

Shortly after 7PM, the 9/10/19 Forest Oak Middle School PTA meeting got underway.

The co-Gaithersburg cluster coordinator, Carolyn Garvey, had the floor and sought ideas or opportunities to be undertaken in conjunction with other cluster schools such as Gaithersburg M.S. Among her tasks is to advocate for improvements/repairs in cluster buildings or help with Maryland PTA audits, and she later requested the F.O.M.S. blue book, which contains PTA member info, so it could be added to larger PTA group e-mail lists.

Very brief attendee introductions revealed Gayle Norris to be the dine-out coordinator and de facto majority fundraiser coordinator, because dine-outs have provided the vast majority of F.O.M.S. (schoolwide effort) funds for the PTA budget in recent years. **The first dine-out is already scheduled for 9/25/19 at the Habit Burger.** The proposed budget of \$5,600 included income from fundraisers, the book fair, personal donations, etc., while projected expenses included PTA dues, 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion, staff appreciation meals, snacks for testing, etc. Acceptance of the proposed budget was motioned, seconded, and unanimously accepted. Several key PTA affiliated roles need to be filled as of 2020-21, due to parents with current 8<sup>th</sup> graders moving on or being term limited—most notably PTA President—among others such as dine-out coordinator, V.P., possibly treasurer, etc. An open invitation was made for parents with current 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> to shadow departing parents currently filling these roles.

The book fair is largely run by media specialist Mrs. Sterrn, which benefits the F.O.M.S. library with [in-kind] book purchases, however; a request for parent volunteers will precede the November book fair. Another budget item, the pre-service week teacher/staff luncheon, went well, and a Spring meal during staff appreciation week is also budgeted. The non-budget item of a service executed by Jen Frohman was noted, whereby F.O.M.S. morning announcements are transcribed and then forwarded to parents. The intention is that relevant parental information has a better chance of actually making it home.

Mr. Muhammed was under the weather, so Mrs. Khouri stepped in to provide some info on the Verizon Innovative Learning (VIL) being rolled out in October at 3 Montgomery County schools, including FOMS. I-pads will be given to every teacher and student (whose parent/guardian returns a signed permission slip) to be used during the day for schoolwork and used at home. (built in LTE) Saturday, 10/12/19, will be the first of 3 informational meetings for parents to ask questions or raise concerns, such as website security and filtering. Two other meeting dates (10/19 & 10/24) are set to coincide with the VIL program's initiation. Chrome books will still be utilized for testing. A full time Verizon employee will be on site to deal with tech issues, and a quasi "Geek Squad" of tech savvy students will also be instituted to fix minor I-pad problems. Mrs. Khouri also touched on Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice as MCPS initiatives to deal with academic, social, or behavioral problems. **MCPS has reversed course on middle schools independently forming cell phone usage policies.** *Liberal usage policies have been scrapped in favor of more restrictive measures giving teachers purview over the veracity of in-class cell phone usage. Other obvious restrictions of cell phone usage*

*remain in place i.e. bathroom, locker room, inappropriate app usage and unwanted photos.* Lastly, Mrs. Khouri touched on the 10/14/19 open house for parents to attend classes during the school day and the parent-teacher conferences in November.

Mrs. Myra Byrom introduced herself as the Assistant Principal training for eventual assignment in MCPS, and she will be the 6<sup>th</sup> grade administrator this year. Upcoming events she noted included a parent night for information on the MCPS Restorative Justice program and a continuation of the Latino parents' night(s), which will include planning a Latino families excursion.

An area of concern was raised on the dress code for physical education and that requirement's tie-in to P.E. grades for current F.O.M.S. sports' participation vs. non-participants. Clarification on the issue will go through Mr. Wiegner.

The next PTA meeting is planned for October and then meetings will likely resume in February. As is always the case, the PTA reminds parents that personal donations are always graciously accepted and any businesses willing to donate gift cards will be put to good use via school activities or PTA funded events.