

Bells Mill Elementary School Parent Teacher Association

PTA General Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2020

Call to Order

The meeting was held via zoom and called to order at 6:34 p.m.

Attendance

A total of 60 individuals from the school community attended the meeting.

Welcome and Introductions – Devin Donaldson, PTA President

Devin Donaldson welcomed the attendees and provided a brief overview of the PTA.

PTA is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization of staff and parents that works to provide an enriching experience to students. While much of the work is done through community events and outreach, we also sponsor academic enrichments. During distance learning we are working to support school families and make sure everyone feels connected. We invite all families to join the PTA ([see here](#)), donate if you are able, and volunteer if you have a little time to spare ([see here](#)). The PTA really needs more volunteers to support its activities and programs.

Treasurer's Report – Devin Donaldson, PTA President

Ms. Donaldson presented the Treasurer's report on behalf of Matthew Barlow, PTA Treasurer. In September the PTA membership approved this year's [PTA budget](#), which includes \$38,000 to support academic improvement, cultural arts, student affairs, events, teacher appreciation and more. Each month the treasurer's report is posted on the website. To ensure our continued support for the school, we need additional members to join, donate, and volunteer with PTA. We have 100 fewer families in PTA this year compared to last year. Sign up at bellsmill.org.

Social Emotional Learning Presentation – Ms. Kanter, School Counselor

Ms. Kanter presented on self-care for students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. She described that families fall into one of four categories: (1) thriving, (2) surviving, (3) struggling and (4) in crisis. She provided some practical tips to help families cope:

- Stick to bedtime and meal routines
- Try meditation and add physical exercise to your daily routine
- Connect with your community
- Take breaks from media
- Take control of small decisions
- Reach out to your school, religious community, or support network
- Consult with your pediatrician or primary care provider
- Focus on what you can control:

- What movie to watch?
- Where to go for a walk?
- Who to FaceTime today?
- Let go of things beyond your control
 - Issues with zoom or internet connections
 - Learning from home
 - Siblings being around during class

Principal's Message – Dr. Stacy Smith, Bells Mill ES Principal

Dr. Stacy Smith thanked the community for their feedback and engagement. She noted she will be holding regular virtual parent coffees to ensure questions and concerns are addressed. The school also recently surveyed the students so they could learn more about how students felt. This will help shape how staff approach virtual learning. The school is actively planning for how to support the return to the school building.

Next Meeting and Adjournment

The PTA holds at least four general meetings per month. Subscribe to the weekly Bear Post emails at www.bellsmill.org to receive announcements. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.