

SUGGESTIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

PTA website should include agenda for upcoming meetings and summary or minutes from previous meeting where someone can research the status of a project at any point through the process.

Make the process more transparent.

Provide more communication – have a PTA communications chair to make it as simple as possible for people to find out about a project.

Post agenda before meeting, post agendas and post minutes after meetings

Ensure the agenda items advertised are actually discussed at the meeting

John Chadwick, APS Assistant Superintendent of Facilities & Operations, outlined the phasing of construction and addressed specific parent questions and concerns.

DURING CONSTRUCTION:

Concern: Who is in charge during construction? Per the construction contract, there will be one contact person and a backup member on site at all times. This will be a member of the contractor team. The back up will be the APS project manager.

Suggestion: We ought to have a construction blog and Twitter feed during the duration of the construction work. We should designate a construction liaison to bring parent concerns re: construction to one person.

Concern: During construction there won't be enough green space for kids to get real exercise. What can PE teachers do to encourage more physical activity in the space that is remaining, i.e. move recess to Bluemont or other locations provide equipment so they can more actively utilize the back blacktop.

Judy confirmed Ashlawn owns jump ropes and big red balls which some parents requested be made available at recess during construction.

It was reported that there will be a temporary fix for Montague street entrance and back doors will be open from 8:40 – 8:55 for arriving students.

Concern: Where will pick-up be during construction – Will there still be pick-up at the back entrance for K-2nd grade? Judy suggested that there may be by-family teacher hand-offs vs. our current by-grade teacher hand-offs because access from front to back of school will be limited, and it may be too difficult to claim a child from the front and back of the school.

Discussion resulted in other ideas to embrace our green space and environmental values including celebrate the planting of our new trees, encouraging more good environmental practices, starting a rain barrel program, and solicit input from kids about the design of the front green space that will replace the bus loop when 8th Road is opened.

Leah Herron: Lea offered suggestions for PTA next year. She specific proposals including:

- Increase diverse representation
- Post agendas in advance
- Post minutes to the website or listserv
- Announce votes
- Provide a “Meet your PTA officers” handout at the beginning of the year
- PTA officers and/or school leaders visit bus stop of 20 or more to introduce themselves and hear parent questions (Ballston has 30 at their bus stop)
- Explain process to people who are new to the area
- Continue to highlight Ashlawn traditions
- Put people on listserv right away
- Review and revise the By-Laws
- Explore Alternate locations for PTA meetings (Fire Station)
- Announcements in Spanish . . .
- Make sure that Montessori families are included in communication, not all are on the listserv
- Post major documents on website . . . Listserv rules, etc,
- Re-instate the stickers on children to announce PTA meetings
- Conduct meetings at alternate times-locations for those who cannot make 7:00

WRAP UP and GOOD-BYE

Thanks and appreciation for Katie Boone’s leadership and hundreds of hours of efforts was expressed by all those present.

These above great ideas cannot be accomplished by the PTA officers alone. If your child goes to Ashlawn, please find ways to participate and help, even if you cannot attend the PTA meetings. Meetings are only one way of participating. Please help respond to all the needs and concerns expressed by taking on a task or role. We are greater than the sum of our parts if we pull together as a school community.

Everyone has talents to contribute!
We welcome One and All!