



# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

Call to Order: 7:06 PM

## Principal's Report - Michelle Makrigrigorgos & Jennifer Condra

- Construction/Renovation Update:
  - The office staff has moved into their stunning new office, blending traditional and modern design. A picture will be shared on Friday.
  - The lobby features original siding from the 1939 building and a mural celebrating Louise Archer, merging historic and contemporary elements.
  - Future plans include adding soft seating for a warmer atmosphere, with ongoing organization of the clinic, main office, and lost and found.
  - Door 1 is currently closed for repairs due to recent rain, expected to be completed in a week or two. Updates will be sent via email regularly.
- Crosswalks:
  - A contact helped raise awareness about safety during arrival and dismissal, as concerns have arisen regarding crosswalk violations. Crossing guards reported that some parents stop in crosswalks and ignore stop signs, posing risks to students. They seek assistance in spreading this message and plan to include reminders in an upcoming newsletter, alongside potential signage to address parking issues.
  - A discussion about relocating a problematic crosswalk was initiated, with parents asked to consider contacting local authorities for potential changes. The current layout is confusing, and while crossing guards are present, some families still cross inappropriately. The school will continue exploring safer crossing options.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences:
  - As mid-October approaches, parents are encouraged to contact teachers for updates on their children's progress, with parent-teacher conferences scheduled for November 4th and 5th.

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

## **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Presentation** **Special Guest Speaker - Jennifer M. Sullivan** **Supervisor at the Cyber Tip Line in the Children's Division**

While many people associate us primarily with locating missing children, our work extends far beyond that. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children focuses on three main objectives: finding missing children, reducing child sexual exploitation, and preventing future victimization. We truly enjoy presentations like this as they help raise awareness about the vast array of prevention materials we provide.

- One of our key prevention initiatives is NetSmartz.org, an online safety education program which teaches children how to be safer online and become more aware of potential risks. It features a range of presentations, videos, interactive games, and tip sheets tailored for parents and children aged 5 to 17. I encourage you to explore our website, as there are numerous resources available for both kids and educators. Everything is free and downloadable.

### What do your children do online?

It's crucial to take the time to understand the apps, games, and websites your child engages with online. We emphasize that the most important aspect is to protect your child through open, ongoing, and meaningful conversations. These discussions help develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, healthy relationships, boundaries, and empathy. By building these skills, children will be better equipped to navigate the digital landscape, as you won't always be there to shield them. As your child matures, these conversations should evolve, becoming more comfortable over time.

We support the use of parental controls and monitoring privacy settings, which I'll discuss more shortly. However, technology alone can't catch every issue, so it's vital to engage in conversations with your children from a young age. Start these discussions even before they go online, setting a foundation for more serious topics later on.

Begin by asking your child about their online interests. Questions like, "What do you enjoy doing online?" or "What's your favorite app?" "Why do you like it?" demonstrate genuine curiosity. Encourage them to share by saying, "Can you teach me how to play?" Establishing yourself as a reliable source of information is vital. Your child should feel they can trust you and that you won't overreact if they encounter something troubling. If they encounter something troubling, they should feel safe coming to you without fear of overreacting or losing access to their devices.

When issues arise, acknowledge that they did the right thing by coming to you. Praise their trust in you and work together to find solutions. This approach empowers them to feel capable rather than helpless.

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

## Online Risks

For younger children, introduce the concept of netiquette—proper online behavior and respect towards others, just as they would in person. Teach them that kindness is essential, and they need to treat everyone with respect. This understanding will set clear expectations for online behavior. Discuss private information with your child, emphasizing what shouldn't be shared, and lay the groundwork to prevent cyberbullying.

For older children in middle or high school, familiarize yourself with sextortion, a growing concern. Engage in conversations about it and utilize videos or resources to facilitate these sometimes challenging discussions, especially with teens who may be reluctant to talk.

As children age, these conversations can shift toward cyberbullying. It's vital that they comprehend who they can trust online, and the potential dangers posed by strangers. While you don't want to frighten them, you do want to encourage critical thinking about online interactions. Encourage open dialogue about uncomfortable experiences. If your child encounters inappropriate content or interactions, reassure them that they can always come to you for help without fear of punishment.

Help your child identify other trusted adults in their life—teachers, coaches, or family members—who they can turn to if they're uncomfortable discussing something with you. Remember, your immediate reaction may be to panic, but it's essential to remain calm and supportive. Your child needs to know that they can rely on you for guidance, regardless of the situation.

If your child receives explicit content or is approached inappropriately, remind them that it's not their fault, and they should come to you for assistance. Work together to explore solutions, such as blocking or reporting the offending parties. Encourage your child to recognize red flags in online interactions and teach them how to report concerning behavior. Discuss topics like privacy settings, location sharing, and personal information, ensuring they understand the importance of safeguarding their data.

Establish clear rules about acceptable online behavior and encourage an ongoing conversation about it. As kids grow, they'll face more complex situations, so it's essential to prepare them for those challenges without causing fear.

Monitor their online activities in a supportive manner. Ask about their friends, both online and offline, to foster a sense of openness. Foster a supportive environment where children feel empowered to report inappropriate behavior without fear of judgment.

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

## Resources

Resources like NetSmartz.org offer valuable materials for parents to help initiate these conversations and to educate themselves about online safety. You can find tips, conversation starters, and interactive content to assist in creating a comfortable dialogue with your children. In the event of a challenging situation, our Family Advocacy Division provides emotional support for both children and parents. They offer a network of providers nationwide who specialize in these matters, often at no cost. They maintain a nationwide network of providers who offer support in these situations, either pro bono or on a sliding scale, and are specialized in these matters. Additionally, we have a team called Hope, composed of peers who are parents or adult survivors with lived experiences. They have undergone training to assist others facing similar challenges. We offer a wide range of support options, including legal referrals, ensuring that if your child or you are going through a tough time, we are here to help. All of these resources are provided free of charge, so please don't hesitate to reach out to us. I found everything to be incredibly helpful and informative, and while I initially felt overwhelmed, I'm now motivated to research more about it.

## Treasurer's Report - Sabiha Khan

Our current balance stands at over \$19,000. In September, it reached \$24,400, mainly generated from membership dues and donations totaling \$5,000. We encourage anyone who hasn't yet contributed to consider doing so. We also have outstanding checks amounting to nearly \$2,000. Additionally, we have yet to hold our major fundraisers, which are anticipated to bring in a significant amount. The projected budget for these fundraisers is \$26,000. We raised \$4 from the first fundraiser, which was at Ben and Jerry's.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

- Current Status :
  - Balance August 30, 2024: \$19,138
  - Balance Sept 30, 2024: \$24,487
- Income primarily from Membership Dues and Donations: \$5051
  - Exceeded budget for membership dues
- Outstanding checks: \$1,943
  - Classroom funds, 6<sup>th</sup> grade performance, sock hop, open house staff party
- Fundraisers
  - We have not had our large fundraisers yet
  - 2024-2025 Fundraisers Net Projected Budget = \$26,500

Budget Item	YTD September 30	BUDGET 7/25*	Variance
<b>Income</b>			
<b>Memberships and Donations</b>			
Donations	2,991.06	5,000	(2,908.94)
Membership Dues, net	2,960.74	7,000	960.74
<b>Memberships and Donations</b>	<b>5,951.80</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>(1,948.20)</b>
<b>Fundraisers</b>			
Ben Toys	50	500	(450)
Dining for Dollars	180.00	3,000	(2,820.00)
Original Works	2,000	2,000	(2,000.00)
Spirit Wear / Apparel Sales	700	700	(700.00)
LA 5k	257.56	10,000	(9,742.44)
Givebacks	59.32	1,000	(940.68)
Other Rewards	500	500	(500.00)
Pizza Bingo	10,000	10,000	(10,000.00)
School Supply Kits	250	250	(250.00)
Yearbook	2,500	2,500	(2,500.00)
Read-a-thon*	8,500		
School Pictures			
<b>Fundraisers - Income</b>	<b>496.88</b>	<b>26,500</b>	<b>(26,003.12)</b>
LA 5k	(8,300)	8,500.00	
Pizza Bingo	(3,500)	3,500.00	
<b>Fundraisers - Cost</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>10,000.00</b>
<b>Fundraisers - Net</b>	<b>496.88</b>	<b>26,500</b>	<b>(26,003.12)</b>
<b>Community Events</b>			
Faculty Volleyball Game	1,500		(1,500.00)
South Grade Celebration	3,000		(3,000.00)
South Grade Gift	3,000		(1,500.00)
Skate Night	2,000		(2,000.00)
Sock Hop	2,500		(2,500.00)
<b>Community Events - Income</b>	<b>10,600</b>		<b>(10,600.00)</b>
Back to School Social/Popscioe	(150)		(150.00)
Faculty Volleyball Game	(1,500)		1,500.00
Field Day	(1,000)		1,000.00
International Night	(250)		250.00
South Grade Celebration	(3,500)		3,500.00
South Grade Gift	(1,500)		1,500.00
SkateNight	(1,500)		1,500.00
Sock Hop	(320.00)		1,500.00
<b>Community Events - Costs</b>	<b>(320.00)</b>	<b>(11,400)</b>	<b>11,080.00</b>
<b>Community Events - Net</b>	<b>(320.00)</b>	<b>(800)</b>	<b>480.00</b>
<b>Student Programs</b>			
Math Counts	2,735.40		
City Club	1,303.68		
Student Program - Income	4,939.08		
Math Counts			
City Club			
Student Program - Cost			
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>8,267.76</b>	<b>32,700</b>	<b>(23,432.24)</b>
<b>Total Income less Programs</b>	<b>8,228.68</b>	<b>32,700</b>	<b>(27,471.32)</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Student Support</b>			
Azzara fund	1,400		(1,400.00)
Cultural Programs	2,000		(2,000.00)
Field Trips	4,000		(4,000.00)
Mentor Visits	900		(400.00)
Odyssey of the Mind	400		(400.00)
Reflections	900		(900.00)
Safety Patrol	150		(150.00)
Sunshine Times	2,200		(1,200.00)
<b>Student Support</b>	<b>10,450</b>		<b>(10,450.00)</b>
<b>Parent, Teacher, &amp; School Support</b>			
Educational Licenses	10,000		(10,000.00)
Classroom Funds	100.00		(5,900.00)
Mini Grants	8,000		(9,000.00)
Supply Closet	1,500		(1,500.00)
Performing Arts	815		(815.00)
<b>Parent, Teacher, School support</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>27,515</b>	<b>(27,215.00)</b>
<b>Teacher/Staff Appreciation</b>			
Staff Field/Lunches	800		(800.00)
Teacher Pop up Parties	1,000		(1,000.00)
Sunshine Committee	2,800		(2,800.00)
Teacher Appreciation Week	1,500		(1,500.00)
<b>Teacher/Staff Appreciation</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>5,900</b>	<b>(5,900.00)</b>
<b>PTA Administration</b>			
Accountant (9FF Tax Filing website)	41		(41.00)
Insurance	450		(450.00)
Misc / President's Fund	300		(300.00)
Supplies	200		(200.00)
Vehicle & Tech	500		(500.00)
<b>PTA Administration</b>	<b>.00</b>	<b>1,491</b>	<b>(1,491.00)</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>48,156</b>	<b>(48,056.00)</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>8,167.76</b>	<b>(12,456)</b>	<b>(17,688.24)</b>
Bank Balance		24,487.29	
Programs Cost		(4,939.08)	
Outstanding Checks		(1,943.00)	
Expected Income		27,471.32	
Expected Expenses		(45,056.00)	
Credit Card Fees		3,500.00	
Projected EOY Balance		4,420.53	

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

## President's Report & Program Announcements - Liz Young

### • Join the PTA

- Here's a monthly reminder to join the PTA if you haven't yet and encourage friends to do the same. Various membership options are available on the website. Remember, you need to join each year, as it's not a one-time membership.
  - Join online or make a donation at: <https://louisearcherpta.org/join-donate/> or <https://louisearcherpta.givebacks.com/>

### • Open Volunteer Positions

- **International Night Co-Chair -**
  - The International Night Committee organizes a cultural celebration highlighting community diversity. The event features booths, performances, global cuisine, and activities based on each country's choice. Sponsored by the Louise Archer PTA, it is managed by two chairs overseeing planning, promotion, and volunteer coordination. Community members are encouraged to sign up to help with various tasks.
- **Membership Coordinator -**
  - The membership committee has several key responsibilities such as: Plan and implement a membership campaign to attract and retain members; Showcase benefits for existing members to enhance PTA value; Set achievable membership goals for the year; Create a relevant membership theme, if applicable; and Recognize and celebrate volunteer efforts and school collaborations by nominating them for Virginia PTA Local Impact awards.
- **Movie Night Committee Chair -**
  - Plan the ultimate school movie night extravaganza! Select an appropriate film and obtain approval. Arrange for the rental of the movie screen and acquire the necessary license. Advertise and promote the event. Collaborate with sponsors and advertisers for additional support. Arrange refreshments for attendees. Recruit volunteers and supervise logistics on the event
- **Nominating Committee Chair -**
  - This committee nominates and presents a slate of officers at the May PTA General Meeting for the following school year. Committee members should be well-acquainted with the membership and have a basic understanding of PTA operations. Their responsibilities include electing nominating committee chairperson; Holding meetings to identify suitable candidates for executive board positions and any vacant committee chair roles; Referring potential volunteers to the relevant vice presidents for committee assignments. contacting individuals to determine their willingness to serve in the nominated role; and presenting a slate of officers at the May PTA General Meeting.
- **Odyssey of the Mind Chair \*\* (Urgent Need) -**
  - Help organize teams — including students and volunteer parent coaches — for the Odyssey of the Mind problem-solving competition. This program runs typically from Sep/Oct through March. The coordinator is the liaison for registering the school and providing necessary resources to families interested in participation. The bulk of the work for the coordinator is in September, gauging student and parent interest and then facilitating the formation of teams.
- **Reflections Chair(s) \*\* (Urgent Need) -**
  - Chair the committee that runs the Reflections program, a national PTA arts competition. The work of this committee and its chair is primarily from September to November and includes advertising the program to Louise Archer students, setting up a digital submissions process, organizing entries and forms for community judges, recruiting (as needed) and engaging with volunteer community judges, planning an awards celebration for November, and working with the Fairfax County regional PTA for advancing top entries. In addition to 1-2 chair(s) this committee benefits from 4 members.
- **Safe Routes/Walking Wednesdays Chair -**
  - Walk and bike to school events are planned activities designed to emphasize healthy habits and endorse SRTS (Safe Routes to School) programs by creating a dedicated opportunity to engage students in walking or biking to school. "Walk to School Week" has grown into an international phenomenon and is celebrated on the first Wednesday of October. October is now recognized as International Walk to School Month and is celebrated in over 40 countries by millions of walking participants; however, walk and bike to school events can take many forms, and can be held any time throughout the school year.
- **Signup at <https://www.fcps.edu/SEPTA> Liaison (Special Education PTA) -**
  - A Special Education PTA (SEPTA) is a PTA organization affiliated with the Virginia State (VAPTA) and National PTA, which specifically focuses on meeting the unique needs of special education, special needs, and disabled students and families. Responsibilities include promoting understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of children with different abilities; serving as points of contact for families interested in connecting with another parent of a child with special needs in individual schools; acting as a liaison between Louise Archer PTA and SEPTA, and promoting SEPTA involvement of LAES parents; as well as fostering connections and providing support.
- **Silent Auction Chair -**
  - This role involves choosing an auction platform and event date. While no licensing is required for a silent auction, it's essential to adhere to the Sale of Goods Act when describing items and stating their value. Seek donations for auction prizes, maintain records of supporters and their contributions, and engage with past and current donors. Generate anticipation by promoting prizes on social media, prepare thank-you letters, craft descriptions, and create images for an online auction. Manage winners, distribute prizes, and communicate collection and payment details within a specified timeline. Keep comprehensive notes on each prize's earnings and popular bids for future reference.
- **Volunteer Coordinator -**
  - Oversee our extensive group of general volunteers who are enthusiastic about contributing to LAES. Whenever a committee requires staffing or an event needs additional support, our Volunteer Coordinator is contacted. They then distribute the necessary information to our list of general volunteers. Also manages the Sign-Up Genius account.

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

## Committee Updates

### • Sock Hop

- For those who haven't attended, the Sock Hop is an absolute blast, and we can't get enough of it! So, mark your calendars for November 15th. This year, we have two fantastic Co-Chairs, Molly Paying and Reshma, who will definitely need volunteers. Keep an eye out in the coming weeks for details on how to sign up. Without enough volunteers, we won't be able to host the event, so if you're available that night, please consider helping out. You'll likely be there with your families anyway, and it promises to be a lot of fun!
- We especially encourage 6th-grade parents to volunteer, as this is a significant event for the 6th graders. It's adorable to see parents dress up and serve pizza during the evening. Pre-sales for food and drink tickets are highly recommended, as they help streamline the process. More information about that will also be shared in the next couple of weeks.

### • Mini Grants

- Each year, the PTA awards approximately \$10,000 dollars in grants to the teachers.
- Examples of grants that were awarded in past years include one-click mic for the younger students in technology lab, diversity and equity books for the library, mini golf and pickle ball for PE, field trips, funds to help new teachers build their class library, and flexible seating and wobble stools for classrooms.
- The grant process occurs twice a year, at the end of the 1st quarter and the end of the 2nd quarter. In this way, teachers have two opportunities to think of ideas but we also don't want to wait too far into the year because the grants are intended to benefit the students of the current school year.
- This year first round will be closing on October 15th at 5:00 PM. The goal is to notify applicants by the end of the first quarter.

### • Silent Auction

- Silent Auction is back this year. Currently, Liz Young is collaborating with Kristen Longwood to gather donations from local businesses. We've already received some fantastic teacher experiences! We will host it virtually in December, making it a perfect opportunity for holiday shopping.
- We're planning to send out information for parents who want to contribute donations. It could be anything you think others would be interested in, whether it's a unique item or experience. For instance, someone donated a large baseball card collection a few years back, and some people even offered vacation homes. If you have something like that, please let me know! Weekend getaways are tax-deductible as well.

## Upcoming Events

### • October 9 - Walking Wednesday Kick-off

- We're thrilled to announce Walking Wednesdays, coinciding with National Walk and Bike to School Day. To kick off this initiative, we invite you to let your kids walk or bike to school. We'll have a table set up where they can collect adorable charms each time they walk to school. Additionally, Cafe Amori has kindly donated some coffee for the occasion, so we'll have cups available. If you'd like to be eco-friendly, please bring your reusable coffee cup.
- This event isn't just for tomorrow; it will happen every Wednesday, weather permitting. As it gets colder, we may move inside to our beautiful new lobby.

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

- We understand that some families may not live close by, especially with bus transportation. If you wish for your child to participate, consider driving partway and walking a portion of the way to school. This way, those who are disappointed about not being able to walk from home can still join in. Just remember to be mindful of crosswalks, and above all, prioritize safety.
- A big thank you to Craig the Floyd for generously agreeing to chair this event, so if you see him around, be sure to express your appreciation!
- **October 16 - Dining for Dollars: Chipotle (4-8pm)**
  - This initiative simplifies meal planning while supporting our cause. If you haven't participated in a Dining for Dollars event yet, visit local restaurants and inform them that you're supporting the Archer fundraising effort. A percentage of the proceeds will be donated directly to the PTA. It's a fantastic way to raise funds while making your evening a bit more convenient!
- **October 28 - Early Release Monday (Madison Pyramid)**
  - To simplify our process, LAES will send you a reminder in about a week, detailing what you chose and what we expect from you. We kindly ask that you maintain your selections or make any necessary changes quickly, as we received numerous calls on the day of the last release, making communication quite challenging.
  - Now that you have this knowledge, you can better anticipate and plan accordingly. In the future, LAES will distribute a new survey customized for our school, allowing you to provide input for the next four early releases. They'll remind you of your choices, and if you need to make any adjustments, just let them know.
  - Additionally, for those participating in SAC in the afternoon, please note that your child can now be released to SAC starting at 1:00 PM. LAES will be sending a separate form to families involved with SAC at our local schools, asking for your preference regarding this new option.
  - If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to the main office. The aim is to keep everything straightforward, so please pay attention to all emails and messages. This will help ensure that your child gets to the right place, whether they stay until 4:00 PM or leave at 1:00 PM.
- **October 31 - End of First Quarter - 2-hour Early Release**

## **Next PTA Meeting:**

Wednesday, November 13th @ 7:00pm via Zoom

## **Questions/Comments:**

Q: Do you happen to know if these early releases will be a regular practice moving forward? For instance, will the district continue with early release Wednesdays or something similar, or is this solely related to the current curriculum development?

A: Currently, the focus is specifically on curriculum development. Honestly, when it comes to elementary schools, we have been pushing for more planning time, as it is significantly less than what middle and high schools receive. This request has been ongoing, and it wasn't until this year that they began to consider it. I believe that once they gather information and data on its effectiveness and explore what options are beneficial for families and staff, there is potential for this to persist. However, no definitive decisions have been made yet.

# Louise Archer Elementary School PTA

General PTA Meeting - October 8, 2024

Q: What is Reflections?

A: an arts recognition program for students in preschool through grade 12. The program aims to enhance arts education by encouraging students to create original works of art and to recognize their achievements. Each year, the program selects a theme for students to respond to. The theme for the 2023-2024 program is "I am Hopeful Because...". Students can create art in a variety of areas, including visual arts, literature, photography, musical composition, dance choreography, and film production. Students can submit entries in multiple categories.

Regarding the timeline, I think the competition is currently taking place, with local school submissions due by the end of the month. This means that if we decide to participate, it would require a quick turnaround. If anyone is interested in taking this on in the next three weeks, please let us know. If not this year, perhaps next year would work better.

I understand there is a wealth of guidance from the national PTA organization, which provides clear deadlines. Most of the tasks at the school level are concentrated around September and October, after which it moves on to the higher levels, where we have limited control. This presents a fantastic volunteer opportunity for next year if that's when you typically have more time to contribute.

Q: I noticed that the new storm drain near the playground lacks any bars or barriers and there's a large hole there that goes quite deep. I'm worried it looks like someone could easily get in and go down.

A: We will certainly investigate it. Thanks for bringing this to our attention!

**Call to Close: 8:02 PM**