



PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Welcoming Families. Building Community.

Parents Association Open Meeting October 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Denise Prince, Parents Association President, called the meeting to order at 8:20.

In Attendance

Jalene Spain Thomas, Denise Prince, Chris Bolger, Mia Bass, Margaret Pearson, Johanna Howe, Diana Allen, Claire Farver, Maria Lisette Romero, Paula Hopkins, Laura Schifter, Heather Ricks, Claire Avella, Kristine Shih, Danielle Day, Bukola Pope, Liz Bonner, Shannon Powell, Julia Ghafouri.

Welcome and President's Report

Denise Prince, PA President, welcomed all attendees and introduced Jalene Spain Thomas, Head of School, and Mia Bass, Chair, Board of Trustees. Denise invited all parents to attend upcoming events, and to spread the work to encourage others to attend. She shared that volunteering is the best way to meet others in the community and that there are many upcoming opportunities. Events of note:

- An IDEALS committee cocktail party, tonight, October 12, to introduce the leadership and for parents to learn how they can get involved.
- Sustainability Cocktail Party on October 13th, the event will take place in the Great Hall, given the rain forecast, but all are welcome to attend.
- Installation Ceremony for Jalene, to be held for the entire St. Patrick's community on October 18th at the Washington National Cathedral.
- Family Fun Day on October 20th.
- Book Fair begins on Tuesday, October 25th, please consider signing up for a volunteer shift.

Denise introduced the PA leadership, as well as members who were not in attendance, and then ceded the floor to Jalene and Mia.

Updates from Head of School

Jalene Spain Thomas, Head of School, welcomed all in attendance and shared a bit about her vision and goals for this school year. She shared that her theme for the year is centered around self care - for oneself and for others. Jalene shared that each division has goals specific to the needs of the students and families. In the nursery school, family engagement is a priority, for those that tend to be newest to the St. Patrick's community. In the lower school, there is a focus on routine, community and learning. In the middle school, returning to full clubs, athletics and activities this year is the focus.

Jalene opened the floor to questions. There were questions raised about the middle school dress code and about sustainability. Jalene will follow up with the PA about the dress code once she gathers more information, and she also shared that sustainability at St. Patrick's is broader than just thinking about the environment, and that we must think about sustainability of the independent school model.

Update from Board Chair

Mia Bass, chair of the Board of Trustees, gave an overview on the board's role and work over the past two years. The board's focus is largely strategic planning, while Jalene, as head, focuses on the actual management and administration of the day school. The board hired Triangle Associates to support the search process. The search committee began working eighteen months prior to Peter's retirement. Once Jalene was named, she worked with the board over a number of months to begin the transition process. Mia shared about the board's work during the pandemic. The board met weekly with a medical advisory team to help guide their decision making during the pandemic. They now only meet monthly. There were questions about potential plans for the building next to the gym and if the middle school would have a more permanent building. Mia shared that the board is considering those issues as they continue their strategic planning work.

Equity Report

Betsy Fenzel shared that there are upcoming coffees with the counselors, chaplain and Erica Thompson, Assistant Head of School for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. She and Erica are working together on how to include DEIB themes throughout all St. Patrick's events. A parent survey link was sent in Houndstruth. Please consider completing the survey and encouraging others to do so as well.

VP at Large Report

Claire Farver announced that plans are underway for a January event for the entire community and that details will be announced soon.

Communications Report

Blair Staunton reports that Wolfhound Grade Reps will send email reminders to parents to help spread the word about upcoming events.

Room Parent Report

Julia Ghafouri announced that all field trip volunteer sign ups have been completed.

Logowear Report

Johanna Howe shared that the logowear online store will launch soon. There was a large order of merchandise, including Yeti water bottles. The hope is to sell the new items at Family Fun Day, and if the merchandise does not arrive, they will display pictures of all items so that families can purchase for later delivery.

Volunteer Report

Paula Hopkins asked the group to consider volunteering at Family Fun Day and the Book Fair, as there is still a need for additional volunteer support.

Fundraising Report

Maria Lisette Romero shared that the annual greenery sale will launch after Halloween, with the usual early December delivery and distribution.

Partnerships Report

Heather Ricks gave an overview of Horizons Greater Washington, and St. Patrick's role in support of it. St. Patrick's has been in partnership with Horizons since 2009. Maret and Norwood are also Horizons partner sites for the summer program. There will be a table at Family Fun Day and the annual cake raffle raises funds for Horizon. Heather also shared that this year's Hoops for Haiti fundraising goal is \$30,000.

Announcements and Meeting Adjournment

Denise Prince thanked all for attending and shared that she would be available at the conclusion of the meeting for any additional questions. Denise adjourned the meeting at 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Taylor White

Recording Secretary