

PTA General Meeting “Mental Health”

8 Nov 2018 / 6:30 PM / LHMS Library

ATTENDEES

Katie McClain, Aimée Monticchio, Ellen Harr, Liz Falcone, Debra Kaspar, Debra Penn, Lori Mitchell, Stephen Pick

Meeting Minutes

6:34 pm Meeting CALLED TO ORDER by LHMS PTA President Katie McClain

I. Guest Speakers: Katie Smith, *LHMS School Psychologist* & Michele Beard, *LHMS Director of Student Services* -- **Topic: Mental Health**

- FCPS Annual Youth Survey www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey
 - This year’s survey began today for LHMS students
 - Used countywide to assess the strengths & needs of students within FCPS
 - Anonymous
 - Voluntary
 - Looks at risk factors and protective factors from student respondents
 - Survey data is available from all FCPS and specifically from students within the South Lakes Pyramid
 - Helps school leadership & counseling staff better understand, assess & meet the mental health needs of students
- 3 to Succeed Initiative
 - FCPS has analyzed the data from recent Youth Surveys and created the “3 to Succeed Initiative”
 - Statistically speaking, students who have 3 or more “assets” or protective factors are better able to manage stress, make better choices, and develop better habits
 - Protective factors also help reduce the likelihood of student substance use

- 3 Categories of risk & protective factors
 - Substance Use
 - Physical Wellness
 - Mental Wellness
- Protective factors related parents & guardians
 - Students are more likely to be successful when parents &/or guardians
 - Are available to help
 - Know their whereabouts
 - Involve students in family decision making
 - Show all family members respect
 - Communicate clear disapproval of drug and alcohol use
 - Parental perception also correlates strongly with student's likelihood to
 - Use alcohol
 - Use marijuana
 - FCPS Office of Safety & Wellness offers a Drug Awareness for Parents Presentation -- for more information call (571) 423-4270
- Protective factors related to neighbors & the community
 - Students are more likely to be successful when their neighbors & community
 - Have caring community members who are available to talk
 - Communicate clear disapproval of drug and alcohol use
 - Encourage participation in after-school activities
- Physical Wellness for Middle School Students
 - Sleep is a major area of concern for middle school students
 - Target amount of sleep is 8 or more hours
 - Only 48% of 8th graders meet this target
 - Students often report they are up late playing video games, on social media, using phones
 - Why do students need sleep?
 - Lack of sleep limits a student's ability to learn, listen, concentrate & solve problems
 - Makes them more prone to pimples
 - Lack of energy
 - More contentious interactions with peers

- Causes overeating
 - Makes students more susceptible to illness
- Students who report higher numbers of family/protective assets tend to report getting more sleep
- Sleep recommendations/strategy suggestions
 - Set up a routine
 - Refrain from watching screens 1 hour prior to bedtime
 - Avoid caffeinated beverages after 5pm
 - Get at least 30 minutes of exercise during the day
 - Don't use your phone as an alarm -- get an alarm clock and don't keep phone in the bedroom
 - Avoid oversleeping on the weekends
- Mental Wellness for Middle School Students
 - Today's students are reporting high stress levels
 - High stress levels often correlate with other risk factors
 - Sadness, hopelessness, depression
 - Suicidal ideations (15% of students reported they have seriously considered suicide in the past year)
 - Suicide attempts (7-8% reported they have actually attempted suicide in the past year)
 - Protective factors/assets also correlate in this area;
- Signs of Suicide Screening (SOS) & Presentation for 8th Grade Students
 - The survey is not anonymous, but it is voluntary
 - At LHMS it is done as part of 8th grade Health & PE class
 - Students can opt out
 - 8th grade parents are notified of the upcoming screening/survey by mail; given chance to opt-out; also given a chance to preview the presentation
 - LHMS staff reviews screening results immediately
 - LHMS staff then follows up with at-risk students
 - Suicide risk assessment
 - Notify parents
 - Provide resources
 - Short (7 questions); also asks students to identify a trusted adult in & out of school
 - It's important to understand that discussing suicide via a presentation/survey does NOT cause suicidal ideation or increase risk of suicide attempts

- Presentation covers
 - Slides & a video component showing students role-playing scenarios
 - Gives students strategies for getting help for themselves & their peers
 - What is depression?
 - Sad, hopeless, discouraged for more than a few weeks
 - What to do if you or a friend feel depressed
 - ACT
 - Acknowledge
 - Care
 - Tell a trusted adult
- Students at LHMS do take the survey seriously

II. Review & Approve Minutes from previous meeting (11 Oct 2018)

- LHMS PTA Secretary Ellen Harr reviewed the minutes
- Katie McClain motioned for approval of the minutes
- Liz Falcone seconded the motion
- Motion was UNABLE to be approved by vote of the members of the LHMS PTA present
 - Quorum requires 10 votes
 - Minutes will be submitted electronically to the membership for approval.

III. President's Report -- Katie McClain

- All spirit wear orders are current; all items (except one special order for size) have been delivered
- Our next meeting will be on January 10th -- topic will be School & Home Security with SRO Tim Wissinger
- Fundraisers
 - MOD Pizza took place in October
 - A Chick Fil A Fundraiser will be next; date to be determined

IV. Treasurer's Report -- Katie McClain for Karen Hottle

- Dues have been paid to the Virginia PTA
- Insurance policy has been paid for the year

- Currently have about eight thousand dollars in the PTA account
- Mini-grants that were approved in the October meeting have been distributed to the recipients

V. Principal's Report -- Aimée Monticchio

- Rolling into the second quarter -- we will have an All-A/Honor Roll ceremony to recognize the students who have achieved those grades for the first quarter. We also recognize A/B students with ribbons.
- In December, many of our performing arts classes/ensembles will have concerts. They are usually held at South Lakes High School.
- To stay informed, parents are encouraged to sign up for News You Can Choose
 - MUST Opt-in online to receive the weekly emails from the principal and also the PTA
- Parents will be able to see their student's report cards via ParentVue
 - Paper copies are also sent home, but soon we will be paperless
 - Please download the ParentVue app and ensure you are able to access your student's academic information
- Winter break will be 2 weeks long; students return January 7th
- Thank you to all the parents & community members who attended LHMS Career Day
 - The event inspirational experience for students & staff. It would not have been a success without the participation of many volunteers who generously shared their time & experiences with our students.

VI. Staff Mini Grants -- Liz Falcone

- The mini-grant that was tabled during the October executive session was not re-submitted
- The mini grant request from the Sunshine Committee for the staff holiday party has been redirected (by the PTA) to the PTA hospitality budget instead of being funded out of the mini grant budget
 - Ms. Falcone will tell the Sunshine Committee will request the funds via a disbursement form

VII. Open Forum

- LHMS PTA Member Stephen Pick discussed a community service project & asked fellow LHMS PTA members for their participation & support
 - In previous school years (with the cooperation of the PTA at his daughter's elementary school), Mr Pick has raised funds for hungry children within the local community
 - Mr. Pick approached locally-owned/operated businesses with which he had a connection to provide funds to supplement & support the backpack buddies program at the elementary school his daughter attended
 - Mr Pick writes a letter (personalized to highlight Mr. Pick's relationship with the potential donor) requesting a financial donation, then writes a thank-you note after receiving a donation
 - He was able to raise about \$2,500
 - Mr. Pick now has a student at LHMS and asked that his fellow LHMS PTA members consider participating in a similar community service effort to support hungry students from LHMS
 - He is already coordinating with the program that LHMS staff use to help assist hungry students; the existing boxes could use additional food items to supplement their contents; middle school students often also need personal hygiene products.
 - Mr. Pick will draft a sample letter for PTA members who wish to participate in the project
 - Anyone who participates can personalize/customize the letter
 - A shared spreadsheet can be used to ensure that participants aren't overlapping their efforts by approaching the same local business
 - Ms. Falcone will follow up with Brian Davidson (LHMS PTA website coordinator)
 - Funds will be donated directly to the school, they will not pass through the PTA or individual volunteers.

7:37 pm Meeting ADJOURNED by LHMS PTA President Katie McClain