



September 2026 General PTA Meeting Notes

Date: October 6, 2026

Location: Ritchie Park Elementary School

Meeting slides:  **October 2026 PTA General Meeting Slides.pptx**

Membership Drive Update

- The membership drive is currently just 12 registrations away from reaching the 2025/26 total.
- Registration breakdown: 55 family memberships, 39 individual memberships, and 19 teachers/staff.
- Funds raised are at 85% of the 2025/26 total, comprising \$3,640 in membership fees and \$330 in optional donations.
- Kindergarten is currently leading the Grade-Level Challenge with 44.8% participation, followed closely by 1st grade at 39.7%.

Live Raffle

- A live raffle was held for "Principal for the Morning".
- Caroline Chang

2026-2027 Budget

- The PTA bank balance as of July 1, 2026, was \$41,978.
- The PTA bank balance as of October 1, 2026, is \$36,562.
- Projected 2026-2027 total income is \$32,000.
- Projected 2026-2027 total expense is \$41,421.
- Projected 2026-2027 balance is \$33,057.

Questions & Comments

Spiritwear

- The PTA has selected a new spiritwear vendor: Rokkitwear
- Rokkitwear was chosen based on offerings, price, and shipping, and they also supply spiritwear for Julius West
- The online store will launch soon at www.rokkitwear.com/school/56929-ritchie-park-elementary-school
- The link will be sent soon via newsletter
 - PTA gets 15% back from all sales above \$1,500

Programs & Events

- **Family Skate Night: Scheduled for Saturday, October 10 from 6:30–8:00 pm at Cabin John Ice Rink (doors open 6:15 pm)**
 - Costumes are optional, and the PTA has reserved the entire NHL rink.
- **Community Service Night: Scheduled for Thursday, November 12 at 7:00 pm in the APR.**
 - Volunteers will pack backpacks and create cards for Comfort Cases. The PTA is seeking donations of new/gently used books, as well as funds to purchase blankets, pajamas, and toiletries.
 - Comfort cases make backpacks for kids entering foster care.
 - Kids can earn SSL hours for volunteering
 - Books go from toddler to teenager, so are PJs
- **Scholastic Book Fair: Running from December 7–12, co-chaired by Ambereen and Sally**
 - Volunteers are needed for setup on December 7 and to assist with classroom visits/wish lists on December 8.
 - Storytelling Night will be on Thursday, December 10 from 6:30–8:00 pm. A separate storytelling glow night features stories read by staff and a 5th Grade Promotion Bake Sale.
 - Spirit week activities include Saturday Donuts, Goodnight Moon Day (pajamas), Wacky Wednesday, and Stuffed Animal Day.
 - Families can set up Scholastic eWallets for their students to shop.
 - The "Share the Fair" program allows community members to sponsor a student with a \$10 gift card toward one book.
 - Suggestion to up the gift card to \$15 using Scholastic dollars
 - For sales of \$4,000 and above, the PTA can take 50% of sales in Scholastic Dollars or 25% in cash. Past fairs have generated roughly \$13,000 in sales, yielding over \$6,400 in profit/rewards.

- At the end of the fair, teachers can request books for their class libraries and PTA buys them using scholastic dollars.
- There is an option for parents to see which books are available for sale

Teacher/Staff Appreciation

- September: Hosted a Pre-Back-To-School-Night Pizza Party sponsored by the PTA.
- October: Conducted a Fall Staff Lounge Re-Stock with goodies, supplies, and coffee.
- November: 4th and 5th Grade Staff Breakfast (grade levels will rotate taking turns volunteering with breakfast on the second week of each month).
- December: Food Treat and Holiday Gift planned.
- Volunteers Needed: The committee (Emily Newlan, Jackie Bookman, Raienne Oliver, Meron Gerbu) is seeking volunteers to help with event planning, in-person setup/clean-up, and social media management.
 - Contact Emilie to sign up - text (301) 455-1379 or email emilynewlan@gmail.com

Yearbook

- Parent volunteers are needed for yearbook design/layout, proofreading, themes, event coverage, photo organization, and grade-level representatives. No previous experience is required.
- Please upload pictures of school events and activities to the yearbook section of the PTA website - <https://www.ritchieparkpta.org/yearbook>

Fundraising & Sponsorships

- The PTA is considering augmenting its fundraising strategy by actively courting business sponsorships instead of relying solely on traditional parent-funded events.
- The goal is to secure one or more sponsors for each PTA event.
- Sponsorships are generally \$500 per event
- Sponsors will receive their name on promotional materials, newsletter advertising, an event table, a public thank you, and post-event Facebook mentions.
- Ideal sponsors include RPES parent-owned businesses or local medical clinics, real estate agents, restaurants, home contractors, and after-school programs

- Ask for PTA parents
 - If you own a business, know someone who owns a small local business, have a local business you use and love - encourage them to become RPES Sponsor and email your idea to fundraising@ritchieparkpta.org
- Questions: what are the MCPS rules on sponsorships?
 - PTAs are allowed to have sponsors, a lot of schools in the area have sponsorship tiers

MCCPTA Update

- The next MCPS Board of Education meeting is Thursday, October 8th at 12:00 pm, with public comments from 12:15–1:15 pm.
- An update on the Elementary Boundary study is on the agenda, which will focus on the process, timeline, and community engagement.
- No decision has been made regarding any school closure.
 - Any potential school closures will not take place until 2029-2030 school year

NAACP Update

- Jennie Jacoby is the RPES Representative on the Montgomery County NAACP Parents Council.
- There are no new updates for this month.
- Please email Jennie at Jrosejacoby@gmail.com to join the Parents' Council distribution list.

Updates from the Principal

- School boundary process will take time, there will be in-person and virtual meetings
 - MCPS website has a timeline and information on the process
 - The expectation is that MCPS enrollment will continue to decline in the coming years
- MCPS has elected to opt-in in the state system where if school utilizes all inclement weather days, there will be virtual learning offered
- Mrs. Heifetz will send instructions to Room Parents on how to support classroom experience, if you want to volunteer - contact your teachers
- Working with new math curriculum - so far it's been a mostly positive transition
 - Question: my kid does not have a Chromebook, can they still join virtual learning?
 - Yes, can join from any device. Can also request Chromebook from media center.

Reminders & Next Steps

- Event Photography: The PTA is looking for volunteer photographers (contact Monica Zeitlin) to capture landscape and portrait photos of students and staff across events.
- Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 1, 2026. Note that there is no meeting in November due to Election Day.