



STEVENS FOREST  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTA

*Where Everyone Fits!*

6045 Stevens Forest Rd. Columbia, MD 21045

[sfespta.weebly.com](http://sfespta.weebly.com)



**PTA General Meeting- 12/3/14**

**Jill Edelson called meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. in Media Center.**

**Board Members present:**

President - Jill Edelson  
Vice President for Membership - Quiana Holmes  
Vice President for Fundraising – Jennifer Sartor  
Vice President for Programs – Krista Threefoot  
Treasurer – Meghan Skaggs  
Recording Secretary - Daphne Harrington  
Corresponding Secretary - Jonathan Edelson  
Principal – Ernesto Diaz  
PTA Council of Howard County Representative - Reginald Avery

**Committee Chairs:**

Boxtops – Tracy Downard  
Hospitality – Tawania Williams

**General Membership Present:**

See attached sheet.

It is established we have a quorum

Introductions of attendees.

**Reading and approval of the meeting agenda:** Jill Edelson

1. Motion to approve the agenda
2. Vote: approved the agenda

**Reading and approval of the meeting minutes:**

1. Motion to approve the November 5, 2014 meeting minutes
2. Vote: approved the November 5, 2014 meeting minutes

**Treasurer update:** Meghan Skaggs

\$1,069 incoming  
\$124.66 outgoing  
\$12,079.02 on the books  
Turkey Trot brought in \$1,188.33

Jill – discussion of the fact that SFES was chosen to receive the Take your family to school grant and whether we could use some of the money towards having the Fun Drum program at SFES for International Night – this program brings all different kinds of drums for the families to sample and teach them briefly about the different kinds of drums. There are 2, 30 min sessions for \$400

The board motioned and approved using some of the grant funds for the Fun Drum program

PTA take your family to school grant – get your family into school – if we get the grant we will have to have a couple of different ideas for getting the families into programs

Motion to approve using the \$1000 grant for this

Discussion to approve spending some PTA funds on materials for math night – requests from teachers and staff needs to go through administration first, so there was no need for a decision or a vote

**Vice President of Membership report:** Quiana Holmes

182 members at this time

Mrs. Arndt won raffle for teacher and got a Panera Bread gift card

From National PTA :

The child of the month who was selected this month is a child with special needs  
“Special needs takes a variety of forms and can range from developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, health conditions, or even giftedness.”

There is legislation to pass nutritional standard – it will provide guidelines for acceptable snacks for schools to provide if they wish during the school day (i.e. providing snacks to all students taking tests etc)

**Vice President of Programs Report:** Krista Threefoot

Reflections program – coming to the end of submission phase, so far there are 10 submissions – 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders are working on tiles for submission – if need more time, contact Krista and she can extend the deadline until Monday before the judging phase begins.

PTA Take your family to school grant – get your family into the school – SFES won this grant – SFES will be awarded \$1,000 – to receive this grant, we need to provide two ways of getting families into SFES in one week – The week of International Night was chosen and the main activity will be International Night participation, but now we do need a second activity to fulfill the grant, so we need some ideas

One idea is having a night where families bring materials from their culture to share, maybe have them out for display in the media center and then people can come in and look at them, maybe asking questions

Another idea is having families come into their child's classroom and share something cultural, such as reading folktales/fairytale/books or something like that that is from their culture

Art Night – Night of Unveiling of the Artist in Residence mosaic, plus a ceremony for recognizing participants in the Reflections Program

Art Night – need donations for food because they want it to be like an art show

Gino Molfino – get in touch with him – art curriculum person – prove that we are finding other ways to provide arts and music into the school even though the class times have been cut down

PTA is trying to invite guests to attend. The chimes choir was asked to perform and open up the night as well as an introduction speech from Mr. Diaz – discussion about asking Ms. Miller to have the strings or band perform as well

**Vice President of Fundraising:** Jennifer Sartor

Learn to Earn – has started already and will run until the end of February - every child has a login already, kids and parents go in and set up account with the login and then record all of their reading – can see sponsors from the site etc

Each teacher has a login for themselves and can track their classes and students

Still working on trying to complete the video

Mr. Diaz will announce on Fridays during the announcements the class with the highest reading and try to make it into a classroom competition to try to get more students and teachers involved

**Committee Updates:**

Events coordinator from the Other Barn, Brigitta Warren, needs volunteers for their Breakfast with Santa event – need help cooking and ushering kids from the tables to see Santa

Announcement for Learn2earn

Newsletter – please submit anything for newsletter

**Hospitality:** Tawania Williams – big thank you to Tawania for organizing the event, was a success –

Holiday treats – December 22<sup>nd</sup> – bring donations for sweets

**Discussion:** How can we make SFES Even Better?

PTACHC – PTA council of Howard County – Reg talked about being on different committees and there has been a lot of positive feedback about the big changes that SFES has been making

Discussion about getting families involved and getting information out about school programs etc:

Parent Champion Program – was it worth it – any feedback? Is it worth looking into doing it again? Feedback was reluctance to have a stranger calling – spread the word by mouth might be a better way of getting the word out

Multiple sources of getting information out, trying the school and PTA website, facebook, twitter, the sign out front of the building (marquee), Friday and Monday folders, email.

Calls from the school when a child is absent – necessary to have to make sure that everyone knows where the children are and are safe

How to integrate all of our population into one body, one school? - Concerns about this, how to bridge all families together into one school body – concerns are expressed and discussion about trying to find solutions for this

#### **Community Update** – Reginald Avery

PTA presidents are receiving a wellness policy survey from PTACHC – survey on thoughts about the wellness policy – should be going out currently

School reps want PTACHC to accept wellness policy as is, PTACHC wants more time to discuss – want PTA survey for input and if they are widespread happy, then not as much need for discussion, but if some concerns from PTAs, then need to take more time to address

Changes in community – CA looking at covenants – violations of CA – such as abandoned homes – CA is taking some legal action against some of these homes, some other homes can't find the owners etc,

Use CA assessments to cut grass for abandoned homes, rodent problems, etc . Some houses are foreclosures; others are purely just abandoned houses

Approaching new budget year, assessing villages and seeing what needs to be updated etc

Police – Howard County has 472 police officers , 31 crossing guards, etc – when looking at statistics, Oakland Mills crime is along lines of many of the other villages, not an unsafe village : most crimes have gone down

#### **Principal's Update:** Mr. Diaz

Thank you for support after finishing the first quarter- conferences went well – seems like a lot of participation – more information to come about conferences in February, fewer conference time slots

Coming up, part of the elementary school model is testing for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades on January 12 – strengths explorer – gallop instrument – include lessons and themes – top 3 strengths of students (teachers took too) – just limited to top strengths

SFES will participate in the Hour of Code event, Dec. 8-12. Hour of Code is an effort to get students interested in computer science and programming.

Quarter 2 progress reports come out Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> – continue with instruction and structure of a regular school day through the month of December

Communication – need better communication about upcoming testing – lots of little tests happening through the year and need to do better communicating with parents these tests will be happening

PARCC assessments – all on computer, is there any plan to teach kids ahead of time how to work on the computers ahead of time? - the answer is yes, and the MAP tests are in a very similar format so many of the students are already comfortable with the testing style on the computers.

Monday – Traffic meeting was held with Dr. Ball, CA, OMV, police officers, school safety officials, and PTA attending – SFES was asked to gather data in general how many cars are coming and going through the school property and from which direction – also to track parking with similar details - it is unsure of what will be done with this data collected, but they asked for it to be collected for analysis.

Already collecting annotative data as far as where people are walking from

BOE owns policy for walking distance to school – if SFES wishes to try to change the walking distance to school for busing purposes; it will be a long process with the BOE involvement gathering data

There was talk of trying to double stacking cars for dropoff or waiting in line, as well as extending the car loop down near the portable, and repaving that area to extend the loop and get more cars off of Stevens Forest Road

**Save the date:**

January 7, February 4- 6:30-7:30 PTA Meetings  
December 15, 4 & 7:30 BOE Meeting  
December 17, 6-7:30 Chorus & Chimes Concert  
January 5 – Penny Wars Begin  
January 12, 3-8 pm Chipotle Night  
February 12- Staff Dinner during conferences

December 8, Fundrucker's Night  
December 16, 7:30 pm CAC Meeting  
Dec 20& Jan 12, 9-11 am Food Giveaways  
January 8- Art Extravaganza Night 6:30-8:30  
February 5- Author Patricia Cummings at SFES  
February 26- 6-8 pm International Night