



YORKTOWN PTA MINUTES
Monday, September 12, 2022
7:30 – 8:30 pm

Agenda:

1. New PTA Board Introductions, and VP Opening

Katrina Brubaker, the Yorktown PTA President, initiated the meeting at 7:30pm. Katrina introduced herself and mentioned that the PTA would eventually like to have hybrid meetings where some of us can join in person. Katrina introduced the following PTA Board Members for the 2022-2023 school year: Katie Beasley – external VP. Cristina Marcus – communications VP. Kellie Stewart – secretary. Michelle Cowan – treasurer. Finally, she introduced Dr. Kevin Clark – Principal, Yorktown.

2. Katrina then introduced the meeting’s guest speakers:

- a. **Mary Kadera, School Board Liaison**

Mary joined the School Board last January. Before joining the board, Mary was a leader of the county council of PTAs (CCPTA).

Excited to be YHS liaison this year. Has already met with Dr. Clark to introduce herself and hear what he thought school board members should keep in mind. Interested to hear from PTAs, school staff, members of the community, what you would like school board to pay attention to. As do their work this year, school board has certain priorities that are aligned with APS strategic plan. Specifically, they are carrying forward priorities that Dr. Duran and team had started last year, e.g. compensation adjustments and making sure that they are preserving and extending that work in this budget cycle. The school board also introduced structured literacy approach last year that will carry forward.

In high school specifically, prioritizing school safety. Have put new school safety coordinators in middle and high schools this year as additional boots on the ground and eyes in hallways and bathrooms. The safety coordinators have gone through 60 hours of training to prepare for their roles. Continue at middle and high schools to pay attention to mental health and ways school staff can help students with mental health concerns. Keenly aware of looking at achievement data and academic data. Looking across all grade levels to see where there are gaps and things have fallen behind due to pandemic. At secondary school level, looking at literacy – what kinds of innovative approaches can use for kids who are not reading at grade level to make sure they graduate with the skills they need.

Oct. 11 – school board is having a work session about student handbook and student code of conduct. If high school students have ideas on how student code of conduct should be revised, they should feel free to give input to school board, as can parents.



CCPTA – Doing great work to coordinate PTAs across the county and to advocate for things with APS leadership. The meetings tend to have a lot of representation from elementary level but not too much from secondary. Looking for volunteer to represent Yorktown at the CCPTA meetings. If there are multiple people from Yorktown who can attend the meetings, can make sure concern of high schools are well represented. Meetings are on Monday night (not same as YHS PTA meeting) and are done virtually. **Email Mary at mary.kadera@apsva.us** if you would like to share ideas for the school board.

b. Laura Porter, Assistant Principal

Laura Porter is back at YHS from Swanson MS. She is over the 10th graders (class of 2025). Ms. Porter is over building and facilities, and safety. Oversees safety coordinators and running drills. Oversees English Department and Business, Computer Science, and Engineering.

Q: How are Safety Coordinators different from the past Resource Assistants? Safety Coordinators are more coordinated and empowered by new title. Now escorting kids back to class, checking restrooms regularly. Have been given more training and authority – have another supervisor who is giving them more of an outline for their role. Know where certain areas are that they need to monitor closely.

c. Johanna Boyers, Director of Counseling and Services

Ms. Boyers is coming to Yorktown from Williamsburg Middle School. Ms. Boyers is thrilled to be part of this very experienced counseling team. Encourage you to get to know your child's counselor! Look at counseling part of the website – a lot of great information there, including about colleges. If you miss a live session, can watch the recording on the website.

How do you know who your child's counselor is? If you don't know who your child's counselor is, check studentvue or parentvue. Or can call counseling office. Or email Ms. Boyers at johanna.boyers@apsva.us.

3. Dr. Clark's Principal Update

Announcements: Big thanks to PTA for pre-service week meals. Shout out to PTA (Rabia especially!) who did great job sharing support for breakfast and lunch for teachers. Thanks to those who helped out with BBQ on Friday.

Great couple weeks of school. This year has felt significantly different. Great master schedule. Thanks to School Board for compensation piece and support for reduction in class size of about 1 student per class. Has helped to create better master schedule and give teachers a slightly lighter load of students. Shout out to students who have also been great. Seem happy to be back!

Laura Porter touched on safety and security piece, which has been an excellent addition to learning environment.



Have made few minor tweaks to advisory and Patriot period. This year students remain with same advisor; if student is 10th – 12th, with same previous advisor teacher. 9th graders are starting up with new advisors. This provides an advisor who supports about 15 students who students can check in with on regular basis and help develop social emotional learning (SEL) skills. By comparison, counselors have 200 – 250 students each. Teachers also support this during regular classes to weave SEL skills into instruction. Tuesdays are formal SEL activities with Patriot Period Advisors.

Thursday is academic check in Patriot Period. Way for students to make a plan that is student-led and someone holds them accountable. Monday-Wednesday-Friday: Students can decide who they need to see during Patriot Period, i.e. teachers, counselors, etc. Or if they need to work with other students on group projects. Or just to take a break in the courtyard and reconnect with each other. They know best what they need to do with their time. Have collected a lot of feedback from teachers, families, students on explicit SEL instruction balanced with their other needs and practicing those skills, like responsible decision making. Think have found a good balance for structured SEL content but also space for them to do what they need to do.

New this year: APS has purchased a contract with Paper, a 24/7 tutoring program. They can pop on and chat with live tutor. They can upload math problem, papers for writing feedback, etc. Would love to hear if this is meeting students needs. Excited to have this opportunity and think it will be helpful. Free virtual tutoring:

<https://www.apsva.us/instruction/curriculum-instruction/virtual-support-for-secondary-students-paper/>

Have had a lot of activities and athletics occurring as well. Fall sports started in August so are in thick of fall athletic competition. Field hockey (defending State champions!), golf, cross country, marching band, color guard, ultimate frisbee, volleyball, cheer, and dance all in full swing.

Activities fair coming up on Friday. Have some great clubs. Have a new robotics team starting up. A lot of longstanding clubs, but if students have interest in starting one, students can create new clubs. Will have sign ups Friday on during lunch and Patriot Period. Have a lot going on and encourage students to find what they are excited about.

Band Day this weekend – band kids will be coming around the neighborhoods supporting the band this Saturday, 9/17.

If want more information on athletics, can go to Yorktownsports.org. Nov 7 – winter sports starting. TEAM App is where you can find info on specific teams, like green days, try outs, etc.

Underclass pictures – 9/14 and 9/15. Students will take it on whatever day they have English class. Sept. 27th – 28th – senior photo make up day.



A lot of senior activities coming up. Senior activities webpage has info. Starting to look at senior experience – things like internships or other opportunities for last three weeks of senior year. If want to know what is going on for seniors, look at the website - <https://yhs.apsva.us/students/seniors/>

Covid-19: still dealing with pandemic – masks are optional. There is a self-reporting process. You can report to APS online. If your student tests positive, isolate for 5 days and can return on Day 6 wearing a mask until Day 10. Students unable or unwilling to mask must provide 2 negative tests taken on Day 6 and 8 and must have no symptoms. If a student has covid-like symptoms at school, they will be sent home and must provide some documentation to return. APS is accepting home test. Not doing contact tracing so close contacts are not required to quarantine. Want to encourage vaccination and make sure everyone stays up to date on vaccinations and boosters. Arlington currently has low transmissions rates by CDC measures.

Weekly newsletter on Fridays. Please check it out!

Back to School Night in person this year – next Wed., 9/21, 7 – 9 pm. Check in for specialists from 6:30 – 7 pm (counselors, gifted resource teacher, math coordinator, etc.) 7 – 9 pm – parents will see each of their students’ classes for 10 minutes. Parking is very limited. Try to carpool, walk, bike. If need to park, come early.

Homecoming – week of Oct. 11 – 15. Theme days/activities during school week. Pep rally on Friday. Homecoming football game and dance on Oct 15. Encourage students to enjoy night safely. Tickets sold the week of the dance. Will need parent volunteers. Volunteer coordinator (Valerie Brennan) will call for volunteers through the newsletter. Will send out a sign up genius before the event.

Getting started with **Equity Team** – Tamarah Stanley is new Equity Coordinator. If interested in participating, they will start up in early Oct. Open to students, teachers, parents. Application is in newsletter from last week and will be again this week. Also, newsletter is posted on the homepage of website.

Holidays coming up – Rosh Hashanah (9/26); Yom Kippur (10/5); Oct. 10 student holiday.

PSAT – Wed. Oct. 12 during the school day. 10th and 11th graders are automatically signed up.

If go to YHS website, left side, School Talks is all of them. Morning announcements is called “Dailies”. Through broadcast journalism class – they share information about what is happening. <https://yhs.apsva.us/academics/english/broadcast-journalism/daily-announcements/>

4. Other Items:



a. PTA Committee Reports

Janet Pence – serves as the Family Activities Chair – brings programs in the evenings geared to parents and students. Last year did first ever college bootcamp for rising seniors. Were able to bring admissions people from various institutions based in DC area. Program ran for three afternoons. Focused on things like finding the right fit, how to write a good essay, what are colleges looking for in applicants. Optional sessions about applying to colleges overseas. Bootcamp went really well. Looking for someone with student in class 2024 to lead it this spring.

Have put on programs via webinar. Want to continue with webinar approach. Have a “paying for college” webinar coming up. Goal is to offer one program per month.

Typically have educational consultants come in and talk about preparing for ACT and SAT. Mock ACT Coming up in Sat., Oct. 29, Mock SAT Sat., Jan. 7 – offered in cafeteria. Janet will schedule Anne Dolan to come by mid-Oct, and she will also talk about test optional schools and when you might provide scores and when you might not.

Janet plans to invite a speaker on mental health. There were good sessions last year that Janet would like to repeat, for example on dealing with homework struggles, executive functioning skills. Looking to do this this year. Want to do a session on. If have recommendations, please send Janet an email. Janetpence@comcast.net

5. Treasurer’s Report: Michelle Cowan, PTA Treasurer

Have been working through transition issues.

Looking back – prior treasurer and a few others completed last year’s financial audit in July. This is a State PTA requirement. At beginning last year – started out with a balance of just over \$49,000. During that fiscal year received \$43,000. There were expenses of around \$48,000. Ended the year with a balance of just over \$44,000. Will post audit results by end of week. Everything looked good and in compliance. Proper filings have been made with State PTA website and IRS. Huge thanks to Dan, the prior treasurer, for leaving things in great order!

Katrina called for vote to approve the budget.
Motioned for approval – approved.

Looking forward: started to work on a budget. Draft looks similar to last year.

Last year, PTA posted the budget for review and then it was adopted at Oct. meeting. Then the budget was adopted at Oct. meeting. Revenues that come from membership, no frills fundraiser, grocery



receipts, etc. equal about \$32,000. Expenditure budget is about \$60,000 (comparable to last 2 FYs). Of the \$60,000, close to \$20,000 is for grants and projects that are run by grants committee, staff appreciation, student events, etc. Plan will be to post, talk to committee chairs, executive board for a final action at October meeting. Will get this on the website ASAP.

There have been very few transactions. Michelle is updating some things like the PTA reimbursement form, etc.

The PTA president's account, treasurer's email accounts have been hacked.

If you think you get a suspicious email from PTA, inform Katrina. PTA will reach out via meetings and newsletters to engage parents – not through direct emails.

Conclusion – Excited for this year! Look forward to your input and your help. Make sure you are signed up with membership, no frills fundraiser. Please check out PTA website - <https://www.yhspta.org/>

If want to make an announcement in the newsletter, send to communications@yhspta.org by Wednesday at 12:00 PM.