

George C. Marshall PTSA Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2021

Board Members Present: Althea Benjamin (president), Elizabeth Keegan (secretary), Karen DeGidio (treasurer), Jeff Litz (principal)

1. President's Report: The 2021-22 board introduced themselves. Althea encouraged everyone to join the PTSA as a way for parents, students, and teachers to connect and build a strong GCM community. She outlined some of the programs the PTSA supports, including art contests, guest speakers, standardized test prep, International Night, teacher wish lists and student and staff awards among other things. She asked if anyone has expertise in a particular area and would like to speak at a PTSA meeting, to please reach out.
2. Principal's Report: Mr. Litz said the school year has gone well so far – kids are compliant with masks. Current enrollment at Marshall is 2043 students, which has been consistent over the past few years. Homecoming week is Oct 11-16. There will be class competitions, colors, a pep rally and football game. The dance is Oct 16th from 8-11:30 pm. SGA is still planning the event, but it looks like it will be a combo of indoors/outdoors. The students do not want to dance with masks on. Oct 13th is PSAT/SAT day. Freshmen will stay home that day and do asynchronous work. First quarter ends Oct 29th. Winter sports tryouts begin Nov 8th. All athletes are required to be vaccinated, except for 14–15-year-olds (exempted due to the Emergency Use Authorization status in kids younger than 16). Unvaccinated athletes will be tested weekly; the county is contracting with an outside vendor to test. Athletes need only to submit their vaccine status once for all sports. Graduation will be May 31st at DAR between 10-11 am. Regarding Covid, Mr. Litz sends an email every Friday to update on cases. Seating charts and student self-reports are being used to contract trace. If a student is paused due to contract tracing, the school will call. Vaccinated students can upload their vaccine status and generally be cleared to return to school within 24 hours. Unvaccinated students may be out a while. GCM has had no staff test positive. The county is sending “neutral safety teams” to examine schools’ safety protocols and compliance. If your child doesn’t feel well, please keep them home. Please do not leave your student’s positive Covid result on the attendance line – email your assistant principal. The online Attendance page will be updated for easier Covid reporting. The Writing Center will be starting up soon. There will be 2 late buses this year, Monday and Thursday at 4:30 pm. Saturday school will be held twice a month, from 8:30 am-12 pm. Marshall does not treat Saturday school as punishment and many students go voluntarily for some extra help.
3. Budget: Karen DeGidio presented the audit of last year’s budget. No irregularities were found and the audit was approved. Karen also presented this year’s PTSA budget, which

was developed using previous (non-Covid years) budgets. The budget was approved and will be posted on the PTSA website.

4. Committee Reports:

- A. Hospitality – Tara Henigan outlined the many events that Hospitality supports during the school year. The dates will be posted on the PTSA website once they are confirmed, and specific volunteer requests will be sent via the Blast.
- B. Newsletter – Jennifer Church said the GCM Newsletter will be published 2-3 times a year beginning in December and encouraged people to send her content. She would also like a to recruit an editor.
- C. Academic Letters – Jennifer Church reported that they will need to order additional letters for this school year.
- D. All Night Grad Celebration – Elizabeth Keegan reported that fundraising for ANGK is well underway. On Saturday, Sept 25th the Class of 2022 will hold a clothing donation drive at Marshall from 8-11 am. A wine tasting event will be held on Wednesday, Sept 29th at Vienna Vintner.
- E. Reflections Art Contest – Jennifer Manise would like to recruit a co-chair to assist her with this year’s PTSA art contest. She is working with art teachers and students’ social media to publicize the event. Entries are due in October.
- F. International Night – 92 countries and 70+ languages are represented at Marshall, so Althea Benjamin stated that International Night has always been a popular event. Last year students submitted videos as International Night was a virtual event. In the past, families have contributed food and students have performed their talents.
- G. Webmaster – Susan Skaggs would like to recruit an assistant to train and help her to maintain the PTSA website.

5. Q&A: Mr. Litz answered questions from parents. (1) Will Powder Puff take place this year? Per FCPS guidelines this year, he said students will not be able to have Powder Puff football. The county wants activities to be gender inclusive. (2) Can you outline contract tracing procedures? If a student tests positive, teachers gather seating charts. Students must have 15 minutes of contact within a 3-foot distance to infected student. The Assistant Principal will call a student who needs to pause, and an email will be sent as well. They will be sent a link to report and upload their vaccination status to the Health Department. The Health Department then clears them to return to school. If unvaccinated, the student must be asymptomatic to be cleared by Health Department. Starting next week, teachers must live stream class (this is NOT concurrent learning as teachers will not be interacting with virtual students online), provide asynchronous work and meet with paused students twice a week. Counselors will meet with students once a week to assess their well-being. This process is very burdensome to teachers, Mr. Litz said. He is optimistic that the number of students paused has been low so far. Last week 17 students were paused at 10 am, but 15 were cleared by 5 pm after

confirming vaccination status. He said contract tracing is very difficult to do in the cafeteria.

The next PTSA meeting is Wednesday, October 27th and Rachel Baily, MSW, will be our guest speaker, discussing students' mental health.