



**Dorothy Hamm Middle School**  
*DHMS PTSA General Membership Meeting*  
Tuesday, October 19, 2021 7:00pm (Zoom)

**MEETING MINUTES**

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**I. Welcome and Introductions**

- Kristen welcomed all attendees to the DHMS PTSA general membership meeting.
- THANK YOU to Karen Freeman for hosting the DHMS PTSA on her virtual platform and all her assistance on managing the Zoom calls!
- Kristen opened the meeting with a fun request for participants to add a response to the following question in the chat function: If you could swap spots with your child, what class would you want to take at DHMS? Lots of fun answers!

**II. One DHMS, One Week (Melissa Hardt)**

- THANK YOU to Melissa Hardt for working tirelessly on putting together all the spirit week activities for the upcoming fundraiser!
- Spirit week will take place **October 25-29**
- The purpose is similar to the No Frills fundraisers in the past, but also to reinvigorate school spirit and DHMS pride, by getting students involved and focusing on school support.
- The goal is to get \$35,000 for the Phoenix Fund, which will go to support the following:
  - A new scoreboard!
  - An art installation for new part of the building now that construction is finished—something depicting the history of the building!
  - Classroom grants!
  - Grade-level celebrations for the students!
- Spirit Week for Students
  - The Student Council Association is encouraging students to show school spirit through different daily themes:
    - Monday: Jersey or college t-shirt day
    - Tuesday: 80s day
    - Wednesday: Color wars
    - Thursday: Pajama day
    - Friday: Halloween costumes
  - The DHMS PTSA will be awarding a breakfast party to the TA in each grade level with the highest level of participation and will be hosting an Early Release Snack Bar! For the grade level with the highest participation. The Snack bar will likely take place on Nov. 17.
    - There were questions about how participation was measured, and there was a request to ensure that participation would be strictly about number of students whose families contributed, not about the amount donated by any family. Kristen assured everyone that the intent was to count number of participants rather than amount of contributions, but she and Melissa would ensure that flyers, advertisements, social media, materials, etc. would emphasize that any contribution was appreciated.
- Contributions made as of August 1 count toward Phoenix Fund
- Social for Parents @ Thursday, October 28, 7 - 10pm—no cost obligation to attend; just social and fun for the parents

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

- Traffic Circle, Safe Arrival to School



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- Kristin Haldeman (APS Transportation), Gabriela Prufrock (Arlington County Department of Environmental Services, Transportation), and Lauren Hassel (APS Safe Routes to Schools) joined the meeting to discuss the temporary traffic circle being added to the intersection of Military Road and Nelly Custis.
- The temporary roundabout should be in place very soon. Preparations of the intersection have already begun.
- Arlington County will be looking to DHMS for feedback on how it's working.
- Gabriela provided some history of the project and the improvements made along the Military Road corridor.
  - This traffic circle project is the last of three improvement projects for the Military Road corridor identified in a 2004 county-wide transportation study of arterials. The others were improvements to the intersection of Military Road with Marcy Road and with 36<sup>th</sup> Road North.
  - At a community meeting in 2017, options for improvement were discussed, including a round-about, a traffic light, or doing nothing; the majority of community support was for the round-about.
  - Arlington County is installing a temporary round-about, to allow for testing and for removal, if it turns out not to be effective. Two crosswalks will be added. There will be white pylons and quick curb berms in place for about 6-12 months and cameras to capture traffic and walker volumes.
  - If effective, it will be made permanent. The permanent circle may be slightly shifted to make the circle more circular (the current oblong shape is a result of a utility pole that is inconveniently located and can't be moved for purposes of the temporary roundabout.). Also, there will be adjustments for a bike lane.
  - The plan can be viewed here: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Project-Types/Transportation-Projects/Military-Road-Safety-Improvements>
- Ellen asked about whether there will be any changes for the crossing guard posted in that location.
  - Kristin indicated that the intention is to keep that crossing guard in the same place as of now.
- Lauren Hassel talked about additional signage for yielding and pedestrian crosswalks.
- Kristin talked about the shortage of resources generally and in particular crossing guards. She intends to ask ACPD for additional resources.
- THANK YOU Gabriela, Lauren, and Kristin for coming to the meeting to discuss these issues!
- Student-Led Conferences
  - Ellen explained that student-led conferences will be taking place with the TA teacher on the afternoon of Thursday, October 21 and on Friday, October 22. Ellen described the intention of the student-led conference is to help students take ownership of their learning, by reflecting on their executive functioning skills, strengths and areas for improvement, areas of pride, and to think about their role in their own learning.
- Ellen reported that there had been a second Covid case in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, which was revealed as part of the ongoing testing. Teachers have been putting lesson plans into Canvas to assist those students who need to quarantine as a result of a close contact. Sometimes, there may be livestream lessons; often, the work will be independent work linked through Canvas.



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- In response to a question raised, Ellen noted that about 200 people have opted in for weekly covid testing (40 are staff). DHMS has developed a pretty smooth process for testing, getting through all 200 subjects in less than 2 hours.
- Ellen gave a shout-out to all the fall sports teams
  - CONGRATULATIONS to the boys soccer team that won today!
- THANK YOU to all the participants in the first parent chat. There is another parent chat with the Virtual Learning parents on October 25.
- Ellen reminded parents to send their child to school with a mask and encourage them to bring a back-up mask.
- Wednesday, October 20: Wear **ORANGE** for Unity Day
  - Purpose is to show unity for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion as part of National Bullying Prevention Month.
- Ellen reported that lunch tables were delivered and will be assembled for students to use when eating lunch at the outdoor plaza.
  - Ellen asked parents to talk to their children about dressing appropriately, as the weather gets colder, if they want their child to eat outdoor lunch.

**IV. Record Prior Items**

The DHMS PTSA general membership voted by electronic ballot and approved the following item(s):

- The August 2021 Audit Report

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

- Kristen reported that there had been updates to our website
  - THANK YOU to Madelon Brennan and Jenny Shanker for all their hard work in refreshing the website and keeping it updated!
- Spirit Wear Sales
  - THANK YOU to everyone who placed orders!
  - Approximately 90 orders were placed; they are due to arrive the week of November 2
  - THANK YOU to Mandi Sutton, our Spirit Wear Chair!
- Kristen announced that we have a new social media chair—THANK YOU Neelima Denduluri for volunteering for this role!
- Kristen reported that the Teacher Appreciation Committee is planning the Fall Snack Attack for Teachers and Staff, for October 27.
  - Be on the lookout for a Signup Genius and other opportunities to volunteer and/or donate for the event!
  - Thank you, Carrie Dunn and Beth Gray!
- Susan Newton reported out on efforts to increase DHMS PTSA membership.
  - Current membership is at 508 (goal 550)
  - Total donation amount from membership is \$9435 and monthly donations are \$13,735.
- Programs (*Christa Mansur*)
  - Christa reported that Reflections entries are due on Friday, October 22.
    - Reflections is a national program that allows students to compete against others to showcase artistic talent in a variety of categories:



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- Dance choreography
- Film production
- Literature
- Music composition
- Photography
- Visual arts
- If you have any questions, you can email [programdhmspts@gmail.com](mailto:programdhmspts@gmail.com).
- Please turn in any submissions to DHMS front office
- To Do For You!
  - Join the PTSA!
  - Complete Online Verification Process in ParentVue
  - Order School Pictures
    - Picture Make-Up Day: October 29

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

- Monthly financial report
  - Kami reported that we are tracking ahead of budget by \$17,261. The ending cash balance as of 9/30/21 (less outstanding checks) was \$39,779.30

**VII. New Business**

- The general membership needs to vote on the following items by October 20, 2021:
  - Vote on September Minutes
  - Vote on Organizational Structure Form

**VIII. Upcoming Dates**

- **Thursday and Friday, October 21 and 22** - Student-Led Conferences
- **October 25 - 29 - One DHMS, One Week!**
- **Monday, October 25** - VLP Parent Chat @ 8:30am
- **Wednesday, October 27** - Early Release (11:54)
- **Thursday, October 28** - Parent Social @ 7 - 10pm
- **Friday, October 29** - School Picture Retakes/Make Up Day
  
- **Monday, November 1** - Last Day of 1st Quarter
- **Tuesday, November 2** - No School for Students
- **Thursday, November 4** - No School for Students (Diwali)
  
- **Thursday, November 11** - No School for Students

The meeting adjourned at 8.17 pm.