

Meeting Called to Order 6:35 PM

President Heather McAndrews opened meeting and introduced Mr. B for his monthly update

- Much of what he'll share will be in the March newsletter and Class Dojo
- There was a question on the last meeting about black history month
  - Every day this month Mrs. Romero has been sharing mini biographies of notable Black figures
  - 2nd graders dressed up as a famous Black American and gave speeches in their RELA classes
  - 3rd graders have been doing a research project and creating slides or ePosters through Google Drawing
    - Parent Q: Is it teacher specific since my 3rd grader isn't doing anything for Black History Month? It is often teacher specific but they will all be doing a project in technology.*
  - 4th grade has been working on projects around HBCUs and getting some parents involved
  - 4th graders are also learning about famous Black Marylanders since they are learning about Maryland
  - 5th graders are doing reflections of the Amanda Gorman poem and creating a collage as well as researching blacks in STEM
- Read Across America week is coming and parents should be getting more info how to get kids to read more
- March 6 school is closed
- Book Fair is coming in March and schedules have been shared
- The annual Camp Schmidt overnight wilderness experience is back and coming up for 5th graders soon; they'll be staying in cabins; more information will be coming soon; there is also a need for parent volunteers to stay overnight
- March 28 and 29 is the STEM Fair
- March 30 is end of Qtr and March 31 is another day of asynchronous instruction
- April is spring break
- MCAT is right after spring break; now that last year's scores are out GWES is once again the top-performing elementary in Prince George's County, and 6 of 832 in the state, outperforming most schools in Montgomery, Howard, and Anne Arundel Counties
- Current extra curricular clubs will continue to run through the rest of the school year; if parents have specific questions about the schedule they should speak with the club teacher sponsor

Parent Q&A:

*Q: What can parents do to encourage teachers to plan field trips?*

Reach out to your child's teacher to ask questions and offer support. Mr. B will also continue to reinforce with them that they can schedule them at any time.

*Q: Can we set an expectation that there will be a field trip at each grade level?*

While Mr. B can't commit to that he is going to talk to the teachers again.

*Q: What is the progress on getting the water fountains reopened?*

GWES continues to follow PGCPs direction on this matter. Even before Covid many schools had their fountains closed. PGCPs facilities personnel were out recently to look at the fountains but no results or word have been provided on the findings or when they will be turned back on. The county is looking to end bottle service but it is a process. Mrs. Wright is running the recycling club and they are active in collecting recyclables, including the water bottles distributed in-lieu of the fountains.

*Q: What is the future plan with parent teacher conferences? There were no notices that went out about this recent time and teachers didn't seem to have enough spaces for all parents.*

In the fall there was a full day but with this Spring, there were only 2 hrs. With teachers teaching so many kids, it's tough to have conferences with parents of every student during that period. For this quarter the time was just for parents whose children really needed it. Going forward there is an opportunity to communicate better about it only being for parents whose kids need it. But parents are also welcomed to schedule meetings with teachers at any time.

*Q: Many parents are concerned about the incident that took place in the third grade classrooms recently. How are we supporting kids with all of the non-normal they've been experiencing? Mrs. Romero is a great resource but is only one person.*

Mr. B gave a brief review of the incident. Communication only went out to the 3rd grade parents since it took place in those classrooms. The child was identified quickly through the state-of-the-art recording system in the building. He asked parents to make sure to talk to their children about making sure they aren't involved with poor behavior.

Mrs. Romero and the school psychiatrist (Dr. Gordon) share strategies with classroom teachers. They also encourage them to send the children in for more assistance if it is identified as a need. Mrs. Romero had many tactics and strategies depending on the nature of the need.ble to meet

*Q: I am concerned about classroom management in Art and iCal teachers. Children have been complaining to parents about how these teachers speak to the children.*

Mr. B said that he is aware of concerns and has visited both classrooms. He will continue to do so. He'll be looking to make sure they have the proper support to do their jobs well.

Review of Upcoming Events, Vice-President Riziki Okon-House

- The school beautification will take place around spring break in the beginning of April. Projects include stencils on the playground. A sign up sheet will be going out for volunteers soon. We'll need at least 20 volunteers.
- Tentatively April 22 Spring block party
- Grade level play dates in March and April and are being planned by the grade level coordinators. Parents should be on the lookout for them in the class chats.
- Field day will be held in June. Mr. Asbury will be planning and more details are to come.

- Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with candy grams. All of the help with assembly and distribution was helpful.
- There is an amazon wish list for snacks for students waiting on late busses:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz\\_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing)
- Grade-level coordinators have taken the initiative to get more play items for the kids for recess. They've started a wish list for parents to support by purchasing items:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz\\_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing)
- Book fair update, Coordinator Veronica Uriquilla
  - March 9 is set up day
  - March is 10 preview day for kids
  - The following week kids will come shop during their specials
  - A signup sheet is out for volunteers  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz\\_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing)
  - The website is also available for parents to set up the e-wallet for your children.  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz\\_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ifvlpj7QkOz_e3Wrwt4Nnr0VpFIDisIHwjEFn7UX9yA/edit?usp=sharing)
- Spring dance update
  - Flynn family will DJ
  - Event will have an Earth day theme
  - The committee is currently looking for donations and volunteers
  - Hoping to get approval from the GWES administration this week.
- School Store Update, Treasurer Brittany Moore
  - School store is up and running. Sizing has been updated; help will be needed going forward with distribution.

There is an ongoing need for PTA volunteers for all events, committees and activities. Anyone interested in joining the PTA admin team please reach out since this board will be stepping down at the end of this school year.

TAG update from Mrs. Soto

- Information on 5th grade continuity has been shared with all 5th grade students and parents.
- She shared the links that parents should use scriborder to register kids for middle school.
- This replaces coming to the school with physical documents to register.
- Our feeder schools are Kenmore Middle, Walker Mill Middle and Greenbelt Middle
- GWES students get priority for the spaces in the TAG middle schools; parents have to complete the 2-step process.

- She went through some tips for successful registration
- 120 5th graders have submitted their applications so far.
- She encourages all 5th grade parents to apply even if they also apply to the lottery for speciality schools. This will ensure that if you don't get in you still have the option for a TAG school.

Please pta.gwes@gmail with any further questions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:38