



Dorothy Hamm Middle School
DHMS PTSA General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, September 21, 2021 7:00pm (Zoom)

MEETING MINUTES

I. Welcome and Introductions

- Kristen welcomed all attendees to the first DHMS PTSA Meeting of the 2021-22 school year.
- THANK YOU to all the volunteers who have helped get this year off to a great start!

II. Teacher and Student Reports

- Phoenix Con! (Beth Sanderson, 8th grade English)
 - Planning for this event got started over the summer. The purpose was to provide a way to help every student feel comfortable and welcome in a new school after such a long time away from in-person schooling.
 - The 2-day Phoenix Con! was intended to help build community and establish TA relationships and to help students make connections in first few days. It also helped reorient staff and students to the building and highlight routines and practices to be safe and for success.
 - There were some team-building sessions; sessions grounded in the history of DHMS and in Arlington; discussions and introductions to the new R.I.S.E. (Respect, Integrity, Self-Awareness, and Engagement) approach; and finally activities geared toward showing kindness and serving others in the community.
 - THANK YOU to all the parent volunteers who came to help with the activities and to all the staff who put the event together!
 - Feedback was very positive and indicated support for hosting the event again next year.
- Structure of TA (Sally Donnelly, DHMS Reading teacher)
 - The TA Committee is working hard to ensure that TA time is structured, organized, and a way to give out information; consistent information to all students. The week is structured as follows:
 - Monday—checking the agenda and looking ahead to what days and classwork is coming up
 - Tuesday—viewing broadcast news team video and discussion
 - Wednesday—checking in with TA on how things are going; checking StudentVue for any missing work and figuring out a plan to get work turned in
 - Thursday—read aloud day and discussion
 - Friday—check over agenda again and assess how the week went; think about whether any work needs to be finished up over the weekend; closing circle and sharing “grows and glows”
 - THANK YOU to the PTSA for supporting author visits!

III. Principal’s Report (*Ellen Smith*)

- Covid news and protocols



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- Ellen addressed the Covid notification email that was sent Monday, September 20, 2021.
- What happens when there is a positive case?
 - When the school gets a call from the APS COVID HR about a positive case, they go through all the seating charts for the classes that student is in and identify any “close contacts”, i.e., individuals who were within 3 feet of the student for more than 15 minutes, excluding anyone who has been vaccinated. DHMS then contacts all “close contacts” to ask them to quarantine and assists to ensure they have their iPads so that they can access assignments through Canvas.
 - This scenario highlights the need to continue maintaining safe masking practices and social distancing.
 - In response to a question about the vaccination rate in the school, Ellen indicated that they are still collecting that information and requested that parents send in evidence of vaccination records to help with the recordkeeping.
- Covid testing is happening on Wednesdays from 7.30am – 9am
 - 100 students were tested last week; 180 are signed up for testing this week.
 - Students, who have been opted into the program by their parents, will be called out of their classes in timed intervals during this period.
 - Parent should have conversation with kids to set expectations about what they want child to do for that test.
- Ellen emphasized the objective of helping students learn to take ownership of their learning in middle school. That is why there is such an emphasis on learning to use the agenda for keeping track of homework and assignments and keeping an organized binder.
- THANK YOU all for strong parent-student participation at Back-to-School night! It was great and teachers really enjoyed the opportunity to see kids without masks!
- School pictures will be taken during your student’s PE class on either September 24 or 27. (If a 6th grader is splitting their time between PE and Spanish split, pictures will be taken during Spanish class.)
- Clubs and Activities
 - There are lots of sports taking place now (cheerleading, GOTR, intramural sports in the gym, etc.)
 - Student Council Association (SCA) is starting up.
 - Ellen will be looking to finalize coaches and sponsors for other clubs this week, in preparation for the activities fair next week.
 - A list of all clubs and activities will be posted online on the DHMS website next week. Ms. Dabney is a great contact if you have questions about clubs and activities.



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- A message will also be posted in Canvas for the students to look through as well and see if there are any clubs they would like to join.
- THANK YOU to PTSA for the great start to the year, including the Back-to-School lunch, t-shirts, the Back-to-School driveway party, and all the positivity and enthusiasm for the new year!

IV. Treasurer's Report (*Kami Ragsdale*)

- Monthly financial report
 - Kami highlighted a few things about the current budget. We are tracking ahead of budget by \$15,167, and our ending cash balance as of 8/31/21 (less outstanding checks) was \$35,074.42.
- 2020-21 Audit Report
 - Kami provided a brief overview of the Audit Report and thanked the members of the Audit Committee—Carina Nachnani, Nancy Ory, and Jason Pletcher.
 - Christa Mansur motioned to accept the Audit Report and Ellen seconded the motion. The PTSA members need to vote on whether to approve and accept the Audit Report.
 - Kristen provided the Google Form for voting in the chat function for the Zoom meeting; it will also be available in the Phoenix Post. Voting closes on Friday, September 24.
 - https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdQJCorq_cn0TREjSkFxfuab3xlCRJd2ezggCBCINRxTOaV5A/viewform

V. Record Prior Items

The DHMS PTSA voted on several items in May and June 2021 by electronic ballots. The following items were approved by the PTSA membership:

- The June 9, 2021 DHMS PTSA general membership meeting minutes
- The slate of Executive Board officers for the 2021-22 school year
- The proposed FY21 DHMS PTSA 2021-22 budget

VI. President's Report (*Kristen Shattuck*)

- Kristen reported out on all the exciting things that the PTSA has been working on for this school year so far:
 - Back-to-School lunch for teachers and staff
 - THANK YOU to Carrie Dunn and Beth Gray, who are our Teacher Appreciation Chairs!
 - Spirit wear t-shirts for all teachers and staff
 - THANK YOU to Mandi Sutton, our Spirit Wear Chair!



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- Very successful Back-to-School driveway party—over 500 DHMS school community members came to enjoy the party!
 - THANK YOU to Amy Erwin and Caroline Holt, our Community Event Committee Chairs!
- Purchasing books for author visits
- Upcoming activities
 - DHMS Dines Out at Pupatella on Wilson on September 22, 2021
 - Mention DHMS when paying for your food.
 - Kristen put a link in the chat function for the Zoom meeting for event ahead of time.
 - THANK YOU to Tara Blankinship, our DHMS Dines Out Chair!
 - Fall social for parents
 - Fall social for students
 - No Frills Fundraiser will begin around October 25. There will be lots of fun activities that week, associated with the kick-off of the No Frills Fundraiser.
 - THANK YOU to Melissa Hardt, our Phoenix Fund Chair!
- Kristen discussed our membership and fundraising goals:
 - The DHMS PTSA membership goal is 675 members. As of September 3, 2021, we have 417 members. We had a strong membership drive in August and are working to meet the goal of 675 members.
 - You can join online at the DHMS PTSA webpage:
<https://dorothyhamm.apsva.us/ptsa/join/>
 - THANK YOU to Susan Newton, our Membership Chair!
 - The DHMS PTSA has a fundraising goal of \$35,000. As of September 3, 2021, we are at \$8,235, as a result of 91 donations. We are still working to meet our fundraising goal and will be making a big push with the No Frills Fundraiser kick-off.
- Things to do:
 - Join the PTSA!
 - Complete online verification process in ParentVue— https://va-arl-psv.edupoint.com/PXP2_Login.aspx
 - Order Spirit Wear— <https://dhmsswag2021fall.itemorder.com/shop/sale/>
 - Parent Survey— <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf9-LpMDuDAImZGaqYp6ekDyLdnQGvKDbv9RtRDGd84RiaAKQ/viewform>
 - The survey closes September 22, 2021. All those who have completed the survey are entered to win DHMS spirit wear.



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- School pictures—to order photos, visit jostenspix.com, sign up for a free account, and access your student's photos with event code FE183321.

VII. Upcoming Dates

- Friday, September 24 and Monday, September 27 during PE class (or Spanish if you have a 6th grader doing the PE/Spanish split option): DHMS school picture days
- Wednesday, September 29 @ 11.54am: Early release
- Monday, October 4: First virtual parent chat
- Monday October 11: No school for students
- Tuesday, October 19 @ 7pm: DHMS PTSA general membership meeting
- Thursday, October 21 @ 4-7pm: Parent-teacher-student conferences
- Friday, October 22 @ 8am-12pm: Parent-teacher-student conferences
- Friday, October 22: No school for students
- Wednesday, October 27 @ 11.54am: Early release
- Friday, October 29: DHMS school picture make-up day

The meeting adjourned at 7.53 pm.