



PTA MEETING: Tuesday, September 1, 2026
TIME: 6:30PM EST **LOCATION:** BPES Media Center + Virtual (Google Meet)

MEETING CALLED BY: BPES PTA Board
TYPE OF MEETING: BPES PTA General Meeting
PTA PRESIDENT: Aly Schwartzbauer
PTA RECORDING SECRETARY: Sarah Musco

In Attendance

- **In-Person:** Tom Dewees, Courtney Madden, Sarah Musco, Lindsay Callaway, Aly Schwartzbauer, Cindy Hanken, Emmiline Auth, Emily Godfrey, Alice Steffen, Katie Tabisz, Kristen Stanton, Chris Stanton, Abigail Kier, Shari Roberts
- **Virtual:** Alina Nesteruk, Candice Gerstner, Cathy Tran-Zwanetz, Elizabeth Brunone, Erin Kerber, Marline Etienne-Mesubi, Melissa Kaps, Shiva K, Tara Benedetti

Quorum Status & Start of Meeting: Seeing that a quorum was present, Aly Schwartzbauer started the meeting at 6:32PM.

Member Approval of 8/18 Meeting Minutes: Aly Schwartzbauer (2 minutes)

- Available here: <https://www.bushyparkpta.org/2627-meetings>
- First: Lindsay Callaway
- Second: Katie Tabisz
 - Motion passed by majority of members present

Principal's Welcome & Update: Courtney Madden (10 minutes)

- Ms. Madden thanked the PTA for breakfast on the first day that staff were back in the building. She also thanked everyone for the warm welcome she's experienced at BPES and for the wonderful open house and first week of school.
- Ms. Madden noted that over the summer, white boards were installed in each room using the money raised by last year's Read-a-Thon (~\$23,000). School administration was also able to give each team \$200 of last year's Read-a-Thon revenue to purchase needed supplies for the year. The Read-a-Thon will happen again next March to raise money for future investments.
- Mr. Dewees said that buses will not only have numbers this year; they will also be differentiated by color. Last year, buses often had to be subbed for others, which

created confusion for students about which bus they were supposed to ride. This year, even if buses have to be subbed (so the numbers are different), the colors will remain the same, which will hopefully reduce confusion about which bus is which.

- Mr. Dewees noted that testing season is upon us - specifically, MAP testing (Grades 1-5) and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (K). Please check the Bear Tracks emails for testing dates.

Question from In-Person Attendee: In the mornings, will car riders be able to exit their cars 5 minutes before the first bell (9:10am) to line up at the front doors as they did last year?

- Ms. Madden and Mr. Dewees said that car riders may exit their cars at 9:13am this year.

Announcements

Back to School Nights

- Tuesday, September 8th
 - 6:00pm: Grades 1-3
- Thursday, September 10th
 - 5:30pm: AAP (formerly GT)
 - 6:00pm: Grades 4-5

Overview of PTA Vision & Goals for 2026-2027: Aly Schwartzbauer (5 minutes)

- Aly noted that the BPES PTA is operating under the same mission, vision, and values as last year. In particular, she reiterated that a key goal of the BPES PTA is to bring the community back into the school through various avenues, especially via parent engagement, as well as our commitment to inclusivity.

Overview of PTA Committee & Volunteer Opportunities: Cathy Tran-Zwanetz (5 minutes)

- Cathy reviewed the open Committee Chair and Co-Chair positions, noting that the Bushy Park PTA hosts many events and programs, all of which rely on volunteers to happen. Thank you to everyone who has already volunteered for a chair position!

- Open Committee Chair/Co-Chair Positions
 - Before and After School Activities Coordinator (chair)
 - Book Fair (co-chair)
 - Bushy Blooms (co-chair)
 - Cookies & Community Event (co-chair)
 - Council Delegate
 - Cultural Arts (chair)
 - DEI (chair)
 - End of Year Party (chair & co-chair)
 - Fall Fest (co-shari)
 - Membership (chair)
 - Reflections (co-chair)

- Restaurant and Retail Rewards (chair)
- Sponsorship (chair)
- Sweetheart Dance (co-chair)
- **Indicate your interest in these positions here** (please note, anyone is welcome to volunteer, but Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs must be current PTA members):
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeEQZl6TtPotm0MJ0aQypVJSf6lKCukSKalJalXfRwFZf1htg/viewform>

Committee Reports (20 minutes)

Concluded Events

- **School Supplies Fundraiser:** Shari Roberts
 - In 2026, we sold 69 boxes (~10 fewer than last year), but we made \$337.78, which is a little more than last year. Families with kids going into 5th grade bought the most boxes (15) this year. The check will either be mailed to the school or to Shari's house.
 - Advertising over the summer can be difficult. Some ideas discussed to increase uptake next year include: having flyers available at the End of Year Party and at the Kindergarten Meet & Greets during the summer, posting flyers at the library, and including the information in emails from school administration and Sunday Scoops over the summer.
 - This is our third year using School Toolbox as the vendor for school supply boxes. Shari highlighted the convenience of their approach - they provide all of the flyers and marketing materials, and the website is easy for Shari to quickly set up.

Upcoming Events

- **Back-to-School Picnic (9/3):** Aly Schwartzbauer
 - The Back-to-School Picnic is on Thursday from 6:00 - 8:00pm. We will have food trucks, local organizations, including Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts, and a Student Entrepreneur section.
 - Vendor set-up will begin at 5:00pm.
- **PTA Membership Drive (ends 9/15):** Aly Schwartzbauer
 - Last year, we had 213 members; this year, our goal is 230 members and 100% of staff. We're currently at 170 members and still have sponsored memberships available for staff.
 - The membership raffle will take place on September 15 and winners will be announced via social media.
- **Movie Night (10/2)**
 - Elizabeth Brunone and Kristen Stanton volunteered to help plan movie night. Cathy will schedule a kick-off call with the prior chairs and Elizabeth and Kristen.

- The movie must be G-rated and comply with the County's policy 8040.
- **Fall Fest (10/15):** Dora Tamaro
 - Aly noted that we found many fall-related decorations and supplies in the shed.
 - This year, we'd like to have parents donate candy to the folks who sign up to have a trunk at the trunk-or-treat portion of the event.
 - We'll make candy donations a competition between grades upstairs and downstairs - Katie Tabisz offered to make a "candy monster" for kids to put candy donations in at school.
- **Bushy Bear Dash (11/14):** Sarah Musco
 - The Bushy Bear Dash is the PTA's largest fundraiser each year. Last year, we raised ~\$15,000 with ~\$10,000 from local business sponsors. This year, our goal is to raise \$20,000. We have already raised ~\$5,000 from local business sponsors, which puts us in a great starting place.
 - We still have sponsorships available - it's a great opportunity for local businesses to get their name or logo in front of hundreds of people.
 - The format of the event will be largely the same as last year - kids and adults will register as participants and will be able to choose the 3K or 1 mile course on the day of the event. Participants will receive a short-sleeve t-shirt, swag bag, and raffle drawing ticket. Registration will open in a couple weeks.
 - For folks who may not want to run, but who would still like to support us - we're going to sell long-sleeve t-shirts this year, which will be separate from registration.
 - Thank you to Aly, Lindsay, Nicci Cortes, Kim Cull, and Kasey Meinecke for their planning help! We'll need adult volunteers on the day of the event.
- **Book Fair (opens 11/14):** Erin Kerber
 - The fall Book Fair will open at the Bushy Bear Dash on November 14. It will be open through November 24 - we're planning for it to be open during both days of conferences before Thanksgiving. On school days, the plan is for the book fair to be open from 4:00 - 7:00pm.
 - Cindy Hanken volunteered to help Erin.
- **Reflections (Late November):** Erin Kerber
 - Reflections is a national PTA art competition. This year's theme is "What My Culture Means to Me." Entries will be submitted online and will be due before Thanksgiving (entries from individual schools are due to the county by December 4). Fliers will go home soon with more details.
 - Abigail Kier and Cindy Hanken offered to help Erin.

Ongoing

- **Room Parents:** Leslie Keane & Traci Zobrisky

Leslie and Traci provided the following report:

- Room parent sign-ups were posted at Open House and will be available again at Back to School Night. Thank you to all of the volunteers!
- Our goal is to have one or two parents per class and one lead parent for each grade level. We expect to be able to notify room parents regarding their assignments around September 15. On Thursday, September 24, at 6:00 PM, there will be a meeting for all room parents and grade level lead parents in the Media Center.

- **Hospitality:** Julia Sharp & Stephanie Bills

Julie and Stephanie provided the following report:

- The Hospitality Committee had a great time providing the BPES teachers and staff a welcome breakfast on August 13. Thank you to all the parent contributions, volunteers and Rosie's (one of our sponsors)! for the yummy breakfast spread.

- **Grounds Beautification:** Aly Schwartzbauer

- There was some discussion during the meeting related to whether we can use this committee as a way to get kids—especially 5th graders—involved with gardening and/or celebrating Earth Day. Some ideas were to conduct nature walks and/or paint rocks.

- **Advocacy Needs:** Aly Schwartzbauer

Aly provided the following update from Ms. Cherry:

Howard County Parents for School Music (<https://hcpsm3.wixsite.com/music>)

- Established in 1993, Howard County Parents for School Music (HCPSPM) serves as an advocacy organization that promotes and advocates for the health of our music programs Pre-K through the twelfth grade. This is not about 3rd grade strings, rather the health of ALL of our county's music programs. This group has led vital initiatives where community members, educators, and families contacted school board officials to emphasize the necessity of these programs.
- We are looking for a member(s) of the BPES community to represent our school at their meetings. The meetings are virtual and monthly with a break around the holidays and summer. Probably about 8 or 9 a year. They are planning to hold one towards the end of September (most likely on 9/24). Info coming soon on their social media and will be emailed to those on their email list. While they do have committees, we at BPES would be happy to have a representative from our school that would be able to communicate any information from HCPSPM to us out here in Glenwood. You do not have to have a child in band, strings, or chorus for this role!

- There is a link on their website to be added to their distribution list. Questions can be directed to Ms. Cherry at Jennifer_Cherry@hcpss.org.

Treasurer's Report: Abigail Kier (5 minutes)

- Abigail reviewed the treasurer's report for August 2026 (available here: <https://www.bushyparkpta.org/2627-meetings>) and highlighted the following:
 - The PTA account realized a net decrease of \$7,425.76, with an ending balance of \$33,231.59.
 - August had a strong start to early fundraising along with very limited expenses. The PTA is well-positioned with strong financial flexibility to support student, staff, and school initiatives.
- She also reviewed the 2025-2026 financial summary.

Question from In-Person Attendee: The in-person attendee was wondering about the "soccer" line item being the largest spending area for 2025-2026 (\$7,810).

- Abigail noted that the "soccer" line item (along with the "after school program expenses" (\$2,480.00)) refers to the money we pay to the folks leading the after-school soccer, basketball, and volleyball activities. That spending corresponds to the "after school activities" revenue line item (\$12,020.32).

Question from In-Person Attendee: Are we not allowed to have any money roll over from year-to-year?

- Abigail noted that as a not-for-profit organization, our goal each year is to have our revenues as close as possible to our expenses. However, that does not mean that we cannot have any money roll over each year; in fact, having a small amount of money roll over can help in years when we may not realize as much revenue.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33pm.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 7, 2026 at 6:30 PM

(BPES Media Center + Google Meet; doors open at 6:15pm)