**Haycock PTA Meeting Minutes**

September 23, 2014, 7:30 pm

**1. Call to Order**

Whereupon at 7:35 p.m., Karen Leiser, PTA President, called to order the general membership meeting of the Haycock PTA. Per the PTA sign in sheet, there were 58 people in attendance. Karen issued a general thank you to current PTA members for helping get her up to speed. She issued an invitation to all meeting attendees to get involved in the PTA. She needs a President Elect for next year. The PTA welcomes fresh blood. You can just jump in. Chair a Committee. Thank you specifically to Sally Johnson, immediate past president. Thank you to Christie Johnson, Laura Sachwitz, and London Liebengood. There are some positions that we’re specifically looking to fill:

1. Copy Committee: Every week we need to make lots of copies of items which will go into Tuesday folders. Please go on to the sign up genius and sign up for a week or several weeks.
2. Yearbook. Alison Seddon, PTA General VP, spoke to parents about the need for a parent volunteer to help supervise the yearbook committee. Meetings are held from 8:00 to 9:00 am on Fridays. Sally Johnson noted that Penny Bolden is the parent who has run the Yearbook and she will still be there. There will be training and you won’t be responsible for the whole of the Yearbook.
3. Teacher Appreciation Week—Needs a chair. London Liebengood is the hospitality chair and will oversee it.

**2. Secretary Report.**

Amy Kales introduced herself and asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June meeting. Sally Johnson so moved. Christie Johnson seconded. There were no objections and the motion carried.

**3. Treasurer Report.**

1. Heather Kimmel, PTA Treasurer, advised that there was an audit performed which found no problems. (Thank you to Pam Giambo, SiSi Cheng, and Jeff Brose for conducting the audit). She asked for a motion to approve the audit report. Katie Pisocky so moved. Christie Johnson seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried.
2. Proposed Budget was made available. Karen asked if there were any questions or comments about the proposed budget. There were none. Heather asked for a motion to approve the proposed budget. Laura Sachwitz so moved. Nancy Trainer seconded. There were no objections, and the motion was carried.
3. Karen noted that with the renovation, there will be a new courtyard and we’ll need a new playground. We’ll need lots of funds to improve the landscaping of the courtyard and for the new playground equipment (what FCPS will provide will not be up to our expectations). We have a good head start. Christie Johnson made a motion that we carry $32,000 in raised funds and allocate them for our PTA renovation reserve. Heather Kimmel seconded the motion. Christie further explained: This year we don’t have as much ability to fundraise, just e.g., we can’t have after school activities, so that is taking away from our income. This $32,000.00 and additional funds we hope to raise will be used for renovation expenses. We don’t know exactly what it will be used for, but we anticipate playground and landscaping fees. We also haven’t been told by the county what the timing will be. County may put in an order and then ask for reimbursement or they may need funds upfront.

We do know the current playground is going to be demolished. The footings have deteriorated enough that we’ll need a new one. It will also need to be moved to where the quads are (not the outfield, the quads more directly behind the school). Parent Bob Coates asked what FCPS allocated for playground equipment. Dr. Sheers: says approx $150,000. What we want will likely cost in the $250,000.00 range. Christie explained we are trying to stay on top of anticipated expenses.

The motion to allow $32,000.00 to be allocated to a renovation reserve was approved with no objection.

**4. General VP Report**

1. Alison Seddon thanked Kate Forrer for her work organizing the back to school folders.
2. There will be a room parent meeting on October 8th at 7 pm in the cafeteria, so if you signed up to be a room parent, please attend.
3. Read the Hotsheet. If you’re not getting it each week, let us know. We are in the process of revamping it. Look for a new format and a new look in October.
4. Have you joined the PTA? If not, come see Alison—she has membership forms with her.

**5. VP of Social**

1. Laura Sachwitz, VP of Social, thanked everyone for coming out to Movie Night. It was a nice event. It was a beautiful Fall night.
2. On Saturday October 18th there will be a Halloween Costume Ball at Longfellow. DJs, games, face painting, food.
3. On November 8th—Skate night at Kettler Arena.

**6. VP of Curriculum Enhancement (Christie Johnson for Tara Tanner)**

Curriculum Enhancement involves a lot of the programs that you’ve seen signups for at Open House or Back to School Night. Art Appreciation, Junior Achievement, Hands On Science. With Art Appreciation, you give the kids the lesson (which is written for you) There are 4 art appreciation events through the year. Junior Achievement is in the spring. Your PTA dues and moneys raised also pay for assemblies for students. $0.00 given to school from the county—so the PTA funds the assemblies. Also, we fund author visits. Sometimes need parent volunteers to come in to greet author or provide lunch. Be aware of the volunteer opportunity.

**7. VP of Community Affairs (Christie Johnson and Roopal Saran for Victoria**

**Lippincott)**

1. Community Affairs Committee, under Victoria Lippincott, pays attention to

FCPS school board issues and provides information from outside of the school. One of the best ways to get information is through the Keep in Touch emails or KITs—When you log in you can choose which kind of communication you receive. News to report today:

1. The school board approved Portrait of a Graduate which shows what skills and abilities FCPS would like its graduates to have.
2. Other big thing is the sleep initiative. There were public forums held last year to gain input from parents after a study was done showing teenagers need more sleep. The proposal approved will alter start time for high school students to allow them to get more rest. As it is now, high school students may be dropped off 30 minutes before school starts, and school starts at 7:30. Some kids are getting up at 5:30 am. The change in start times will mean middle school will start a bit earlier than it has. Longfellow will start earlier. Looking at a continuum –from K to 12th grade, there are only two years where you’ll start before 8:00 am. Change in start time won’t materially impact elementary school start time, although 25 elementary schools might be impacted ten minutes one way or the other. Really is a good thing.
3. Roopal Saran runs Cougars Care which is the part of the PTA

organization that provides service opportunities for kids to learn a bit more about the world around them. Last year Halloween costumes were collected and donated. Haycock participated in Stop Hunger Now with Lutheran Redeemer. Throughout the year there are a variety of activities. Roopal would love suggestions. Service projects for youngest kids are hard to find. Through churches or friends or non-profits. Let her know, even if the project would only need 10, 20, 30 kids. Projects for this year:

1. Autism Speaks Walk. Sunday October 5th. There is a Haycock Team. If you’re interested, please sign up.
2. DC Childrens Homeless Play Time Project is interested in receiving Halloween costume donations again this year. Look for information about that soon because we obviously need to do it before Halloween.
3. Stop Hunger Now—November 1st.
4. Christie noted that the Lost and found is currently empty. If you have

anything missing check it before school or have your kids check it. It’s located in the back of the cafeteria. Cougars Care volunteers will donate at Christmas and then at the end of the year. Putting your names on coats, lunch boxes, etc totally helps!

**8. VP of Fundraising. (Christie Johnson)**

* 1. We are looking to raise $40,000 in the first 40 days of school with the

Armchair Fundraiser. If you look at the budget, you’ll see we don’t sit on this money. The majority of money is used for the school—teachers, programming, classrooms, cafeteria tables, you name it. The sooner they have it, the sooner they can put it to work. Don’t put it off. If we give teachers money in March, it may be too late for them to put the money to use. If you haven’t donated yet, you can still. If you verify A to Z you can do it all in one shot.

* 1. Ways to get money for free:

i. Register your card with Giant, Harris Teeter and Safeway.

ii. Box Tops. We raised over $3000 in Box Tops last year.

iii. Shop from the Haycock Amazon link—we raised $4300 last year—

and it doesn’t cost you anything—just start from the Haycock PTA Amazon link. Bookmark the page. Haycock gets something. Great at the holidays. Anyone can use the link.

1. We’ll be starting the Scrip program—lots of boosters in high school

do it. Gift cards. Anytime you purchase a gift card we get a portion of the sale. It’s a different way of shopping. We can earn a significant amount of money.

1. Mixed Bag. Think of Scout bags but a little cheaper and made of recyclable materials. This will come out at the end of October. All kinds of bags.
2. SCA—pennies for the playground. Keep your spare change. Fundraisers where coins have been collected. $7000-$9000 can be raised with coins.
3. Bricks—Buy a Brick. There will be a new entrance to Haycock. The current cafeteria, where we’re sitting, will become the administrative offices. There will be a brick wall where you enter. You can buy a brick in honor of your kids, teachers, etc.

*Remember: Fundraising is important but it’s the least favorite thing of a lot of people to talk about. It’s easy to forget to do—we’re all busy. But Christie’s big pitch--Come together. Don’t want to procrastinate—teach your kids about the importance of saving and raising funds.*

**9. Principal’s Report.**

* 1. Dr. Sheers introduced herself and introduced Erica Shannon, our

Assistant Principal. The opening of school was smooth considering the renovation and full day Mondays. Renovation is ahead of schedule.

* 1. The renovation is right on target to have building done in two years.

Kids are excited. We will take advantage of the lessons available. Construction guy might be on the news show, just for example.

* 1. Parent Coffee notes are available on the website. Next coffee is Friday,

October 10th.

* 1. Portrait of a Graduate—Fairfax County has adopted it. Basically it’s a list

of skills and knowledge they would like to see in every Fairfax County graduate to have. Haycock staff created a Portrait of a Haycock Student. (Lists were available at meeting).

* 1. Full Day Mondays. Parent conferences are no longer worked into the

calendar. Conferences are still available. Please be respectful of the teacher’s time. If a phone conversation will suffice, please do that as opposed to meeting.

* 1. Parent Survey was taken at the end of the year. Amount of responses

was small. Please remember to respond—because time is spent reviewing the surveys and the school can really be improved if we have your input. Questions were asked about the following subject areas: Reading, writing, mathematics, science, social studies, character education, research skills, technology, physical education, visual arts, general music, band, strings. Parents suggested the biggest area for improvement is technology and research. Dr. Sheers said she’d probably agree with that assessment. Her goal would be to have a set of computers for each classroom – a one to one ratio of students to computers One of the changes that was made based on parental input is that there is now flexible grouping across general education and AAP for math instruction in grades 4, 5, and 6. This allows kids to get Level IV instruction in math even if they aren’t in the center.

**10. STEM (Science Technology Engineering Math)(Anne Rosenbaum)**

Anne Rosenbaum discussed STEM Night. If you’re new to Haycock we have a tradition of Family Science Night. This year we are combining it with Math night, so it will be STEM night. Last year there was a new element—we had vendors, TJ students, Longfellow students, and, hands on activities. Book Fair is also the same night.

Mark your calendar—STEM night is on November 6th.

This year we’ll have a Science Share. Not like a Science Fair—as it is not a competitive event. Science Share will be held from 5:30 to 6:30 and the other activities from 6:30 to 8:30. This allows science share kids to participate in all activities. The whole event, therefore, lasts from 5:30 to 8:30. There will also be food available to purchase. (So make a night of it!) With respect to Science Share:

* Open to all Haycock students.
* Families may design together.
* Only requirement is that it starts with a question. What were you trying to investigate? For elementary school—the more interactive it is, the better it is. Can the viewers participate in it? If it’s not an interactive project, then your project must follow the scientific method—hypothesis, one manipulated variable, a measurable dependent variable, data, discussion, and conclusion
* There are certain rules: No fire. No mess unless it is easily cleaned up by the exhibitor. No glass or fragile items.
* How do you sign up? A form will be on the website probably tomorrow. Simple form—what is the question you want to explore? Have you thought it through?
* The deadline to submit your form with your idea is October 17th
* If your child is participating, you must show up at 5:00 to set up in the gym.
* Remember electrical outlets are limited. All exhibitors are expected to stand by their projects from 5:30 to 6:30 pm and explain their science experiment to other students.
* Pick a subject that your kid(s) is/are interested in. Library is a great place to get ideas. Mrs. Rosenbaum is a great resource as well.

**11. Questions from the Floor**

* Karen Leiser noted that parent Tatiana Vandivier had proposed creating a Health and Safety Committee as part of the PTA. Karen Leiser reported that the PTA Executive Committee declined the invitation to create a committee at this point, but invited Tatiana to express her concerns regarding safety.
* Tatiana Vandivier noted that there was cement by play area and noted concerns about air quality at the school. She also noted hand washing practices are important in preventing the “expansion of disease.” Animals in the classrooms under certain circumstances may be a concern. Plug-in air fresheners are discouraged from being in school. FCPS has fact sheets and if a committee isn’t formed she would like the links to be included in the Hotsheet and on the website and she wants each parent to be informed of possible dangers and health/safety concerns. FCPS has guidelines for renovations and EPA and Healthy Schools has guidelines re air quality.
* Parent Beth Anderson noted that in the past the PTA has had a position where a person is connected to Health and Safety and issues. National PTA has a recommendation for Health and Safety position on boards. Karen said she would bring this up with the PTA Executive Committee again, but at this point the PTA is declining to form a Health and Safety Committee.
* Another parent (unidentified) raised concern about “huge” amounts of construction dust outside. Dr. Sheers stated that any parent should email her directly if they have any concerns. She is in touch with the lead construction project manager on a very regular (near hourly) basis. Dr. Sheers would put her child here and feels that the construction crew has been very respectful and safe. The FCPS air quality expert comes onsite to test air quality routinely. The air quality tests must meet not only OSHA guidelines, but also the FCPS guidelines, which are more stringent. They test at 25 locations in and around the school on an at least weekly basis at various times throughout the day. Another parent (unidentified) asked whether the information could be shared on the website or in the Hotsheet? Dr. Sheers said she would look into it. All tests conducted have been within normal OSHA and FCPS guidelines. Irene Levy noted that in the early morning hours she has not noticed any dust problems but that parents should remember that it has been windy the past couple of days. There are certain things the construction crew are not allowed to do during school hours and the construction crew has been very cooperative. First parent (unidentified) reiterated that there has been a lot of dust and the kids have been playing near the dust—she asked whether the administration was aware of it and why they hadn’t gone outside when there was a large noise (which apparently preceded the dust clouds). Dr. Sheers reiterated the need for parents with concerns to contact her when they have concerns and not to tell her after the fact as she can’t rectify any issues that occurred in the past. Staff noted the clouds of dust, but were not concerned with the general safety of themselves or students.
  + *Safety Concerns Follow Up: The following day, Dr. Sheers followed up with the construction manager, Mr. Carros, regarding the concerns brought up at the PTA meeting. FCPS Design and Construction (D&C) representatives met onsite to discuss the activities that occurred on Monday; apparently there was no cutting of masonry blocks on the playground side of the school.  What did occur was a gravel pour for the concrete slab.  This was likely the dust that was observed being blown towards the playground. Mr. Carros, the FCPS Construction Representative for Haycock, noted that the contractor did attempt to spray water to keep the dust down but that it was quite windy yesterday and that their efforts made only a little difference.  However, this activity is now complete and should not occur again.  Further, the mixing tower and the masonry block saw is located approximately 300 feet away from the play area, which should be ample distance to prevent concrete dust from reaching the playground.  During the meeting the FCPS D&C Safety Inspector collected air readings throughout the school and near the playground, all of which were within applicable regulatory standards.*

*A second air reading event was conducted during recess.  Readings were collected for nearly an hour during recess and were collected between the playground and the construction area.  All readings were within applicable regulatory standards. A spot test was conducted side of the school where concrete block cutting had been occurring.  Readings were collected few feet away from a worker who was cutting concrete block in order to approximate a "worst case scenario".  This outdoor dry cutting generated a reading that was higher than any other reading collected at the school but still within applicable regulations.   Parents should be assured that D&C will take precautions to reduce airborne particulates as much as possible.*

*In order to prevent a similar occurrence from happening again, Mr. Carros will ask the general contractor to be mindful of any dusty materials that are outside near the playground area and will ask that materials be located away from the area whenever possible.  The masons are going to be directed to cut concrete block with a wet saw in order to prevent dust, and the GC will be asked to install a mesh screen around the chain link fence to prevent large debris from leaving the construction area.*

*Further, a Virginia Department of Environmental Quality inspector has visited the school yesterday and had no significant findings.  Mr. Carros reviewed the air data with the inspector, walked him through the construction areas, and explained Monday's gravel activities.  The inspector found no issues with the site in its current condition and agreed with the planned actions to prevent excess airborne dust.*

*Parents are encouraged to address concerns regarding the renovation immediately to Dr. Sheers and Ms. Shannon so that they can address them immediately. Safety is our number one priority.*

* Karen Leiser thanked everyone for voicing their concerns and reminded everyone to report anything of concern when they see it.

**Adjournment:**

Whereupon Bob Coates made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Trainer seconded the motion, there were no objections and at 8:45 pm, the meeting was adjourned.

**Amy Kales**

**Recording Secretary**