

**CES PTA Meeting Minutes**  
**September 24, 2024, at 7:00 pm**  
**CES Media Center**

*Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm*

**Attendees:**

**Board Members:**

Eileen Brewer (President), Julie Kim (1st Vice President), Mikkola Gomes (2nd Vice President), Carmen Cheng (Secretary), Meghan Nickerson (Treasurer), Evelyn Sommers (PTACHC Delegate)

**Members:**

Huiyang Li, Nilgun Ozturk, Erin Aust, Kara Mears, Jei Diamante, Valerie Owen, Becca Gorsuch, Jen Livingston, Sterine Hargrove, Bokyoung Shim, Karishma Chengappa, Micaela Crooks, Heeba Sait, Eileen Buckle, Svitlana Omural, Stephanie Dunn-Martin

**CES Staff:**

Hilary Becker (teacher)

**1. Introductions Board & Welcome to Dr. Brewer - New Principal**

**2. Principal / Assistant Principal's Items - N/A**

**3. President / Vice President Items**

- Policies for Meetings
- Approval of Minutes - [May](#)
  - Meghan Nickerson asked for a motion to approve the May meeting minutes. Micaela Crooks seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.
- IRS Status Update - Need a committee or need to stop trying
  - CES PTA lost 501(c)(3) charitable / non-profit status - issues ongoing for a few years
  - Pending resolution from IRS to correct tax year and recognize charitable status (PTA has consulted with CPAs without resolution)
    - IRS called Eileen last year after receiving paperwork: registered in state of Maryland but under organization in Delaware (explained solution offered by national PTA)
    - IRS does not have record of rejected electronic submissions
  - Issue: cannot fundraise with non-profit status (need to pay taxes)
  - Seeking volunteers to form a new (short term) committee to help resolve issue and provide recommendations
  - Option: form PTO (own charity but can operate under Free State PTA) - steps needed to form PTO are: establish business license in Maryland (~2 weeks, but can start operating), hire non-profit attorney to review documents (few days to review documents), file non-profit status (~3 months from IRS), new bank account
    - Consider change back to PTA after non-profit status reinstated

- Next step: reach out to state legislator
  - Becca Gorsuch motioned for CES PTA to form our own PTO; Micaela Crooks seconded. After group discussion, the motion is to be tabled until next meeting (PTA board to check with non-profit attorney to answer questions whether current non-profit status will be issue when forming our PTO; PTA board to provide a report at next meeting)
  - [Calendar for the year](#) (Subject to Change)
    - Cultural Night: 5/23/25 at RHHS (only date in May with availability at RHHS), committee ok with date
    - Back to School BINGO - rescheduled to October 2 (planned for outdoors, but cafeteria reserved in case of rain)
  - Open Committee Positions - Really need volunteers (hospitality is filled)
    - Note: PTA to provide own paper to make copies
    - After School Program Committee - Mr. Weiskind seeking volunteers (PTA receives \$5 per student for after school
      - Booking room, registration, website, making copies
      - PTA provides room and insurance
      - Micaela Crooks motioned to create an after school program committee chair. Becca Gorsuch seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.
  - Virtual Meetings
    - Plan to alternate between in person and virtual meetings
  - Field Trips - line item in budget
  - Bins in ladies room for menstrual products - PTA will advocate with administration
  - Summer Bridge - Julie Kim suggested to restart fundraiser
    - Meghan Nickerson motioned to restart the Summer Bridge fundraiser. Julie Kim seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.
  - Candy for Courageous (Nov 1-4) - Micaela Crooks will help organize. Sherine Hargrove motioned to hold Candy for Courageous for candy collection for the troops. Becca Gorsuch seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.
- 4. Membership Update - N/A**
- a. 110 members
  - b. Eileen will check with Emily how many teachers have joined; want to increase participation (decide the fees at next meeting)
- 5. Treasurer Report**
- Approval of the 2024-2025 Budget
- Supporting Documents:
- [Budget vs Actuals](#)
  - [Proposed Budget](#)
- Reminder: will vote throughout year as needed
- Motions during the meeting for changes to the proposed budget:
1. Eileen Brewer motioned to add a line item for hospitality income of \$1500 and increase staff appreciation expense from \$5000 to \$7500. Micaela Crooks seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.
  2. Eileen Brewer motioned to change the expense line item for “fun run” to “dance a

thon". Carmen Cheng seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.

3. Evelyn Sommers motioned to add a line item to the budget for copy paper expense (\$240). Becca Gorsuch seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.
4. Becca Gorsuch motioned to approve the 2024-2025 budget with the amendments raised during the meeting. Julie Kim seconded. A voice vote was called with no opposition, the motion carried.

-Eileen Brewer shared that CES administration is planning to add dry erase boards to classrooms. 432 dry erase boards to be resurfaced from chalkboard to whiteboard. Cost will be more than \$16,000. CES administration asked the PTA for some contribution. Table vote until school provides an update on the allocation of funds from previous school fundraisers.

-Reminders:

- Reimbursements: submit original receipt to treasurer
- PTA cannot purchase gift cards and submit for reimbursements
- Annual financial review due last week of October; 1-2 hours commitment (volunteers: Evelyn Sommers, Micaela Crooks, Becca Gorsuch)

## **6. PTACHC Report**

-See full report at end

## **7. Committee Reports**

- 5th Grade Committee - held first meeting prior to PTA meeting
- SECAC - have not heard from SECAC, next meeting is Oct 1
- BINGO
- Yearbook - from previous years' experience, co-chairs propose to limit special messages to 5th graders (not for other grades). Difficult to keep track of payments for messages, which are submitted to school and messages received. Discussed changing payment for messages to CES PTA vs. school.
- Hospitality/Staff Appreciation - back to school lunch held in August; calendar for whole year has been planned with CES administration
- Cultural Night
- Kindergarten Connection - good turnout over summer
- After School Programs
- Events - need volunteers to help with events
- Fundraising - hold for now
- Spirit Wear - need volunteers
- Reflections - need volunteers
- Spring Fling - need volunteers
- Other (Website, Front Sign, Fall School Supplies, Communications)

## **8. Q & A**

## **9. Adjournment**

*Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm*

**Upcoming Dates:**

- **October 2nd - Back to School BINGO**
- **October 15th - PTA Meeting - Virtual**
- **October 25th - Glow Party**

## Parent Teacher Association Council of Howard County (PTACHC) Delegate Report

Date of Meeting: September 3, 2024

### GENERAL MEETING

*7:30 PM Call to Order; Establish Quorum; Mission Statement; Board Introductions*

***President's Report (Terri Marcus – [president@ptachc.org](mailto:president@ptachc.org))***

**Mission: PTA's mission is to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.**

Ms. Marcus explained the role of the PTACHC delegate. Each PTA can have up to 3 members as delegates to the PTACHC. The President and 2 delegates.

If you are coming to meetings representing 2 different PTAs (e.g. 1 student in elementary school and 1 student in middle school) You can only cast 1 vote if you are voting (so one school wouldn't be represented in the voting if both schools just had the 1 delegate attending).

As a delegate, you can:

- Suggest positions
- Bring up topics of interest to the PTACHC
- The best way to contact the PTACHC Board is the emails on the website. The website is the official site of record.

Website: <https://www.ptachc.org/>

### **Free State PTA Convention – July 2024**

President Terri Marcus, Treasurer Laurie Ramey, Vice President Karina Fisher, and Vice President Angela Shiplet attended the convention. There were 71,000 PTA members at the state convention. 10,000 were from Howard County. This is the largest percentage of PTA members of any county in Maryland.

Terri Marcus represented the Howard County PTACHC.

Brent Loveless, PTACHC Legislative Chair, is on the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) Committee.

Pat Carter is Operating Budget Alternate.

### **Training for local PTAs.**

Laurie offered treasurer training. Treasurers and one other member of the local PTA board should attend. PTACHC likes to offer in-person training. Free State offers virtual training

Leadership trainings are offered by Terri but are not mandatory.

## **Candidate Forum**

There will be a **Candidate Forum** on **October 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am** in the **Homewood Center Cafeteria**. Candidates for the Board of Education will be there but probably others too. Please come and ask questions live. It will also be recorded and posted after a couple days (they usually edit just to take out periods of waiting / non-content).

HCPSS is **looking for parents to serve on the committee to update the Student Personal Technology Policy**. There will be a stakeholder value meeting. Meeting dates are 9/25, 10/2, 10/9 10/16.

## **Local PTA Bylaws need to be updated this year.**

Local PTA bylaws were mostly done in 2022. Local PTAs need to submit all new bylaws this year. This can be reviewing existing bylaws and making small changes; it can be simple. In October, PTACHC will call for volunteers for bylaws committee.

## **Executive Vice President Report**

Thank you for representing your local PTAs.

In October, the Howard County delegation to the State Government visits and provides the legislation they are intending to propose. Members include: Vanessa Atterbury who sponsored a commercial Excise Tax, Terri Hill, who sponsored Public Private Partnerships, Chao Wu, who sponsored Transfer Tax. This was because of PTACHC's advocacy.

Task Force Revenue Options: Present options on or before October 31, 2024.

There are two resident's budget hearings: the estimated dates are December 11, 2024 and March 7, 2024.

There are state and local bills.

Mr. William Barnes, HCPSS Superintendent, is here to speak to us today. He is accompanied by Mr. Brian Barrett, Director of Communication.

## **Secretary's Report**

Minutes were approved with slight changes all noted by previous Secretary.

## **Treasurer's Report**

1. Budget was approved
2. Approved use of bank account.
3. Review was completed.
4. Financial Training Central Library 9/4, East Columbia Library 9/7 3-5 pm, 9/15 2-4 pm East Columbia Library
5. PTACHC had to pay a penalty to the IRS, was \$150 / quarter.
6. There isn't a current Free State financial training.

## **William Barnes, School Superintendent**

### Introduction:

Mr. Barnes is a former math teacher and Chief Academic Officer for HCPSS. He spoke of the following topics.

1. Defining Greatness: this is Mr. Barnes' 30<sup>th</sup> year in education. For him, educators were sanctuary. He was in computer science but came to education.
2. Spoke of HCPSS as a "Learning System" where we are learning from each other, not just between Central Office and schools, but learning across school staff.
3. His "90 Day Plan" : He has communicated this to teachers and there is great energy around it. Accountability Strategic Plan with measurable goals and outcomes. He wants to be transparent. In some ways HCPSS will be great. In some ways we will fall flat.
4. Referenced HCEA President Ben Schmidt.: Pay attention, community education sessions. Focus on learning for 7 years. Focus on employee well-being, and student well-being, school based mental health.
5. He said for transportation – we are still working on it. It is better this year. He wants to restore walking next year to the previous year boundaries.
6. Human Resources: speeding up hiring process. Trying to increase the diversity of staff. Emphasizing equality. School System DEIA.
7. Discussed Budget – Last budget we just approved allocated \$29.5M 1 time fix
8. Kept summer program. Kept strings program, question of how much additional well compensated staff can be recruited. He has a strategic vision and a values survey that was circulated to all schools
9. He said he would send out a short version of his slides and a link for the survey. He wants conversations to happen such that when you provide input there will be meaning behind it.

### Question & Answer:

1. Power outages at Western Howard County, refrigerators. He said yes we knew about Mt. Hebron, first thing when generators restored power was to get the refrigerators back online.
2. School start times – will they stay the same or change. He said he would talk with Board Officers analysis of what it would take. He said we would need 11 more buses probably around \$1.5M. Compressing the school bus schedule required 30-50 buses.
3. Zum is doing better this year than they did last year but we have Tip Top on our rosters. Teams got together twice. Tech is better on Zum than Tip Top Chain of communication. Other contractors didn't have enough invested / tech / infrastructure.
4. Question about Capital Budget: Do not move the project list around. Lock the criteria down.
5. He has hired a new Chief Administrative Operating Officer who was previously the Harford County Associate Superintendent. Comment from floor that schools getting put on the deferred maintenance list is getting faster than taking schools off. Mr. Barnes will look at replacing the sports equipment at Dunloggin Middle School which was eaten by rodents. And will kick the tires on Public Private Partnerships. Some members explained while they are not thrilled about them at this point they want to better understand the options / be open-minded.

6. Mr. Barnes reduced some positions, not as many Special Ed, staff have vacancies. Was asked about HCPSS accepting donations and he explained rules about that. Deputy Superintendent / CFO said looking at all funding points.
7. River Hill rep asked him to look into W.R. Grace and he said he would.

### **Legislative Chair Report:**

1. PTACHC is an advocacy organization.
2. The number of legislative items accomplished is proportional to the number of volunteers.
3. PTACHC has a long term legislative effort
4. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) Local law saying planning area for growth and development. Ensures adequate infrastructure, new schools, maintenance of existing schools.
5. Chair is PTACHC Representative on APFO Committee. Current standards are:
  - a. 105% elementary
  - b. 110% middle
  - c. 115% High School
6. APFO is more than that. Do you have everything in capital budget? 30,000 additional units, that's 1 new seat you need in a school for every 2 houses.
7. There are two public sessions where community members may testify. Right now emphasis is schools and roads. Watch hearings online, Read all materials. [Legislative@ptachc.org](mailto:Legislative@ptachc.org)

### **Howard County Educators Association (HCEA)**

Teachers are in a 3-year agreement. This is year 1. Benefits.

Have to be back at the tables 2.25% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

Not everyone is eligible for step increases. You max out at 25 years. For Central Office step 27-28 more max at 30.

Budget has COLA for Fire and Police at 3.75%

In the budget the teacher share has dipped over the years. Budget includes library and community college.

### **VP of Issues Report**

PTACHC is starting a Facebook Group

Please complete your New Officer Contact Sheet to receive updated information and provide updated emails. [PTACHCPTAOfficersgroup@ptachc.org](mailto:PTACHCPTAOfficersgroup@ptachc.org)

President made a motion to adjourn and was approved.

**Meeting Adjourned.**