

Arlington Science Focus School

PTA Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 3rd, 2019 7:00-8:30pm



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

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

II. **Guest Speaker** – *Officer Gammell, ASFS SRO (School Resource Officer)*

Officer Gammell reviewed his role and relationship to the ASFS community.

III. **Principal's Report** (*Mary Begley, ASFS Principal*)

Ms. Begley thanked parents for coming this evening, encouraged parents to come to PTA meetings held each month, and reminded parents that we have free childcare for the PTA meetings.

Our first big event is this Sunday, our back to school picnic.

Ms. Begley reminded parents that cell phones are not permitted at ASFS. If you have a child who brings a cell phone to school, it will go into a 'June' box. It will stay there unless you schedule a meeting with Ms. Begley. There are phones available across the school. (Please also feel free to refer to page 17 in the handbook).

Thank you to Jen Bethel for her help securing funding for our new track. It's such a wonderful addition to our property. This year, the ASFS staff has chosen a theme for this year 'Be the change you wish to see in the world.' –Gandhi.

Ms. Begley shared that APS is focusing on 'multiple pathways' this year. APS has schools that focus on different ways of learning and a variety of option schools. APS is looking at these pathways from elementary through high school.

Ms. Begley highlighted the wall of college pennants in the ASFS hallway showing where all teachers went to college. It's really an impressive site.

Ms. Jones reviewed the SOL (standards of learning) assessments in grades 3-12. This past year, ASFS performed in 94% in English, 97% in math and 96% science (5th). Growth rates in reading and math – 94% improved in reading and 97% in math. Individual student scores will be mailed out tomorrow.

This Thursday, our new superintendent will be sworn in, Cintia Johnson. We have over 700 children in our school this year. We would love your involvement. Please reach out to your friends and neighbors.

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

VOTE: The PTA membership voted to approve the August PTA Meeting Minutes.

V. **ASFS PTA Audit Report and 2019-2020 Budget** (*Chris Brown, ASFS PTA Treasurer*)

- Audit report – Chris Brown reviewed all of our expenditures from this past year. We send this to the VA PTA to ensure we are in compliance.
- VOTE: The PTA membership voted to approve the FY2018-19 Audit Report.
- 2019-2020 PTA Budget – Reviewed the highlights of the proposed budget, including a 1-page budget snapshot which shows what our PTA does and what we want to support as a PTA.
- VOTE: The PTA membership voted to approve the FY2019-20 ASFS PTA Budget.

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VI. **Fundraising** *Kristi Tsiopanas, VP Fundraising*)

ASFS holds two big annual fundraisers, the no-frills fundraiser and the annual auction. There is a flyer in the first day packet. Please feel free to contribute at any time. There are other ways to support ASFS as well, including loyalty card grocery programs or purchasing through Amazon Smile. Harris Teeter requires an annual renewal, and Giant has ended their program.

VII. **Other Events**

This Sunday is the back to school picnic. There are a few volunteer options still open, so please reach out to Rabia.

PTA reminders:

- PTA parents can only get contact information through the PTA directory, and parents must choose to opt in. The ASFS PTA Directory will launch early next week.
- Remember to follow the PTA Facebook page and Twitter accounts. This is another way for the PTA to communicate over the course of the year.

VIII. **Committee News**

- **Grounds Committee** (*Alex James, Grounds Co-Chair, and Ms. Lin, ASFS Investigation Station Lead Teacher*)
 - o Alex provided a quick overview of the of the garden initiative to renew the learning laboratory for our children through exploration. The grounds committee is working with a landscape designer to assist in redesigning the space. The group would like to start a vegetable garden so children may observe the plant lifecycle, textures, etc. There is a great maple tree which provides for a shade garden.
- **After School Enrichment Programs** (*Baroody*)
 - o Registration opens on Sunday, 9/8 for fall session classes.
- **Reflections Contest** (*Noosha Tayebi*)
 - o National contest sponsored by the National PTA. The theme is "Look Within." There are a variety of categories for children to enter. Deadline is October 29th. There will be judges, and finalists move up to the regional and state levels.
- **Welcome Committee** (*Jen Bethel*)
 - o Please see the flyer for new families if interested in connecting with another family in the school.
- **Box Tops** (*Amy Hodges*)
 - o This is moving to an app on your phone. The goal is to do a school wide participation goal.
- **Girls on the Run** – Program for 3rd through 5th grade girls during the fall in spring; running program where the group meets twice a week at 7:30am on the track. Registration is open through mid-September.
- **Food Bus** – Every Friday we take unopened leftover food to AFAC collected at lunchtime. We need volunteers to take less than an hour of their time - online sign-up is in the eFF and PTA website.
- **Grade Level Social Events** - If you are open to hosting an event, please let Dena know. Best to do before day light savings and while the weather is still warm.

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IX. Thank You's!

- Thank you to all the parents who have helped over the summer and start of the school year:
 - o Kindergarten Playdates - Grace Carlson, Puja Valiyil, and Olga Kasyan
 - o Aquariums - Dierdre McDermott
 - o Watering the School Grounds - Lindsey Englerth, Alex James and Julie McGowan Flynn
 - o Welcome Back Staff breakfast - Tyeana McIver
 - o First Day Coffee & Balloons and New Families Reception - Rabia Oubenadi
 - o PTA Directory - Patricia Wilson working with our new provider
 - o Wendy Williams - PTA Membership Chair for collecting and managing PTA membership dues.
 - o Carol Brzymialkiewicz - new PTA Volunteer Coordinator
 - o Mary Schmergel and Allison Horbaly - for leading the school supplies efforts this year, and Rhiannon Leutner for her help
 - o Tech Crew - for installing the new ASFS sign on the fence
 - o Reading Workshop Books - thank you to all who helped over the summer

X. Community Update (*VP External Affairs, Kate Merrill*)

- Kate shared a list of dates for upcoming school board meetings and work sessions.
- A timeline for community engagement will be released later this fall.
- APS is looking at more deficits as part of next year's budget. This will be something to pay attention to.
- Elementary school boundary updates will go into effect in the 2021-22 school year. All elementary schools may be impacted, and there may be school location changes.

XI. Upcoming Key Dates

- Sunday, September 8th - Back to School Picnic, 4:00-6:00pm
- Wednesday, September 11th - Back to School Night, 7:00-8:30pm
- Monday, September 23rd - Kindergarten Parent Coffee, 9:00-10:00am
- Wednesday, September 25th - 1st/2nd Grade Parent Coffee, 9:00-10:00am