



9/24/2020

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Introductions and Goals for the School Year

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Ross Kyle, PTA President, started the meeting with PTA Executive Board introductions.

Ross Kyle, PTA President, [rossmkyle@gmail.com](mailto:rossmkyle@gmail.com)  
Tanya Myers, Vice President, [tanyad717@gmail.com](mailto:tanyad717@gmail.com)  
Andrew Lyons, Treasurer, [andrewlyons33@hotmail.com](mailto:andrewlyons33@hotmail.com)  
Sandra George, Secretary, [sandracgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:sandracgeorge@gmail.com)  
Ebony Burton, Parliamentarian, [ebony.y.burton@gmail.com](mailto:ebony.y.burton@gmail.com)

Ross kicked off the meeting with a discussion of the PTA's goals for this school year, as well as challenges. Ross noted that a major role of the PTA is to fundraise for the school, in particular, for the classroom aides, whose salaries, with limited exceptions, are not paid for by DCPS. PTA fundraising also supports school and classroom supplies and numerous other programs. The other major role of the PTA is to foster a sense of community at the school. This is more challenging in a virtual environment, but we are trying to be creative. Please remember to have your students decorate and display the Maury Rocks signs they received in their school supplies packages.

Most of the community-building and fundraising events we planned to hold this school year will not be possible until the Mayor revises current health guidelines, including a 50-person cap on in-person gatherings. This will require us to be more creative with community-building and fundraising efforts this year. The PTA is looking to provide opportunities to interact safely. We are also looking at moving up some of our teacher appreciation activities, which typically take place in the spring. Virtual learning has created a large challenge for teachers and they've been working tirelessly to help students and families adapt to the new routines.

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Committees and Announcements

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**Committees:** Ross Kyle, PTA President

Ross provided an overview of the various PTA committees and identified several committees that still require leadership, namely the Fundraising Committee. Ross noted that one of the primary ways the PTA functions is through these committees, which are a great way to support the school and meet other parents. Please volunteer to join or lead a committee if you can. Please contact any member of the Executive Board to volunteer, or contact the Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Committees directly.

Fundraising Committee: Fundraising is going to be a challenge this year because many of our traditional fundraisers are impacted by social distancing. But there

are a lot of really good ideas out there on new ways to fundraise, and so we are looking for a few people who would like to lead this effort for us this year.

- **Maury at the Market:** Liz Lyons and Amy Toner, Co-Chairs. Liz and Amy will be co-chairing the event, which will hopefully be held in person in the spring of 2021. This is Maury's largest fundraiser and it takes a large group of volunteers to make the event a success. Please contact Liz to volunteer ([lizvlyons@gmail.com](mailto:lizvlyons@gmail.com)).

**Grants Committee:** Maury has traditionally written and received a few grants a year to support some of our programming. The Grants Committee is responsible, in coordination with the school, for researching and writing those grant applications.

**School Improvement Committee:** This is a Committee that took a gap year last year because we had the brand new school, but traditionally had organized a fall and spring clean up of the school grounds. It seems to be something that could be done in safe way and would be good if we had a parent or two who wanted of volunteer to organize this.

**Middle School Committee:** Really looking for someone here who has a student both at Maury and at Eliot Hine. This Committee really helps to facilitate communication between Maury and Eliot Hine- making sure Maury parents are aware of Eliot Hine activities. Looking for a parent that has a student at Maury and at Eliot Hine.

**Communications Committee:** Liz Murray is the Chair ([elizabethtmurray@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethtmurray@gmail.com)). Responsible for updating the calendar on the Maury website and sending the weekly calendar checks. I know Liz would love to have some social media savvy parents join her who might be interested in updating Maury's social media accounts.

**Staff Appreciation:** Rosie Zaklad ([jzaklad@gmail.com](mailto:jzaklad@gmail.com)) and Amy Toner ([amysuebee@gmail.com](mailto:amysuebee@gmail.com)) signed up again this year to chair the staff appreciate committee. They have a unique challenge this year in that the staff are not at the school, but I know they are working on some new ideas of ways we can show the teachers, aides, and administrative staff just how much we appreciate them.

**Social Emotional Learning Committee:** Caitlin Wesaw ([wesawc@gmail.com](mailto:wesawc@gmail.com)) and Jennifer Sklar ([jennifersklar2005@yahoo.com](mailto:jennifersklar2005@yahoo.com)) also signed up again to Chair the Committee again this year. You're going to hear more from them at the October PTA meeting, but I know they are focused already on ways to support the schools' social emotional curriculum as well as supporting the general emotional health of the Maury Community.

**Hospitality Committee:** Last but not least, D'Ann Letteri ([dann.lettieri@gmail.com](mailto:dann.lettieri@gmail.com)) has agreed to serve as the Hospitality Committee chair again this year. D'Ann has already organized the grocery store gift card drive, and I want to give her the floor to talk to you all about that and other activities the Committee will undertake this year. D'Ann has been organizing a grocery store drive, through which families can donate \$25 grocer store gift cards to support those in need in the Maury community. Please sign up to contribute and drop off gift cards by Wednesday/Thursday of next week (9/29-20/1), or you can send funds to the PTA PayPal ([MauryPTA@yahoo.com](mailto:MauryPTA@yahoo.com)) and note in

the memo field “grocery gift card drive.” Families needing a gift card can email Ms. Leventhal or Assistant Principal Griffin.

**Local School Advisory Team:** Jean Kohanek, Parent Co-Chair (jean.m.kohanek@gmail.com). Each DC public school is required to have a Local School Advisory Team (LSAT), which is composed of elected parent, teacher, non-instructional staff representatives, and an appointed community member. The LSAT is an advisory group to the principal and works on a range of issues, from school culture and student achievement, to operations and long-range planning strategies. The LSAT also signs off on the annual school budget. LSAT meetings are generally open to the public, and you can find upcoming meetings at the [LSAT website](#).

**Fall School Picture Day:** Tanya Myers. Tanya announced that she is working with the school to organize a picture day on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Freed Photography, which took school pictures last year, will be returning to Maury on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Please keep an eye out on the list serve for additional information.

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#### Exec Board Update

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**Membership/Dues:** Tanya Myers, Vice President

Tanya encouraged parents, teachers, and community members to become members of the PTA, but she also emphasized that it is not necessary to be a dues-paying member of the PTA to attend PTA meetings, participate in PTA activities, or join the Maury Listserv. Ross noted, however, that you do need to be a dues-paying member to vote in PTA elections and for the PTA budget. Tanya also announced that the PTA has established a new PTA member sponsorship option. When you pay your dues [online](#), you can elect to sponsor an individual who is unable to afford the \$15 dues. You can also complete request to have your PTA membership sponsored.

**SY2020-2021 Budget Update:** Andrew Lyons, Treasurer

Andrew noted that the Maury PTA website will soon be updated to reflect the current school year’s budget, which the full PTA approved in June. The budget for this school year is about \$150,000. About two-thirds of the budget funds additional teacher aides that are not funded by DCPS. The other spending categories include educational programs, school events, PTA events, PTA administrative expenses, and school supplies. School and classroom supplies is the biggest category, next to classroom aides. Another large expense is the Roots of Empathy program. Andrew noted that we started the academic year with \$110,00 in hand so we must raise approximately \$40,000 to meet our budget for the year. Drew is working to form a PTA Finance Committee that will look into simplifying certain PTA budget procedures and to help get other PTA members up to speed on the Maury PTA budget with the expectation of identifying future PTA Treasurer candidates. Please contact Drew to learn more about the committee and to join it.

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#### Principal’s Update

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Principal Payne-Chauvenet announced that Maury was selected a National Blue Ribbon School, one of only three schools receiving this recognition in

Washington, D.C. Principal Payne-Chauvenet noted that the application process, which is quite lengthy, started at the beginning of the pandemic and was an additional task that teachers and staff at the school took on while also adapting to virtual learning.

- Attendance: If parents are receiving calls from the DCPS attendance office, please note that the attendance folks may not be aware of your child's participation on the day they contact you. They only have records up to the preceding day. For preschool and pre-k, the school recognizes that it can be a particular challenge for kids this age to participate every day and the school is in communication with DCPS Central Office about this.
- Reopening Plans: A number of people have asked if there are any plans to open sooner. Maury is not one of the schools that has an alternative plan for outdoor space and we do not have enough staff returning to support a program like that.
- Virtual Learning: Maury is offering more than we did in the spring and we are celebrating the fact that we have more live time with students. We are prioritizing in what order we are supporting various needs. Principal Payne-Chauvenet is open to hearing from families about big picture concerns. If you have a question about an assignment, please contact your teacher directly. Long-term, the school is hoping to move away from the current focus on technical issues to focusing on student-to-student interaction and to give the students more opportunity to show us what they are doing. We want to ensure we have good evidence of how kids are doing at the end of this term.

#### Q&A

Is there a place to log bug reports? There isn't a central place, but some classrooms may be keeping track.

Is there an update on iPads? They've been shipped but the school doesn't yet have them. As soon as we do, we will get the word out.

What's happening with a potential Maury name change? There will be a city-wide approach to considering school name changes, and Maury is on the list of schools whose names the city is considering changing. If you have views to express, you should contact the city through the process they've created. Jean Kohanek, LSAT Parent Chair, noted that DCPS will make decisions about name changes and individual schools will not be responsible for establishing a name change process or to make decisions about name changes.

How can parents better track children's performance? Ask your teacher. You can also check assignments in Canvas and you should start to receive feedback on the assignments.

Why are specials not live? That's just a matter of how much time was given to the school to go live and what the district prioritized and what the school prioritized. That doesn't mean specials aren't important, but Maury has to meet the District-wide curriculum and, in addition, we need additional classroom time to meet Readers and Writers Workshop program requirements.

Are students being assigned incomplete for not completing assignments. Can you explain how grades will be determined? The incompletes were used in the spring,

but now that we are offering more instruction you should get some feedback in terms of what work is missed. Concerns were expressed about challenges parents have tracking assignments and ensuring they can help their kids meet expectations. DCPS policy provides guidance on grading and, in general, this policy is intended to help kids succeed in the virtual environment.

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In Attendance

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Attendance was not taken.

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Next Meeting

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10/15/2020 6:00 PM, Virtual