

**North Cross School  
Parents' Association Meeting Minutes  
September 10, 2015**

**Attendance:** Laura Arnold, Donna Batzel, Sara Bartlett, Tonya Benson, Meschelle Bibby, Molly Burns, Susan Card, Kathy Callis, Elise DeMoss, Jeanne Fishwick, Cheryl Glose, Maggie Lenkowski, Amy Lowman, Ellen McGimsey, Linda Morgan, Sarah Muse, Marlo Pearson, Ashley Phelps, Gay Pollock, Karen Pruitt, Jessica Schindhelm, Tammy Snyder, Kristina Sommer, Heather Taylor, Fiona Tower, Susie Wagoner and Susan Wenk.

**Welcome:** Susan Card called the meeting to order at 12:00.

**President's Report:** Susan Card welcomed new and returning members to the meeting. Positions that have been filled include the following: Donna Batzel-Willis Hall Rep., Tonya Benson- 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep., Fiona Tower- Ellis Hall Rep., Molly Burns- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep., Tammy Snyder- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep., Maggie Lenkowski- ECP-1 Rep., Elise DeMoss – ECP-3 Rep., Gay Pollock-10<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep., and Marlo Pearson-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Rep. Kristina Sommer is now our Community Chair along with Kathy Callis. Susie Wagner Richardson will now be our Ways and Means Chair.

**Treasurer's Report- Karen Pruitt-** at the end of last year PA was writing gifts for the end of the year gifts for divisions. Lower School received \$4,600, Middle School received \$3,100 and Upper School received \$3,800. PA wrote a landscaping check for \$341. PA had a Kroger deposit from the quarter that ended in June in the amount of \$4,717.52. We continue to see a decrease in our Kroger dollars. Our current balance is \$11,923.86.

**New Business- Susan Card-** We still have positions that need to be filled including Vice-President, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Representative and Development. Susan met with Development over the summer. Thank you to PA members who voted this summer. It was a close vote and ultimately the PA voted not to give Development the money they requested from the spring challenge. Development would like for the school to decrease the amount of fundraisers a year, down to 3 per year, Annual Fund, Gala and Big Flea. The combination of those 3 raises about a half of a million dollars and the operating budget. Our goals are to provide our children with the best possible education to give them extra things if we are able. Hopefully Development's budget is going to increase this year so we can contribute to the divisions and the extras for the kids. Like field trips, going to the movies and other things not in the school budget. This is why the PA raises money. In the past Kroger has been great. We have received a lot of money. We have seen a decrease in the percentage of money we get from Kroger. We once received 5% and now it is down to 1.3%. We had an agreement with Development that they would receive a certain percentage when we raised a certain amount from Kroger. The money that PA receives has gone down. So we would like to raise money to continue to give money back to the school for the kids. They only want those 3 fundraisers. So, they want to partner with us and they came up with a proposal for us. They want us to help with the big flea. Their proposal is that for one week this year, April 2-April 9, we help them to find volunteers and help run the Big Flea. It is a community service that NCS offers. Grade Representatives can send out requests for volunteers. The Big Flea is going to be less

work according to Development. There will not be drop offs each day as before. There is a shed now that was built this summer. Boosters are on board to help move items from shed into the CAC at the time of the Big Flea, April 9<sup>th</sup>. The gym will be set up April 2<sup>nd</sup>. One week. Drop your stuff and it gets sorted. It will not be a 3 month process. Development has marketing, sponsors and advertising set up. They need people to organize all the items that come in. They will have the racks set up for us by Maintenance. Zach De Moss has the entire iPad check out done. They know in real time how much money had been made. They have made the process efficient. They have proposed that PA helps to get volunteers, talk it up to people, educate how it works and they will in turn give us 50% of the profit. Last year the Big Flea raised \$26,000. Most it ever raised was \$35,000. We had a wrapping paper company lined up for a fundraiser, but the school no longer wants us to fundraise. They want us to find new volunteers from the current families. They want this to be seen as a community event, to help the community. There will still be a boutique with new items. We want to price items to move. The high school kids will get Community Service hours if they volunteer. They will have drop offs at the shed one time a week and go out on pickups once a week. The High School Students will not do the driving on pickups; there are parents that Development has dedicated to this. The school now owns a trailer. Kathy Callis stated that we need approx. 10-15 people there, every couple hours. Free extended day for volunteers. The students will require direction for what needs to be done when they are there to volunteer. Development felt like meetings wouldn't need to begin until after the New Year. Our biggest job is to obtain volunteers and to talk up the event. Susan asked who from those present during this meeting would be willing to volunteer that week. A large majority raised their hand. It was recommended that in addition to emails requesting assistance, we ask people directly through phone calls. There was discussion of what we raised last year for the school and there was concern about Big Flea not making enough money for the PA to do what we want to do for the school each year. Susan Card reminded the PA that we aren't required to spend a specific amount for the school each year, we have chosen as an organization to be very generous. Currently we should have in our budget to continue the Bonfires, Homecoming, Founder's Day, Red and White Day and Prom. According to Karen Pruitt, we spent \$29,000 last year. So, we may not be able to do as much for the school without fundraising. The school wants departments to ask for what is needed so there can be discussion over what to add to the operating budget of the school. A vote was attempted to ask Development to guarantee a minimum of \$10,000 for our part in assisting with the Big Flea. We decided to call the question on a motion to work with Development on the funding and the volunteers for Big Flea. We have not agreed that we will not do any other fundraising, just that we won't sell wrapping paper. Vote was taken if we should help with Big Flea and earn half of the proceeds. Result is that the PA will help Development with Big Flea. Back to school nights were discussed. The Division Reps need to supply water and cookies for their division. The Division reps can ask the Grade Reps. to help with that. There is a Bonfire on the September 25<sup>th</sup>, a welcome back to school bonfire. We can have volley ball nets, corn hole, and a DJ. Last year we had hotdogs (PA provided) and Deb's Lemonade (people had to pay for) so we can do that again if PA wants to. Homecoming is October 24<sup>th</sup> and the week before there will be all kinds of activities, powder puff game, spirit week and the pep rally. The football game is at 2:00 on the Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>. Prior to that are field hockey games, Volleyball games and a tennis match. The Homecoming Dance this year is in the White Room above Blue 5 with a great DJ.

**Ellis Hall Report- Fiona Tower-** the LS garden was installed on August 19, 2015 as the result of the planning, hard work, and generous support of many parents, students, and faculty members. The NCS football and soccer teams helped to spread mulch and fill the beds with soil. This is truly a community garden! Rehearsals for the Lower School musical, Cinderella, have begun. Performances will be November 20 and 21, 2015. In recent years, North Cross administered ERB's CTP assessment in late spring. The resulting summative data informed parents of their child's achievement, and it provided administrators and faculty members with a measure of the past year's instructional efficacy. Beginning this school year, North Cross will administer the CTP in the fall so that gains or losses in achievement that take place over the summer months are accounted for, teachers may use current student data to provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of individual students instructional decisions can be driven by a teacher's current, rather than former, students' achievement and curricular decisions may be made. The CTP assessment will be administered in grades 2-5 the week of Sept 14<sup>th</sup>. The Honor Code Assembly for grades 1-12 will be in the CAC on Tuesday, September 15 at 8:30 a.m. The Ellis Hall Back-to-School Night will be Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. It will begin in Fishburn before moving to classrooms in Ellis Hall. Childcare will be available in the multi-purpose room for NCS students ECP-1 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The Back-to-School Bonfire is scheduled for Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 on Hooper Field. School pictures are scheduled for Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Eaton Hall- Jeanne Fishwick reporting for Susan Wenk-** Eaton hall began the school year with a total of 99 students. We are happy to have joined students to the rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade class and we had several prospective students tour Eaton Hall during the first week which is exciting for our future. New faculty assignments include, Erin Hunter is now teaching the Middle School French 1 & 2 classes. Many know her as she has served as a French tutor for students and as a substitute. Senora Fernandez- Plaski is now teaching Spanish 1 & 2 classes and she is also teaching a beginning Spanish class with no previous background in a language. This beginner course has been a welcome addition to the MS curriculum this year because it allows new Spanish students to start with the beginnings of a language without being scheduled for Spanish A & B. Mrs. Sharkey is now teaching 8<sup>th</sup> grade Art and this class will include more graphic design. Lee Kephart is now teaching Art 7 and is also teaching an upper school class to her schedule. Mrs. Hamlin is serving as the new school counselor and she will be teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade health class, she will also meet with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, in smaller groups. Fall events and news- with the help of Amy Holly we have used PA funding to help maintain and expand our media and research capabilities. We have continued discovery education screening which offers teachers a wide variety of educational videos and information. We have also continued our subscription to Issues and Controversies, which provides an excellent database for research. We are currently reviewing Writers Reference Centers to see if it would be a valuable addition to our English classes and helping students improve their writing and grammar. Under the leadership of Robin Garrett and Carrie Greer the SCA did a wonderful job of making the start of the New Year special. They created signs, decorated lockers, put welcome back gifts on the teacher's desks and made regular announcements to make the students feel enthusiastic about upcoming games and events. The MS talent show has been moved to October 29<sup>th</sup> which will be an interesting change this year. We are currently doing research for future plays or films to attend with specific classes or for field trips. We have attended The Hobbit films for the past 3 years, but now that series has come to an end. The end of September all MS students will take the ERB's. On September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, James Brown is taking the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students on their annual trip to West

Virginia where the students will take a tour of the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine and challenge themselves on a white water rafting trip down the New River. On Sept. 25 Sandy Patterson will take the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students to Camp Roanoke for their fall orientation trip. Thanks for all of your help and support! From Ed Dickenson.

**Willis Hall- Donna Batzel-** A great opening of school for Willis Hall. We have had a very strong start to the year and new faculty have integrated very well and made a very positive impact already. There are 165 students enrolled with one or two more likely to join us soon. School spirit seems very positive with lots of positive energy, including "new and improved" advisory lunches that have a particular focus for our weekly lunches. We had two very successful Global Studies trips to Europe this summer - one focused on educational leadership that ended with a huge conference in Davos, Switzerland and another that focused on the history and sites of WWII. We also had 4 students in a pilot summer program to Corrientes, Argentina, and will be hosting 10 students from Argentina for 7 weeks in January/February/. We are looking for a few more host families. 2 upper school students traveled to Korea this summer with our sister city in Wonju, and 2 students spent time studying and traveling in Cyprus as part of a fully funded state department program. We have plans for international travel to China over the December break, and two trips to Europe next summer; one focused on language immersion in Spain, the other is a cultural/history trip to Italy and Greece. The annual 9th grade overnight retreat is departing on Sunday for Wilderness Adventure. All-School honor assembly is on Tuesday at 8:30am in the CAC, it is a formal dress day. Thanks for all the efforts of PA - your time and energy is important to our on-going success!

**Admissions- Susan Card reporting for Deena Lugar-** Currently enrolled is 486 students which is up 4 from last year. We had less than 10% attrition from last year. We have had more people expressing interest in the beginning of the school year. A couple new students have started since we began this fall and we also have an application for next year. The first visit day will be on Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> (Election Day). A huge thank you to Maggie Lenkowski and Ashley Phelps for hosting the play dates this summer. Amy Jackson was very excited about that. Gave the new students and parents a chance to meet and interact. If Amy can help anyone from PA host a coffee this fall, let her know.

**Education- Heather Taylor reporting for Angela Thomas-** on October 27<sup>th</sup> there is the Headmaster Update (formerly the Headmaster Coffee). On November 10<sup>th</sup> is the Ellis Hall Director's update.

**Boosters-** Marlo Pearson reported that Boosters just purchased seven new red tents for outside games.

**FOTA- Ellen McGimsey-** one of the goals of FOTA this year is to increase awareness this year. Ellen will be referring to it as Friends of the Arts. It is an Arts Booster Club similar to our athletic Booster Club. We have one main fundraiser which is the FOTA Coffeehouse. It is a showcase for our children. FOTA is trying to get some instrumental acts, vocal acts, display MS and US artwork and drama. It will be November 6<sup>th</sup> at the Whitman Auditorium at Virginia Western. Planning for this event has already started. NCS has fabulous teachers and FOTA tries to purchase items they require. Ellen will attend all of the back to school nights to increase awareness. Anyone can join. If FOTA charges admission, they will have to pay sales tax. So, it will be a suggested donation for entry. Refreshments are provided including coffee and baked goods.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:15