

St. Rita School PTO Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2021

KEY OCTOBER DATES

- OCTOBER 11: No School -- Columbus Day
- OCTOBER 12: Formal uniform begins
- OCTOBER 13: Picture Day
- OCTOBER 28-29: No School (Teacher Professional Development)
- **OCTOBER 30: St. Rita 5K! 8AM 1K Fun Run Start; 8:30AM 5K Start**
- Next PTO Meeting: Wednesday, Nov. 3 (time TBA)

ACTION ITEMS

- [Register for the St. Rita 5K!](#)
- Order Charleston Gift Wrap & Gifts -- 40% of sales go back to the school! Visit registercw.com to register using ORGANIZATION ID **19954**
- PTO Used Uniform Closet open Tuesday, Oct. 12 from 6-7 PM and Sunday, October 17, 12-1 PM

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

Eric Oaks, PTO President

II. School Update

Mr. Klosterman, Acting Principal

1. Mrs. Hamm returns from maternity leave next week
2. The next PTO meeting is scheduled for Election Day; Mrs. Hamm suggested moving it to Wed., Nov. 3, with a start time at 7PM (instead of 7:30PM) so Fr. Christensen can speak about the neighboring building project and the potential gym project. Some parents expressed interest in having a meeting about the building project separate from the PTO meeting; via Zoom or hybrid to encourage participation. Other parents expressed concern that the 7PM start time may affect parents' ability to participate. All approved moving the PTO meeting to Wed., Nov. 3; time TBA after consultation with Mrs. Hamm.
3. The formal uniform starts on Tuesday, Oct. 12. To help families prepare, the PTO Used Uniform Closet will be open on Tuesday, Oct. 12 from 6-7 PM and Sunday, October 17, 12-1 PM.
4. Upcoming dates:
 - a. No School Mon., Oct. 11 (Columbus Day)
 - b. Formal Uniform begins Tues., Oct. 12
 - c. Picture day is Wed., Oct 13
5. The first House event took place on the Feast of the Archangels, featuring a tic-tac-toe rally, volleyball, and memorizing quotes based on their House patron -- it was a great "normal" day. House of Michael won this month's competition; at the end of the year the House with the most points wins a prize TBD.
6. Battles of the Books, Track & Field, and Spanish Club have all started. Pending interest, there will be a new club, Endow, a Bible-based program for middle school girls. A survey will go out to gauge interest; if you are interested in helping, please contact Miss Blank at Kblank.strita@gmail.com.
7. VIRTUS-trained parent volunteers are needed for recess and lunch; paid substitute teacher opportunities are also available. Contact Mrs. Hamm at bhamm@saintrita-school.org for more details.
8. The school is trying to reboot field trips -- if you have ideas, email your child's homeroom teacher or Mrs. Hamm. A parent noted that now is the time to start booking field trips for spring.
9. The transition to Classical Education is going well -- Mr. Klosterman demonstrated how art is used in Humanities classes to spark discussion. Teachers also conduct seminars with students sitting in a circle

and directing the discussion, based on a single question asked by the teacher. Mr. Klosterman noted that both strategies are easy to implement, with incredible outcomes. A parent asked how teachers grade in the Classical classroom. Mr. Klosterman said there is on-going debate within Classical circles of how much teachers should focus on grades -- participation is a great way for teachers to assess how much the students actually know. Mr. Klosterman noted that there may also be a backlog of grades in Powerschool; interim reports are coming next week.

III. Faculty Representative

Miss Casbarro, 5th Grade Teacher

1. The all-school blessing was wonderful, especially having the entire school community together
2. The students are having lunches and classrooms outside more -- please volunteer to help as a lunch or recess monitor to give teachers a break.
3. Miss Casbarro showed two hands-on projects her 5th grades students are completing in their Humanities class -- cuneiform tablets and mummified dolls
4. All students are invited to dress up as a saint for All Saints Day -- this will be the first year dressing up is open to all children grades K-8.
5. Miss Casbarro stressed that the first quarter is skill-building -- so students are receiving feedback -- but there are limited graded items.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Christine Hughes, PTO Secretary

1. PTO balance: \$76,282.13
Remaining 2021-2022 School payments: -\$49,500.00
2021 Christmas Bonus: -\$11,000.00 ****Note: increasing this budget is a later agenda item*
Available 2021-2022 balance (*before any fundraising*): \$17,817.13
2. Voluntary PTO dues and homeroom fees have been billed via FACTS; homeroom parents should receive their class checks this week

V. Committee Reports

1. Charleston Wrap

Sarah McBride

-- To date, Charleston Wrap sales raised \$1,352.70 for the school; the school receives 40% of all orders. Orders do not officially close until December. To register your family so you can place an order and share with others, visit registercw.com to register using ORGANIZATION ID 19954.

2. Auction

Kara Wilson

-- A Mardi Gras themed Auction will take place on Feb. 26 at the Columbus Club. A Sign-Up Genius with volunteer needs will be distributed soon; think creatively about auction items; and ways to increase sponsorship opportunities.

-- Mrs. Fitton volunteered to serve as co-chair. If you are interested in joining the committee, email pto@saintrita-school.org

3. St. Rita 5K

Mark Malseed

-- The St. Rita 5K will take place Oct. 30 behind George Washington Middle School -- fast & flat course along Potomac Avenue (*note new location due to construction*). Staging will take place outdoors.

-- This is the final week for business sponsorships due to the t-shirt printing deadline; currently at \$14,000 raised in sponsorships. Help is needed making phone calls for sponsorships; to help -- or for a sponsorship package to share with a business that you support -- email saintrita5k@gmail.com

-- Student fundraising drive continues -- children will receive 5K headbands if they reach the fundraising goal (\$50/child or \$150/family).

-- T-shirt contest will be decided this week; committee will select the finalists, and the principal and priests will decide winner

-- Need help collecting gift cards/prizes for top finishers -- email saintrita5k@gmail.com to help

4. Teacher Appreciation Team

Donations are needed to stock the teacher break room shelves; the 2nd and 6th grade classes are assigned to donate items this month. [Click here for the Sign-Up Genius.](#)

5. Calling All Chefs

-- Oct. 28 & 29 are both professional development days for teachers. Calling All Chefs is covered for Oct. 28; volunteers are needed to coordinate a meatless luncheon on Oct. 29. If you are interested in helping, email pto@saintrita-school.org

6. Robcyn's Representative -- Lisa McNichols

-- As the new representative to Robcyn's, Mrs. McNichols solicited parent feedback to share with Robcyn's. Of 112 families, 26 sent feedback; most were positive. All mentioned that customer service was almost always or always excellent; many expressed desire to continue to support a small business rather than a large company. Complaints were in three main areas: inventory; embroidery taking too long; and an antiquated ordering process.

-- Updates since meeting with Robcyn's: they do have an online ordering process now, which will be soon linked through Shopify, which will update inventory in real-time. Inventory was impacted by supply-chain issues; staff shortages have affected embroidery. Robcyn's did acknowledge that inventory is a guessing-game (orders in fall must be placed by February). Megan is open to suggestions, including bulk orders (ie: spring, before the summer uniform change) delivered directly to St. Rita.

-- As the PTO Used Uniform Closet chair, Mrs. Co suggested that the PTO offer more frequent access to the closet (especially early in the summer), and update the school community on inventory.

VI. Old Business -- Adopt September Minutes

Eric Oaks, PTO President

Minutes approved. Minutes are available in the newsletter after the PTO meeting and on the website.

VII. New Business -- Increasing Faculty Bonuses

The PTO board has discussed increasing Faculty/Staff bonuses; current budget is \$11,000. Bonuses have stayed the same since 2004. For each \$25 increase in the budget, it costs \$1,000. A motion was made to increase the budget to \$15,100, with the option to increase based on the 5K profits. A parent noted that the PTO should ensure that the new figure is sustainable for future years. The motion was approved, with the opportunity to increase the amount after 5K fundraising numbers are in.

VIII. Open Discussion

1. A parent requested more transparency in the school's hiring process and personnel changes. Mr. Klosterman said he would pass the information on to Mrs. Hamm.
2. A parent asked about variety in Yay Lunch! options. Mr. Klosterman said Yay Lunch! planned on offering more variety, but have had challenges finding vendors with COVID-related supply-chain issues and staffing shortages. Mr. Klosterman suggested reaching out to Yay Lunch! directly, as their customer service team is very responsive.

Meeting Adjourned