

## General HSA Meeting

November 3, 2016

Meeting started at 7:07

Shannon Behm, HSA Co-President welcomed everyone. Because there was a relatively small group of meeting attendees, everyone introduced themselves.

The minutes from the October 6, 2016 HSA General Meeting were approved. Sarah Remes moved to approve and Kristen Nicholson seconded. All were in favor and there were no objections.

Shannon noted that earlier in the week, the HSA Board reaffirmed its mission and included a notice in the Tuesday Bulletin to remind parents that the HSA Board serves as a resource for parents, a fundraising vehicle, and provides support to our school and the community.

There were several handouts, including the HSA budget, a power point of the safety presentation, and a flyer that describes HSA activities and the class activity fee.

Shannon noted that the handout of the approved budget may be missing a page, and explained that the budget also is available online. She explained that this budget lists out the anticipated revenue and expenses for the year, and that the actual revenue and expenses to date for the year will be available at the next HSA General meeting where we also will discuss next year's budget. She noted that there was an increase in spending on extracurricular activities this year. She explained that the January HSA General Meeting will provide a forum to discuss what the HSA funds are used for, such as science night, supplies for teachers, recess resources, and the peace program at Lafayette and requested that HSA members take a look at the budget, think about things we can do, and provide suggestions to make sure that Lafayette has well rounded offerings. She noted that if anyone is interested in organizing something like Odyssey of the Mind or chorus, to please suggest it to the HSA Board so that we can work together to make it happen.

The camp expo also will take place at the next HSA General Meeting where various summer camps will attend and provide information. Shannon noted that the camp expo was held for the first time last year and it was very successful.

Shannon provided a membership update - membership is about \$20,000 short of our goal, but we continue to work towards that goal.

Sarah Remes provided an update on school outreach. She noted that family science night was a success, with about 200 children participating. Participant comments indicated that there was a sense that the event skewed young. The outreach committee now is organizing a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade robotics night, which may take place before the holidays. Sarah also noted that the New Family Social that took place on Tuesday, November 1 was a great event - 33 new families came to meet each other and socialize. Sarah also provided an update on the auction. The auction team is in the process of calling businesses for donations. She asked that anyone who wants to help to please let her know. The auction theme is 1928, which is the year that Lafayette opened.

Kristen Nicholson provided an update on the HSA Survey that went out to Lafayette families. She reiterated that the survey is anonymous and noted that as of the time of the meeting, there were 139 responses.

Dr. B provided an update on the school nurse. She explained that DCPS created a new model for school nurses that was not very transparent and it was not clear whether the new model impacted nurse hours for schools. At the time of the General HSA Meeting, Dr. B had no information on what impact, if any, the new model would have on Lafayette. In an effort to get ahead of any potential changes, Dr. B had asked the Board for some help in advocating to maintain Lafayette's full-time nurse. A draft letter was made available to parents to send to their council members and others. Dr. B also noted that Council Member David Grosso introduced legislation that was passed to stop any nursing changes through the end of the year (it is not clear if "year" is the school year or a calendar year.) She also noted that Brandon Todd indicated that he was going to mandate that schools have full time nurses. Dr. B will keep us updated on the latest developments.

Dr. B also discussed the new schedule that was just implemented to add a lunch period and reduce the number of kids at lunch and recess at one time. She noted that it has only been 2 days (one of which was the day after Halloween), so it is a bit early to tell whether this makes a difference.

Dr. B provided an update that the playground and field should be substantially complete by Nov 30<sup>th</sup>, but noted that this does not necessarily mean that the school will be permitted to use by then.

Dr. B also discussed plans for Election Day, explaining that Lafayette is a voting location. She will be sending out a constant contact informing parents that on Election Day there will be no drop off lane, and that pre-K and K will enter another entrance. She noted that the school now can close off and lock the side of the building where the voting is taking place. She has been in touch with those in charge of voting in DC to discuss how it will work. They are very kid conscious. She also noted that the new gym floor will have a cover so that it does not get scratched by voters on Election Day. She said that every class has an opportunity to walk through the voting site and that most teachers take advantage of this. She also noted that third grade has a voting unit, but that they decided not to talk about the actual election this year because it is too polarizing.

Dr. B also provided an update that student council elections took place and the winners will be announced on the Lafayette website. She explained that each 5<sup>th</sup> grade seat has a 4<sup>th</sup> grade shadow to provide an opportunity for "on-the-job training." Dr. B will meet with student council once a month. The Student Council will hold their first fundraiser on Election Day with a bakesale. They are looking for volunteers to bake and help with the sale. Eileen Dombo will send out a note asking for volunteers.

There was an update on the Fall Festival. It was a great event with a record crowd. The HSA Ways and Means committee is still finalizing the expenses, but the Festival pulled in \$17,000 gross income.

Shannon provided information on upcoming events -- the HSA Board extended the coat drive until Nov 18<sup>th</sup> to increase participation, and that there is a book drive at Childs play from Nov. 7-22. The HSA is working with Episcopal School and some of the books and proceeds from the book drive also will go to the Episcopal school.

Shannon then turned the meeting over to Dr. B to provide an overview of school safety.

Dr. B explained that Lafayette has a safety plan in place for various events. She noted that she has heard that the building is not accessible, but explained that she thinks that tightening up security for the building, such as locking doors, was needed from a safety perspective.

She noted that the new building has numerous safety upgrades, including security cameras in the hallways, gym, multipurpose room, and computer lab, locked exterior doors, and a doorbell video camera. She also noted that the classroom doors lock from the outside automatically. She explained that after the Sandy Hook tragedy, new standards for school security were put in place.

Dr. B explained that the school regularly practices safety and evacuation drills. They do so in a calm and matter of fact way and try to strike the right balance so as not to frighten students but to ensure that they take safety seriously. She also informs parents when they are practicing these drills in order to help facilitate discussions at home.

The drills differ depending on what the safety issue is. For example, for earthquakes, the drill involves taking shelter and then evacuating. They also practice lockdowns and shelter in place. All classrooms have a dedicated place to go to be out of sightlines. When sheltering in place, students know that they cannot leave for any reason unless Dr. B or a teacher has keyed them out. The MPD police officers also suggested that teachers put signs in exterior windows to let responders know where teachers and children are located in the building. Dr. B explained that there are captains on each wing of each floor. There also is a first aid team led by the nurse that consists of first aid and CPR trained teachers and staff. With regard to evacuation, Dr. B explained that if they have to evacuate they cannot come back into the building. In the case of evacuation, Lafayette teachers, staff and students walk up the street to Blessed Sacrament. Dr. B then discussed the reunification process after evacuation and asked parents for patience. She stated that she recognizes that this is a particularly difficult time for parents and explained that it may take time, particularly in an emergency situation, to reunite everyone with their children. She noted that she will only release kids to their parents and no one else.

Dr B noted that she may not have time to send a robo call while things are happening, but she will try to get to the comms teams once she is in a safe space to provide information to the Lafayette community. She reiterated that if there ever is a lockdown scenario, parents should not go to school when it's in lockdown. If anything happens, they all will go to Blessed Sacrament. She suggested making sure that children know their parents' phone numbers, especially if they have access to a phone.

Shannon and Dr. B then turned the meeting over to Officer Sprague and Lt. Fleming, two MPD officers whose "beat" includes Lafayette.

#### Presentation by MPD

The two MPD officers provided contact information and encouraged people to get in touch with them directly – either to get information or to give them information about things happening in the neighborhood.

Officer Sprague:

[John.sprague@dc.gov](mailto:John.sprague@dc.gov)

Lt. Fleming:

[Gregory.Alemian@dc.gov](mailto:Gregory.Alemian@dc.gov)

202-351-9400

The officers discussed the most recent indecent exposure cases happening in the neighborhood and assured everyone that they are continuing to try and find the perpetrators. They believe it is two different people. The officers emphasized that in situations like that, safety is paramount. If it possible to get a good description of the person, they encouraged people to do that. If possible, they suggested walking calmly by and getting a good look at the perpetrator in order to provide a description to the police. If possible, they suggested contacting the police without letting the perpetrator know. If the perpetrator does not think anyone saw them or that anyone is doing anything about it, they may stay and make it easier for the police to catch them. The officers offered another tip to take a look at the perpetrator's shoes because that is the item of clothing the perpetrator is least likely to change. Someone asked about taking a picture and the officers responded that it is fine to take a picture so long as your safety is not compromised. They also emphasized that it is extremely important to make yourself available to talk to the police after you call. It is much more helpful to them to be able to talk with eye witnesses. They also noted that it is a good idea to share information on the community listserves and noted that they also monitor the listserves for information.

They also made some suggestions about how to talk to your kids about safety. They said to tell children that if they don't know the person, don't talk to them. They also suggested telling your child that if something ever happens, to find an adult you can trust, like a mom, babysitter, teacher, someone with a child. Another suggestion is to tell them to yell and scream so that they can get the attention of someone who can help. They also said it is very important to communicate "If it doesn't feel right, it's not right" and to act on that and not be afraid to hurt someone's feelings.

The conversation moved back to catching the perpetrator(s) exposing themselves. If the police see him doing it, he goes to jail. Once the perpetrator is identified, a stay away order can be put in place. They emphasized again the importance of following up and talking with the police if you call 911 anonymously. Also, if someone is arrested, they suggested contacting people in DC government (ANC commissioner, DC Councilmember, etc.) to express concern and communicate the great negative impact that the perpetrator has on the community. It is important that they hear that this is affecting lives and kids in order to get an arrest / stay away order.

Shannon thanked the officers for their time and for coming to talk with the Lafayette community.

Eve Bennett motioned to adjourn and Kristin Nicholson seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15.