

Arlington Science Focus School

PTA Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 6th, 2019 7:00-8:30pm



I. **Welcome** (*Dena Porter, ASFS PTA President*)

President Dena Porter welcomed everyone to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.

Both Ms. Begley and Ms. Jones are returning from well-deserved vacation.

II. **ASFS Updates**

Dena introduced Danielle Ancil as the new ASFS EL teacher for English language learners. We welcome Ms. Ancil to our school community.

Ms. Cherubim provided an overview of the Responsive Classroom program. The group participated in a quick 'Hot 100' activity. Responsive classroom activity suggestions come from trainings teachers receive but there are always some available online.

III. **Principal Update** (*Mary Begley, ASFS Principal - highlights shared by Dena Porter*)

We are fully staffed. Please contact Ms. Begley with any staffing questions. We have met with 84 of the 102 registered kindergartners. Before school begins, we will have a new visitor sign in process to promote further security. Please stay tuned for more information. For volunteers must submit an APS online application. Stacia Griffin will be the point person in the ASFS front office for the process.

IV. **June PTA Meeting Minutes Approval** (*Dena Porter, ASFS PTA President*)

VOTE: The June meeting minutes were approved.

V. **2018-19 ASFS PTA Audit Report** (*Chris Brown, ASFS PTA Treasurer*)

The audit report is a checklist required by the VA PTA to ensure that we are following requirements for our nonprofit status. It is available online for anyone to review. We will vote on the audit report at the September PTA meeting after which we will submit to the VA PTA. Please feel free to reach out to Chris with any questions.

VI. **Draft 2019-20 ASFS PTA Budget** (*Chris Brown, ASFS PTA Treasurer & Kristi Tsiopanas, VP Fundraising*)

Dena reviewed a draft of the PTA executive board's goals for the year. If anyone has feedback questions, or ideas, please reach out to Dena.

The PTA executive board is finalizing the proposed budget for 2019-20 which we will post for review and vote at the September PTA meeting.

VII. **Presentation of Proposed Upcoming ASFS Projects**

- ASFS Track Repaving Project
 - Classic Cottages has offered to sponsor a joint project with us to repave our walking track. They have asked the PTA to donate \$2000. Jen Bethel has already donated \$2500 of her design services to contribute towards the project, and Classic Cottages will generously cover the rest of the costs.
 - VOTE: The PTA membership voted to approve the track repaving project.
 - The project is scheduled for Wednesday, August 14th and scheduled to be completed by Thursday, August 15th.

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- 3rd Water Bottle Refilling Fountain
 - APS will provide 2 water bottle refilling stations at ASFS, one in the lobby and one in the gym. The request is for one additional fountain downstairs in the 4th and 5th grade hallway. The estimated cost is \$1000-1500. APS will install all three fountains at the same time, and maintain all three fountains.
 - VOTE: The PTA membership voted to approve the third water bottle fountain.
- ASFS Tree Trunk Design
 - When you drive into the circle of the school, there is a stump that is half cut down. To remove entirely would cost \$3000 (not covered by APS). As an alternative, a local artist has offered to carve an ASFS design on the tree trunk for \$1000-1200. The project would be incorporated into the curriculum and allow the children to view and observe with the result of a piece of art in front of the school.
 - VOTE: The PTA membership voted to approve the tree trunk design project.

VIII. PTA Updates

- Join the PTA - Thank you to parents who have joined, and all parents and teachers are encouraged to join this year.
- Submit PTA Volunteer Form - We are so grateful to our parent volunteers and encourage all parents to submit their volunteer form this year to indicate their interests where they would like to help out.
- PTA Directory Update
 - To be included to the directory, you need to opt in through ParentVUE. The system defaults to 'no' and you must opt in stating 'yes'. This is how you may find other classmates information for parties, play dates, and class email lists. If you have trouble getting into ParentVUE, please see Loren in the front office.
 - The PTA Website has some updates this year with a new directory platform, and no need to register on the site. The directory has its own login process.

IX. PTA Volunteer Opportunities

- ASFS Aquariums
 - Thank you to Deirdre McDermott for leading the effort to feed our fish this summer. We have a few open spots should you wish to assist. Please reach out to Deirdre to sign up or visit the PTA website.
- Water School Gardens
 - We have a few open spots to water the grounds before school starts. Please reach out to Lindsey Englerth to sign up.
- Back to School Packets & School Supplies
 - We need some extra hands on the afternoon of August 27th to unload the boxes and put together the packets of flyers that are sent home with students on the first day of school. Please reach out to Dena if you can volunteer.

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- Back to School Picnic
 - Sunday, September 8th from 4-6pm is our annual picnic which is a potluck style family event, with games on the field. We need a lot of hands to make it happen. There are a variety of jobs. If you are interested, please reach out to Rabia Oubenadi or sign up online.
- Open PTA Roles
 - Coordinator for 5th grade field trips with the Cherrydale Rehabilitation Center. Last year, the students made blankets and visited the residents. The time commitment is about 1.5 hours for each visit, and we would like to set up ongoing visits this year.
 - Dine Out Lead - If anyone is interested in helping with family nights and restaurant promotions, please contact Kristi.
 - Theater Production Lead – There was interest in the spring to do a theater production with our after-school partner, Baroody. However, we need a parent to support this effort. Please see Dena if you are interested.

X. **Committee News and Announcements**

- School Grounds Committee Plan (*Lindsey Englerth, Grounds Committee*)
 - Our focus this year will be to start rebuilding and establish a better maintained courtyard that is safe and fun for our children to learn. Specifically,
 - Create a “living laboratory” that complements the ASFS/SOL curriculum while enhancing the aesthetic experience for our students, faculty, & staff;
 - Provide an “experiential platform” to connect children with nature in a safe, educational environment (e.g., Partnership with 4H Garden Club); and
 - Offer a dynamic learning space that highlights the constantly changing qualities of the natural world (i.e., seasonal changes, rotating crop/plant life cycles, soil building, etc.) in ways that encourage children to make connections between what they learn at school and what they observe in the broader world around them.
 - More to come next month.
- **Rewards Programs & Promotions** (*Kristi Tsiopanas*)
 - Fundraisers
 - Shop for ASFS through our local grocery stores. Easy way to help ASFS by grocery shopping. Another way is to use smile.amazon.com. Box tops has an app now.
 - We have a partnership with Silver Diner as well. Every time you eat there and reference ASFS, the school will receive a % of the dollars spent.
- **National PTA Reflections Contest**
 - All students are encouraged to participate in this national art contest with 7 categories. Children may enter in all of the categories as often as they like. More details to follow as the year kicks off next month.

XI. **APS and School Board Update** (*Kate Merrill, VP External Affairs*)

The school board has selected Cintia Johnson as the interim superintendent. An executive search committee will be heading up a search for a new superintendent.

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The APS Instructional Pathways report was released in June. The school board will use this data to factor into upcoming boundary changes and other school changes. If you are interested in what is going on with the school board, you can attend a meeting or stream online.

XII. Upcoming Events/Reminders

- Thursdays in August - Kindergarten Playdates (Hayes Park), 5:00-7:00pm
- Thursday, August 29th
 - ASFS Open House, 3:00-4:00pm
 - Kindergarten Playdate (Hayes Park), 4:00-6:00pm
- Tuesday, September 3rd
 - First Day of School (Parent Coffee @ 8:45am)
 - New Families Reception, 6:30-7:00pm
 - September PTA Meeting, 7:00-8:30pm
- Sunday, September 8th - Back to School Picnic, 4:00-6:00pm
- Wednesday, September 11th - Back to School Night, 7:00-8:30pm