



## Merrill PTA meeting minutes

Tues, Sept 23, 2019

6:30pm

Merrill Middle School library

### 25 attending:

Rose G	Kate E	Julie M	Emily C	Lisa V
Kate P	Emily KS	Yasmin M	Sara A	Whitney B
Amy D	Channon T	Holly KO	Sara W	Karina C
Amy C	Tammy G	Stephanie M	Kristen E	Tracy B
Patty N	Sylvia W	Melissa K	Heather WP	Sara R

### Principal's Update – Mrs. Panek

Seeing positive results with new cellphone policy – good social interactions, fewer classroom disruptions

- Merrill is currently the only DMPS middle school with a no phone policy

Mustang Minutes (30-min morning “homeroom”) helps protect time for reading, community, etc.

Upcoming Professional Development Day (9/27) will be focused on inquiry driven exploration.

The building remodel/construction was inconvenient, but the end result is wonderful! Please thank school board members so they know we deeply appreciate the funding/prioritization. Transportation drop-off/pick-up issues continue to be addressed so patience is appreciated.

Merrill is currently serving 815 students – classroom size is up significantly this year. Administration is focused on protecting 6<sup>th</sup> grade class size to ease their transition, so 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grades are feeling biggest impacts.

- Multiple drivers of the increase include large/unexpected growth in neighborhood population, ELL surges, absorbing students from special programs that were eliminated by budget cuts, etc.
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade class size average is around 25 students; 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> closer to 35

Fall conferences

- Thurs 10/31, 8:15-3:15
- Mon 11/4, 4-7:30pm
- First come, first served format

### Recent PTA Accomplishments

1. **Provided new t-shirts** for all 6<sup>th</sup> graders, new staff, incoming 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders
  - Supplier is Twin Forks Trading Company
  - Helps provide sense of belonging/community
2. **Provided popsicles** for incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders and staff
3. **Provided breakfast for teachers/staff** the day before school started (Sara R)
4. **Provided back-to-school notes & treats** for teachers/staff (Sarah M)
5. **School Supply boxes** (Emily C) – **HELP NEEDED, TRANSITION OPPORTUNITY**
  - 110 boxes sold this Fall: 55 6<sup>th</sup> graders + 51 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> + 5 donations
6. **Apparel Sale** (Megan T)

- Pop-up online apparel store successful (merrill2019.itemorder.com)
- Sold 78 orders; 170 pieces
- Will likely do again before holidays and in the spring
- Will consider offering yard signs?

## Upcoming/Ongoing PTA Events + Opportunities to help

1. **Renting tables for Science Fair** (Rose) – annual request from Mr. Hammond
  - Thurs 11/14
  - Every 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade student participates
2. **Opportunities to help the school** (Mrs. Panek)
  - Freshen the space to showcase talents; need an overall designer to imagine a new look **NEED DESIGNER**
  - Greeters in the morning and lunchtime – duties would include supervising in specific locations (e.g. hallway) **NEED COORDINATOR & VOLUNTEERS**
  - Need physical maps in the classroom – will add to [Amazon wish list](#)
3. **“Meet the candidates” forum for Nov 5 school board election** – **NEED COORDINATOR**
4. **Basketball concession stand** – **NEED COORDINATOR & VOLUNTEERS**
  - Merrill hosts approx. 6 JV & freshman Roosevelt basketball games Dec-Feb
5. **Helping Hands** (Rose on behalf of Julie H)
  - Ongoing anonymous needs surfaced through Merrill case worker and counselor
  - If interested in helping, ask to be added to Julie’s donation mailing list (private list)
6. **Teacher Appreciation events** (Sarah R)
  - Fall conference meals
  - December appreciation notes
  - January coffee bar
  - January paper & pencil drive
  - Spring conference meals
  - May teacher appreciation week & [Amazon wish list](#)
7. **Box Tops** (Amy D)
  - New mobile app to scan receipts
  - Will continue to accept physical box tops
8. **Merrill Matters** (Rose) – **NEED COORDINATOR**
  - Parent education opportunities; approx 4x/yr
9. **Book Fairs** (Karina C) – **HELP NEEDED, TRANSITION OPPORTUNITY**
10. **Spring fundraising events** – **NEED COORDINATOR; HELP NEEDED**
  - Inaugural “parents’ night out” held last spring
  - Movie night for kids
11. **8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion** – **HELP NEEDED**
  - Mid-May promotion celebration at Roosevelt, dance at Merrill
12. **Centralized online archive of PTA “ways to help”** (Rose & Kate) – Kristen E & Holly KO
13. **PTA president** – **HELP NEEDED, TRANSITION OPPORTUNITY**

## PTA Decisions/Motions

1. PTA will sponsor voting & education forums for school board and state elections.
2. Monthly PTA meeting times will be on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month (some meetings will be replaced with Merrill Matters).

## Housekeeping

Next PTA meeting will be **Mon, Oct 21**. Agenda will include: 2019-20 Budget

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm

### Merrill PTA board 2019-20

**President:** Rose Green

**Treasurer:** Theresa Chivers

**Secretary/Communications:** Holly Kilborn O'Neall

**Membership & Community Relations:** Sarah Witt

**Apparel:** Megan Tempero

**IB Liaison:** Marquis Ellis

**Helping Hands:** Julie Hahn

**Teacher Appreciation:** Sarah Ramsey

**Book Fairs:** Karina Casini

**School Supply Kits:** Emily Cataldi

**Box Tops:** Amy Dagitz

All Merrill PTA meetings are open to families and community members interested in helping students.

Contact Rose at: roseDOTgreenATcbdsmDOTCOM or 773.844.1782

Find more information at <https://merrill.dmschools.org/parents/pta/>

Connect with us at <https://www.facebook.com/merrillpta/>

Read Mrs. Panek's "Merrill Minute" monthly newsletter for more PTA information