

St. Rita School PTO Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2021

KEY SEPTEMBER DATES

- **Thursday, Sept. 9:** Back-To-School Night, 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the school hall (parents only)
- **Sept. 13-24:** Scantron Testing (grades 2-8)
- **Thursday, Sept. 16:** Preschool Back-To-School Night, 7pm to 8pm
- **Sunday, Sept. 19:** Parish Picnic, 2:30pm to 6:30pm
- **Friday, Sept. 24:** 11:30am dismissal; to help with the teacher luncheon, email pto@saintrita-school.org
- **TIME/DATE TBA:** Auction Committee Meeting (via Zoom); email pto@saintrita-school.org for the invite

ACTION ITEMS

- [Update your family's directory listing](#)
- Turn in the forms: [PTO dues and Homeroom fee](#) and [Family Stewardship Commitment](#)
- VOLUNTEER -- lots of opportunities detailed below!
- SAVE THE DATE: St. Rita 5K on Oct. 30; Auction on Feb. 26

- I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer Eric Oaks, PTO President; Fr. Christensen, Pastor

- II. Introduction of the 2021-22 PTO Board Eric Oaks, PTO President
The membership voted to fill the vacant positions of Treasurer and Secretary; all approved. The 2021-22 PTO Board:

President: Eric Oaks
Vice President: Britt Manor
Treasurer: Christine Hughes
Secretary: Maureen Schweers
Preschool Representative: Beth Kaczmarek

- III. Old Business Eric Oaks, PTO President
Motion to approve the [June 2021 PTO minutes](#) was approved. A link to minutes is available in the weekly school newsletter after the PTO meeting.

- IV. School Update Mr. Klosterman, Acting Principal
 1. Thanks to the PTO and the Calling All Chefs team for the Sept. 3 luncheon for teachers; Sister John Thomas gave a talk to the teacher on the virtues, and how to incorporate them into their lesson plans.
Note: Calling All Chefs provides meatless lunches for the teachers on 11:30am dismissal days. The next luncheon is on Sept. 24. To volunteer on the committee, email pto@saintrita-school.org
 2. [Yay Lunch](#) started this week; the students were happy with the food options; staff reports that the delivery process was well-organized and efficient.
 - a. A parent said some students have complained that they do not have enough time to eat. The school has implemented a "quiet" last 5 minutes to finish lunch, which has helped. Mrs. Carroll noted that many of the children will eat lunch items at snack time, and some teachers allow students to eat outside during recess if they need more time.

- b. A parent asked if Yay Lunch would provide the option for a smaller lunch portion for younger children. Mr. Klosterman said Yay Lunch is extremely responsive, and suggested reaching out to them directly. He also noted that a Yay Lunch representative will be at Back to School Night.
- c. Another parent noted that the lunches were cost-prohibitive for many families. Mr. Klosterman noted that Yay Lunch was selected due to its healthier options and efficiency in ordering/delivery.
- d. A parent asked if pretzels during recess would return. Mr. Klosterman said they are considering Wednesdays only, possibly starting Sept. 15.

3. Preschool started this week!

4. Our Lady's Birthday is tomorrow (Sept. 8); students will celebrate with Mass, Adoration, and a treat.

5. Back to School Night (parents only; infants welcome) takes place on Thursday, Sept. 9. The event starts in the school hall at 6:30pm, followed by three breakout sessions for parents to meet the teachers.

6. Scantron Testing for grades 2-8 takes place Sept. 13-24. Teachers will not assign major projects or tests during their testing week; please make sure each child has enough rest and a good breakfast. The Diocese adopted a new, shorter testing procedure; it is done via computer and should take a child 2-3 class periods to complete.

7. Title One classes start on Sept. 20 for students who need additional attention. Eligibility for students is based on the Title One status of the public school where the child is zoned to attend.

8. The next 11:30am dismissal for teacher workday is on Sept. 24.

9. COVID Updates: Please review the school's [COVID Mitigation Plan](#); and please keep children home if they are sick.

10. Extracurricular Updates: Track and Spanish Club start soon; Strings has started; Band is on hold at this time.

11. Classical Education Update: St. Rita started its transition to Classical Education; a major goal this year has been to make each classroom a warm, welcoming, home-like learning environment. Next steps are integrating the partner classes more (1st/5th, 2nd/6th, 3rd/7th, 4th/8th), and structuring lessons to try to get the children to "see the truth on their own" rather than being "fed" information. A parent asked if the school had all the needed resources to implement the plan or if financial help from the PTO was needed; Mr. Klosterman will consult with Mrs. Hamm.

V. Faculty Update

Mrs. Carroll, Faculty Representative

Mrs. Carroll thanked the parents and PTO for their support of the faculty.

VI. President's Update

Eric Oaks, PTO President

1. Future PTO meetings will take place in the school hall

2. Please update your family's information [here](#) for the school directory -- information was sent in back to school packets and in an email from Mrs. Cunningham dated Sept. 7.

VII. Treasurer's Report

Christine Hughes, PTO Treasurer

1. The PTO's current balance as of 6/21/21 is \$85,100.26. Major budget obligations are a \$5,500/month payment to the school to support the school's operating budget, plus Christmas bonuses for the teachers. The current budget requires that the PTO raise \$75,000+ this school year.

2. The PTO is accepting PTO dues and Homeroom fees through mid-September; please submit your forms (sent home via the Thursday folder) if you haven't done so. Once all totals are tallied, fees will be

collected via FACTS and checks will be issued to the homeroom parents.

Current budgets, through Sept. 7:

PTO dues (goes toward general fund): \$1,790

Homeroom fees (used for class parties, teacher gifts, etc.): \$4,860

3. Mr. Manor noted that Mrs. Hamm raised the fee for stewardship shares to \$30. He also made a motion to review the budget to consider increasing the teacher's Christmas bonus. Motion was approved.

VIII. Committee Reports

1. Auction Update

Eric Oaks, PTO President

The Auction is the school's largest fundraiser, raising over \$50,000 each year. It is scheduled to take place on Feb. 26 at the Knights of Columbus Club in Arlington.

Mrs. Wilson volunteered to co-chair the auction; a second co-chair and committee members are needed to make this fundraiser happen. The first committee meeting is being scheduled for next week via Zoom (time/date TBA) -- email pto@saintrita-school.org to be added to the Zoom call.

2. St. Rita 5K

Mark Malseed, 5K Chair

The 5K & 1K Fun Run is the school's fall fundraiser and a fun community event. The tentative date is Sat., Oct 30; pending City permits, the event will return to the U.S. PTO Building, with the race taking place on Eisenhower Avenue. If the City cancels permits due to COVID-19, the school will transfer to a hybrid/virtual event. Three ways to participate:

-- Register your family to run or walk

-- Consider asking businesses you support to sponsor the 5K (especially home improvement businesses/contractors, realtors, other industries that have thrived during COVID)

-- Volunteer! The committee needs a team to make phone calls and send emails, making this a great at-home or evening/weekend volunteer opportunity. Email Mark Malseed at msmalseed@yahoo.com to volunteer.

3. Teacher Appreciation Team

Erin Church, Teacher Appreciation Chair

In 2020, the PTO started stocking snack shelves for the teachers and giving monthly treats associated with Liturgical feast days. Both programs plan to continue this school year. For the snack shelves, two grades per month will be assigned to donate supplies -- emails with full details will be provided via room parents during each class' assigned month. If you're interested in helping with the monthly treats, email Erin Church at erinmchurch@gmail.com. Mr. Klosterman noted that both are very appreciated by staff.

A parent reminded the group that each \$30 in donations count toward a stewardship share for the Family Service program.

4. Friday Pizza Fundraiser

Eric Oaks, PTO President

During PTO summer planning meetings with Mrs. Hamm, it was suggested that the PTO organize pizza sales on 11:30am dismissal days as a fundraiser (parents would pre-order, then pick-up pizzas at dismissal). If you're interested in leading this effort, email pto@saintrita-school.org.

5. Calling All Chefs

Eric Oaks, PTO President

Calling All Chefs provides meatless lunches for the teachers on 11:30am dismissal days. The next luncheon is on Sept. 24. To volunteer on the committee, email pto@saintrita-school.org

IX. New Business

1. Open Volunteer Positions

Britt Manor, PTO Vice President

Most vital volunteer needs below; to sign up, email pto@saintrita-school.org

- 5K Co-Chair -- this will be Mr. Malseed's last year as chair; looking for a co-chair to work with/shadow Mr. Malseed this year, with the intention of taking over next year.
- Auction Co-Chair -- one chair in place; additional co-chairs needed
- Kindergarten Room Parent
- Hospitality Coordinator -- a team is in place willing to help, but need a chair
- Family Service Coordinator -- tracks hours/donations and ensures that all families fill their family service requirement
- Field Day Coordinator -- note: this event takes place in May

PLEASE NOTE: Under Diocese of Arlington policy, to serve in ANY volunteer role that involves working with children, you must be VIRTUS certified -- details are at virtus.org

2. Fall Fundraiser

Sarah McBride, Fall Fundraiser Chair

During COVID, the school raised \$4,500 through a Charleston Wrap Fundraiser, with minimal work from the PTO -- all orders are placed online and delivered directly to the purchaser; the school gets 40% of all sales. This year's fundraiser will take place Sept. 15 to Oct. 15; an email will go out to room parents with information on ordering.

3. Robcyn's Rep Position/Uniforms

Eric Oaks, PTO President

Robcyn's has had supply-chain issues throughout the summer; currently, boys' ties are the only item still on backorder. Mr. Klosterman noted that the teachers are aware of the issues and are showing mercy when enforcing the uniform code.

Mrs. McNichols volunteered to serve as the PTO liaison to work with Robcyn's. If you have any feedback (positive or negative), please email Lisa McNichols at lisamcnichols@icloud.com

A parent recommended establishing a uniform committee to explore other options; Mrs. Hamm had requested that this discussion be put on hold until she returns from maternity leave.

Mrs. Co, the co-chair of the PTO's Used Uniform Closet, suggested providing access to the closet earlier in the summer to help with planning.

4. CYO Track/Cross Country

Lisa McNichols, Track Coach

All children in grades 3-8 are welcome to join the CYO Track/Cross Country Team. Practices take place 3 days/week (students should come to at least one per week). All parents must attend a mandatory informational meeting even if your child has participated in the past; if you missed tonight's parent meeting, another meeting will take place on Sept. 11 at 12pm. If you can't make the meeting, reach out to Coach McNichols at lisamcnichols@icloud.com.

5. Battle of the Books

Carol Carle, Battle of the Books Coach

Mrs. Carle and Miss Casbarro are the leaders of Battle of the Books; the program is a book club for 5th and 6th Graders, with titles chosen by Diocesan librarians. Meetings take place Tuesdays starting Sept. 21 from 3:20pm to 4:20pm; check the newsletter for more details.

6. Parish Picnic Amanda Bowman, Parish Hospitality Chair
The Parish Picnic will take place Sun., Sept. 19 from 2:30-6:30pm in the church parking lot; all are welcome. The event will include a pig roast, moonbounces, cornhole tournament, 3x3 basketball tournament, basket & 50/50 raffle, and more. Parking TBA (either Grace Episcopal Church or the old Safeway -- check the bulletin and/or newsletter for details).
7. Walk for the Homeless Christine Hughes, Walk for the Homeless Chair
The Walk for the Homeless (to benefit ALIVE) will take place on All Saints Day (Nov. 1). If you're interested in volunteering on this committee, email Christine Hughes at cmhhughes@yahoo.com

X. Open Questions

1. A parent asked about the status of the potential gym. Mr. Klosterman suggested a future PTO meeting with Fr. Christensen and Mrs. Hamm for more information.
2. A parent asked if there will be more opportunities for the children to go to Confession during recess times. Mr. Klosterman will ask Fr. Christensen.
3. A parent asked if the book fair will be virtual or in-person this year. Mr. Klosterman said that Mrs. Hamm requested the book fair be held online again this year; details to come.

Closing Prayer & Adjourn

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, October 5 at 7:30pm in the School Hall.