



ASH PTO Meeting Minutes
2019-2020 General Meeting #1
Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2019, 9 a.m.
ASH Boardroom (Room 2.75b)

Attendance

PTO	Suzanne Perl, Taha Faruqui, Beatriz Hotz, Mindy O'Bannon, Jessica Martinez, Laura Crane, Linda Winter, Irina Negovan, Nicole Wickenheiser, Patricia Tovar (parent), Andre Morin (parent)
Guests	Dr. Courtney Lowe

Meeting called to order by President Suzanne Perl at 9:01 a.m.

Minutes: N/A

Executive Director's Report: Dr. Courtney Lowe

- In process of finalizing the search for a permanent HS principal.
- We've launched a design team to look into the future aims of the school and begin strategic educational planning.
- As part of this effort, Project Nest was created to garner feedback from stakeholders (parents, teachers, staff, students) until Oct. 10.
- Various meeting/seminar opportunities have been scheduled with third-party facilitators to discuss and investigate how to better prepare our students for the future. See Director's all-school email, "Join Our Community Conversation," dated Sept. 9, 2019, for the details.
- ASH has changed its accreditation affiliation to New England Association of School and Colleges (NEASC), which has connections to elite schools that can give important feedback.
- Open Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Sept. 24. Parents are encouraged to attend this first meeting of the school year and meet the board.
- Changes have been made to how ASH will host Halloween event and International Festival.
- Bike-parking area is almost completed. Installation of new coverings/roofs, including solar panels and charging for electric bikes, will be finished by end of September.
- Discussions began in June on increasing school capacity in anticipation of future growth. Waiting lists already exist for MS and HS.
- A formal plan for addressing future growth and educational development at ASH should be in place by the spring.



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Officers' Reports

President: Suzanne Perl, Budget Overview

- We're trying to combine efforts where applicable and adjust budgeting as required in order to use funds most efficiently.
- Halloween is shifting to main campus this year, along with a "Haunted School" to help make the event inviting to all student age groups.
- One of the other biggest changes is bringing all grade-level and school-support committees under one umbrella, with grants being allocated to groups to spend as they see fit. Some areas, such as Arts, will see fewer funds this year to better align with scope and mission.
- €10,000 in CTA contributions were earmarked in the spring to jumpstart STEM initiatives across all grade levels; purchases are in process.
- We are open to ideas for more fundraising opportunities, as we continue to see downward trend of income.
- New expense/reimbursement forms are available on the PTO website. Expect that reimbursements will be processed in about a week's time. Please refer to the form and our website for the guidelines on spending.

Secretary: Mindy O'Bannon

- New PTO newsletter is published every Friday; guidelines for submissions will go out soon.
- Reminder for all committee chairs to fill out their online report before monthly PTO meetings. Dates have been emailed/shared.

VP#2: Suzanne Perl, on behalf of Vicki Johnston

- GDPR compliance is our biggest undertaking as it pertains to emails, photo releases, and VOGs. Letter about putting VOGs in place for volunteers going out later this week.
- Board members and committee chairs must take GDPR compliance quiz by Sept. 15 or PTO email access will be denied. This is a school compliance requirement.
- Vicki will give refresher trainings on using Google Drive as needed.
- Questions posed: How does GDPR apply to partner organizations such as ABF and Scouts? Are these VOGs paid for?

Communications: Beatriz Hotz

- 50 new requests for ASH PTO on Facebook
- Committee members reminded to send things to be posted on social media to Beatriz; newsletter submissions to PTO secretary.



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- The *Flash* is expected to change in December, so we will consider how to better utilize this communications channel following the changes.

Committee Reports

ABF: Nicole Wickenheiser

- Soccer numbers are down.
- Publicity for programs is becoming increasingly difficult.
- Most urgent need is for baseball coaches.

Monday Morning Networking: Linda Winter

- Fall calendar complete; spring program planning in progress.
- Numbers are down; we have identified a few reasons why.
- New chair(s) needed for 2020/21.
- Second year and stayers discussing options working with Safe Harbour.
- Have started advertising interpreters to help new MMN members at meetings.
- Would like MMN higher on the list of activities in newsletter when possible.
- Recommendation is to continue welcome coffee and reinstate grade-level coffees.

Spirit Wear: Laura Crane

- Gross sales of approximately €5,000 at beginning of school year.
- Awaiting additional orders of items already out of stock.
- Spirit Wear Fridays in the Elementary School in progress.
- Looking for more promotional ideas. Suggestion: "Where Has Your ASH Shirt Been?"
- Want to utilize HS volunteers for Troy mascot costume and other PTO opportunities.
- Still working on making online ordering a seamless process.

Adult Ed: as submitted by Harma Donkers

- Adult Education Programme is live on website, with 45 courses offered.
- Need culinary arts and publicity coordinators.
- How will we now publicize these and other events? Current publicity efforts are on Facebook, notice boards and lobby TV screens. How does the PTO recruit volunteers?
- Discussion around the table centered around whether we need to do surveys and look at pricing and course offerings. It was also brought up that Shell recently rejected Adult Ed receipts for some reimbursement requests, suggesting that this



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could be a reason for decreases in sign-ups if people now have to pay out of their own pockets.

Parent Welcomers/Int'l Parent Ambassadors: as submitted by April Ruthen-Gough

- 2019-20 intake at orientation and welcome coffee completed.
- Gathered feedback on orientation via questionnaire.
- More parent welcomer volunteers needed.
- Results needed from orientation review with Admissions.

AOB (Any Other Business)

- Floor yielded to parents in attendance to discuss desire for grade-level coffees that allow parents to get to know each other better and build camaraderie among new families.
- Where are the grade-level reps? Some parents are willing to help host these coffees.
- Could we get more volunteers to do this? How would we publicize in light of GDPR compliance?

Meeting adjourned at: 11:02 a.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, Oct. 9, 9 a.m., in ASH Boardroom

Minutes compiled by: Mindy O'Bannon, PTO Secretary