also provided the following information on the Summer and Fall 2021-22 updates:

- Summer school offerings will include:
 - Full-time in-person instruction for 5 days a week
 - Full-time distance learning for 5 days a week
- Summer school course offerings are contingent on available staffing.
- Extended Day will not be offered during summer school due to staffing and space constraints and health and safety requirements.
- We are preparing to offer five-day in-person and five-day distance learning schedules in the fall, while following health and safety guidance.
- We will continue to communicate 2021-22 school year updates providing the details of each instructional model.
- Family/student surveys will be conducted in late April/May to gather data regarding instructional model and transportation choices for summer and fall 2021-22.
- APS is preparing to offer five-day in-person schedules in the fall, while following health and safety guidance.
- We are also working to provide a full-time distance learning option for students who wish to continue learning virtually.
- APS will continue to review changes in legislation and guidance and will communicate 2021-22 school year updates when available.

Ms. Diaz-Torres provided the following updates on School Options and Transfers:

All Pre-K Programs

- Application Deadline: April 15 at 4pm
- Online Lottery: April 23
- Families will be notified to accept/decline a pre-K slot on April 30.

Elementary Option Schools

- Application Deadline: April 15 at 4pm
- Online Lottery is April 22
- Families will be notified to accept/decline a slot on April 30

Ms. Diaz-Torres then provided an update on the 2020-2021 School Board Action Plan. The overarching goals are to focus on an excellent education regardless of the delivery model. Support staff to be innovative and deliver high quality virtual and in-person instruction. Continue to focus on equity. She proceeded to discuss the steps that APS has taken to ensure student success and well-being including: providing technology and WIFI connectivity for every PreK-12 student; implementing new safety procedures with a focus on safely resuming in-person learning; ensuring every student is connected to a trusted adult to support academic and personal growth; and implement and support social-emotional, mental health, and physical wellness practices for staff and students.

She also discussed the current operational planning which includes: reviewing and adopting policies to include Equity, Facilities, and Discipline; review the APS relationship with the School Resource Officers with stakeholder engagement (a public hearing on this will be happening soon); adjusting FY 2021 budget as needed and adopting a needs-based FY 2022 budget; Adopting an interim FY 2022 four-to-six-year capital improvement plan; refining the PreK-12 Instruction Program Pathways (IPP); adopting new elementary school boundaries for SY 2021-22; and naming and renaming schools as needed.

The School Board has done a number of engagement activities over the past few months to address the PreK-Adult Instructional Programs and Pathways (IPP). They have examined a number of aspects of the APS programs such as: do we have obsolete programs that should be phased out? Are we providing programs that help our APS students to be competitive as they leave our school system?

Ms. Diaz-Torres discussed the FY 2022 Budget Calendar. The Board should be able to approve the budget in the coming weeks. On April 29th there will be a public hearing for feedback on the School Board's proposed budget and then they will vote on May 6 to approve the budget. There will be a \$12M shortfall, however, APS will be using reserves to cover that.

In closing, Ms. Diaz-Torres provided ways to stay connected with the School Board they include the following:

- Sign up to receive monthly newsletter and agenda updates
- Sing up to speak at a Board Meeting (via phone service)
- Sing up for Virtual Open Office Hours
- Visit our Engage Page at www.zpsva.us/engage to follow our current initiatives and provide input and feedback
- Follow us on Twitter @APSVaSchoolBd
- Email the Board at school.board@apsva.us
- Office Phone 703-228-6015
- Website: <https://www.apsva.us/contact-the-school-board/>

Questions and Answers:

- **Where does the Board stand on COLA for staff?** Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that the Board is going to provide some kind of compensation increase – given that we have a budget gap, and we want to give some kind of increase, we are trying to figure out doing it in an equitable manner. Some staff have not had a raise in years, so the Board is really wanting to be sure that everyone gets an increase this year. There is an option to give a 2% across the board however, since the Board is trying to remediate the problem of some staff not having received increases in years, it is possible that those staff members would receive the 2% and a bit more. A survey was completed in January on teachers' salaries and the Board will be reassessing the survey results for next year to be sure all pay is equitable.
- **What will happen if a family does not select a learning model for next year?** If you do not select a learning model for next year, it will default you to in-person. The earlier and the more families that can say their preference, will help APS with planning for next year.
- **What is the policy for when grades should be posted?** Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that there is a district wide policy, however, it is in the process of revision because it has not been updated since around 2005. It does not allow for standards-based grading, so, APS is not in compliance with that. APS will be looking for feedback on this later this year and hope for an implementation of the new grading policy in the fall of 2022. Dr. Clark responded to the concern about the timing of posting grades by explain that the expectation is for teachers to input grades into synergy in a timely manner. This year is a bit more challenging because each teacher has to enter grades to three different grade books which makes it much more time consuming. If there is a specific teacher of concern, please reach out to Dr. Clark or counselors.
- **Comment to APS:** Please be sure to focus on the needs of the students; some feel that the majority of the needs this year have been focused on the staff and teachers. Ms. Diaz-Torres assured that every decision the School Board makes is with the students' best interests in mind. Often what seems to be a focus on helping the teachers has a direct impact that benefits students.
- **For students that opted to remain virtual this year, but will return to the school next year (especially for the rising 10th graders that have never entered YHS), are the schools preparing to guide students that have been out of school for so long?** Ms. Diaz-Torres answered that the School Board has been considering this and trying to help schools plan for these situations. Dr. Clark stated that YHS is planning to hold a normal 9th grade orientation, but they are also planning to help students that are current 9th graders get acclimated to high school as well.
- **Covid related question – If there is a covid exposure within a classroom, why does the entire classroom need to quarantine for two weeks; this parent was under the impression that only students sitting within six feet of the infectious student would need to be quarantined.** Ms. Diaz-Torres did not have the specifics of why the entire class needs to quarantine, however she stated that APS is following the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health, so, that may be the place to look for the answer. The parent responded that they were under the impression that the seating chart was for contact tracing so that the entire classroom did not have to stay home and quarantine. Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that she will look further into this and get back to the parent on this concern.

- **Equity and Cameras** – Last week, a YHS teacher told a student to turn on her camera or leave the classroom. This student does virtual school with her two siblings in the same room and is not comfortable turning on her camera. Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that APS policy is that students should turn on cameras when possible, but it is not mandatory. Dr. Clark also responded by stating that this teachers request was not in line with the school’s policy and asked the parent to reach out to him with specifics.
- **What might we be able to do next year to address student stress – not just Covid related stress, but overall stress?** Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that APS is adding additional counseling support for next year and they are intentionally overstaffing schools with additional adults to address some of the social anxiety that may affect students returning after not being at school for over a year.
- **Will there be staff training for SEL so that teachers can know what to look out for?** Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that APS is doing some SEL training across the board for all teachers. Dr. Clark also stated that the YHS SEL team is working to identify what needs students might have and trying to meet those needs (keeping in mind that 9th graders may have different needs than 12th graders).
- **What is the county doing to commit to some kind of SEL curriculum?** Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that she is not sure at this point, but she will inquire about it and get back to Ms. Milburn.
- **Is APS considering doing anything to ease the stress that students are having about school?** Ms. Diaz-Torres responded that the Board is thinking about what additional resources and programs can help to mitigate this issue. One step to help with these concerns is that APS is providing additional counselors and staff to help students at school. They also offer an SOL opt-out so that students that are stressed about the SOL do not have to take them. The Board will be focusing on resources going into the fall to ensure that the school leaders and staff have what they need to help students with stress.

In closing, Ms. Diaz-Torres provided her email to the PTA in case anyone had any further questions which they wanted to ask her about directly. She can be emailed at:

cristina.diaztorres@apsva.us

10) Adjourn – Dana Milburn

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.