

# Louise Archer PTA General Meeting Minutes

**Date:** August 27, 2025

**Location:** Zoom Virtual Meeting

**Time:** 7:00pm

**Meeting Called to Order By:** Liz Young – PTA President of Presiding Officer

**Meeting Adjourned At:** 7:53pm

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## PRINCIPALS REPORT:

### Welcome and Opening Remarks

- The school year is off to a strong start. Students returned with positive energy and stories from their first week.
- Despite a few upcoming four-day weeks, the school is focused on maintaining consistency with routines and procedures.

### Back to School Night

- Traditionally, this meeting does not occur before Back to School Night, so most detailed information will be shared at that event.
- **Back to School Night is scheduled for next Wednesday at 6:00 PM.**
- Families will have the opportunity to meet teachers and learn more about the academic year.

### Communication Updates

- Bi-weekly school newsletters will resume under the new name "**Sunshine School.**"
- Due to the busy start of the year, newsletters have been sent weekly, but this will shift to every other week shortly.

### Upcoming Events

- **Pyramid-Wide County Fair:**
  - Scheduled for **tomorrow from 5:00–6:45 PM at Madison.**
  - This annual event features games and activities and includes participation from all pyramid schools.
  - All families are encouraged to attend.
- **Spirit Wear Drive:**
  - Madison students will be on campus tomorrow to cheer on arrivals and collect gently used youth spirit wear.
  - Items from any feeder school are welcome.
  - Donated items will be redistributed to families in need.

### Historical Marker Recognition

- In 2021, a fourth-grade student submitted an application for a Fairfax County historical marker honoring **Louise Archer.**
- The marker will be installed next week and officially unveiled on **Saturday, September 6th.**

- County and school board officials will attend the unveiling to honor the significance of Louise Archer's legacy.

### **School and Community Connection**

- This year's goal is to deepen connections between the school and families.
- Appreciation was expressed to the PTA Board and members for fostering community through events and volunteerism.

### **Testing and Assessments**

- **Beginning-of-Year Assessments:**
    - Reading and math assessments are underway to gauge student levels.
    - New **MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)** testing will replace the previous iReady assessment for 1st and 6th graders in math.
    - The testing window opens next week and will continue over the next few weeks.
    - Families will be notified if students qualify for additional academic support.
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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **New Items for the 2024–2025 School Year**

#### **Item #1 - PTA Meeting Schedule Update**

- To address "meeting fatigue" from previous years, the PTA will hold fewer meetings this school year.
- Many past meetings were found to be redundant, with updates already communicated via:
  - The *Sunbeam* newsletter
  - News You Choose emails
  - Tuesday folders
  - Facebook and other PTA communications
- For 2024–2025, the PTA will hold the **minimum three meetings required:**
  1. **September (this meeting)**
  2. **January 14th** – Financial update and planning for spring events
  3. **May 19th** – Year-end wrap-up, board elections, and review of any remaining budget items
- Additional meetings may be added if needed, but the goal is to streamline communications.

#### **Item #2 - Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Volunteer Policy Update**

- FCPS has implemented a **new volunteer process** to enhance student and staff safety.
- Volunteers are now categorized by levels, with some roles requiring:
  - Background checks
  - Fingerprinting (e.g., for classroom helpers, field trip chaperones, etc.)
- Families are strongly encouraged to complete **higher-level volunteer clearance** early if they anticipate volunteering multiple times this year.

- o This ensures availability for last-minute needs, such as field trips.
  - o Avoids delays or cancellations due to lack of cleared volunteers.
- As of last Friday, **48 volunteers** have begun the process.
- Volunteer clearance can be considered part of the “beginning-of-year paperwork.”
- Additional reminders and guidance will be provided at **Back to School Night** and via school communications.

### **Item #3 - 2024–2025 PTA Budget Outlook**

- The PTA is working with a **smaller budget this year** for several reasons:
  - o During the pandemic, a surplus accumulated due to reduced events.
  - o That surplus was intentionally spent down over the past few years to benefit current families.
  - o Some fundraising events last year underperformed compared to projections.
  - o Unexpected one-time fundraisers also contributed unpredictably.
  - o Inflation and increased costs for goods and services have also impacted planning.
- Budget planning this year is **conservative by design**:
  - o The PTA will fund fewer programs at the outset.
  - o If fundraising exceeds expectations, additional spending may be authorized mid-year.
- The goal is to avoid overcommitting and ensure that all programs funded can be sustained.
- A formal **vote on the budget** will follow in this meeting.

### **PTA Membership Reminder**

- Members were reminded to **renew their PTA membership annually**.
  - o Memberships **do not roll over** from the previous year.
  - o Only current members are eligible to vote on PTA matters.
- Multiple membership levels are available:
  - o **Individual Membership**
  - o **Two-Parent Membership**
  - o **Family Cheerleader Membership** (includes name(s) printed on the Louise Archer 5K T-shirt)
- A link/QR code to join was provided during the meeting. Members were encouraged to register as soon as possible.

### **PTA Board Elections**

- President Liz Young and Secretary Katie Nevitt are currently serving the **second year of their two-year terms**.
- Two **open board positions** were announced and nominations presented:
  - o **Vice President Nominee: Sarah Norcross**
    - Parent of a 2nd grader and a kindergartener
    - Longstanding involvement with Louise Archer and the PTA
  - o **Treasurer Nominee: Dan Taylor**

- New Louise Archer parent with a kindergartener and a future student
- Excited to support PTA operations in a financial capacity
- **A motion to elect Sarah Norcross as Vice President and Dan Taylor as Treasurer** was made and seconded.
  - o Voting was conducted via Zoom poll.
  - o All votes cast were in favor (“Yay”).
  - o No “Nay” votes were recorded.

**Motion passed unanimously. Sarah Norcross and Dan Taylor are officially elected to the PTA Board.**

- The board expressed appreciation for both Sarah and Dan’s willingness to serve.

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## **PRESENTATION & ADOPTION OF 2024-2025 AUDIT**

**Presented by:** Steve Soliday

- **Audit Committee Members:**
  - o Jerry Alexandratos (former PTA Webmaster and Audit Chair)
  - o Katie Nevitt (Secretary)
  - o Steve Soliday (former PTA exec)
  - o Sabiha Khan (Outgoing Treasurer, attended to answer questions)
- **Audit Process Overview:**
  - o The committee completed the **annual financial audit** using the standard PTA audit form.
  - o Verified that all **required documentation and records** were complete and present.
  - o All **compliance checklist questions** received “Yes” responses—indicating proper financial oversight.
  - o The audit form and full report will be posted to the **PTA website** for member review.
- **Key Financial Figures from FY 2024–2025:**
  - o **Starting Balance:** \$19,350.60
  - o **Total Income:** \$65,762.49
  - o **Total Cash on Hand:** \$85,113.09
  - o **Total Expenses:** \$55,271.75
  - o **Ending Balance:** \$29,859.24
- **Adjustments:**
  - o **Outstanding Checks:** 4 checks from prior fiscal year not yet cashed as of June 30.
  - o **Outstanding Deposits:**
    - Yearbook payment: \$191.85
    - Late donation: \$5,000

- **Final Adjusted Ending Balance:** \$24,656.14 (This becomes the opening balance for FY 2025–2026)
  - **Recommendations from the Audit Committee:**
    - Simplify the number of accounts and remove outdated categories.
    - Move toward **double-entry accounting** to streamline future audits.
    - No discrepancies or violations were found.
  - **Motion:**
    - Steve made a motion to **adopt the findings of the FY 2024–2025 audit**.
    - Motion seconded.
    - Vote conducted via Zoom poll.
    - **Result: Motion passed unanimously.**
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## TREASURER’S REPORT

### FY 2025–2026 PTA BUDGET PROPOSAL AND APPROVAL

**Presented by:** Dan Taylor, Incoming Treasurer

- Dan Taylor introduced himself as the newly elected **Treasurer**, shared excitement about serving the PTA, and noted his child is enjoying their first weeks at Louise Archer.
  - **Budget Overview:**
    - The proposed budget is **based on last year’s budget**, with some **adjustments** to reflect:
      - Reduced fundraising projections
      - Updated actual expenses from the previous year
      - Inflation and vendor cost increases
      - A smaller overall budget due to the post-COVID spending drawdown and over-forecasting from the previous year.
  - **Structure of the Budget:**
    - Divided into **Income** categories (e.g., membership, donations, fundraisers)
    - Followed by **Expense** categories (e.g., events, staff support, programming)
  - **Key Points:**
    - Some programs saw **reduced funding**.
    - The PTA will be **flexible** throughout the year and may revise the budget if income exceeds projections.
    - Treasurer’s contact information is available for members with questions or suggestions.
  - **Motion:**
    - Dan made a motion to **approve the FY 2025–2026 budget as proposed**.
    - Motion was seconded.
    - Vote conducted via Zoom poll.
    - **Result: Budget passed with unanimous approval.**
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## Open PTA Committee Positions

- Several committee roles are still unfilled. Volunteers are urgently needed for the following key roles:
    - **Yearbook Chair:**
      - *No chair = no yearbook.*
      - Essential role for overseeing yearbook production. Katie has past experience and is available to provide information/support to interested volunteers.
    - **Read-a-thon Chair & Silent Auction Chair:**
      - Both are significant fundraisers.
      - Katie previously led Read-a-thon; Liz managed Silent Auction.
      - These are computer-based roles, with most of the work being virtual (e.g., email outreach, website setup).
      - Volunteers are not expected to handle alone—support is available.
  - **How to Volunteer:**
    - Visit the **PTA website** for detailed role descriptions and to express interest.
    - Encourage friends to co-chair roles together.
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## Reflections Art Program

- **Presented by:** Reshma Patel
  - The Reflections Program has returned this year with the theme **“I Belong.”**
  - **Chairs:** Reshma, supported by six volunteer committee members.
  - **Program Highlights:**
    - National PTA-sponsored competition with progression from school to state to national level.
    - Six creative categories; students may enter more than one.
    - Submissions are judged anonymously by professionals in each field.
    - Details will be shared via Tuesday folders, email, and Back to School Night.
    - Submission **deadline will be announced soon.**
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## Before & After School Programs

- **Chairs:** Kinny Jeng
- Registration for enrichment programs is currently open (info sent via Tuesday folders).
- Deadline to register: **September 7**
- Programs are highly recommended and popular among students.

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## Walking Wednesdays

- **Lead Volunteer:** Craig Floyd
  - Weekly walking event where students receive collectible keychains.
  - **Needs:**
    - Additional volunteers for setup, breakdown, or to sub on days Craig is unavailable.
    - **Coffee pickup** volunteer needed (donated by Café Amour).
  - **Start Date:** September 17
  - Volunteers interested in assisting can contact the board for coordination.
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## Dining for Dollars

- **Coordinator:** Corrie Pratt
  - Monthly restaurant fundraisers where a portion of proceeds go to the PTA.
  - **Upcoming Events:**
    - **September 17:** Chipotle, 4–8 PM
    - **September 25:** Ben & Jerry's, 4–9 PM
  - These events are fun, well-attended by families, and support local businesses and the school.
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## Spirit Wear

- **Website:** [www.louisearcherspiritwear.com](http://www.louisearcherspiritwear.com)
  - Ongoing promotions available.
  - Proceeds benefit PTA programs.
  - Students enjoy showing school pride through spirit wear.
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## Staying Connected with the PTA

### Communication Channels:

- **PTA Website:** Up-to-date info and events.
- **The Sunbeam:** Weekly PTA newsletter (opt-in required).
- **Facebook Group:** Louise Archer PTA
- **Sunshine Scoop (formerly News You Choose):** Sent by the school
- **Tuesday Folders & School Marquee:** Ongoing updates and reminders

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## General Questions

**Q:** What is the maximum class size at Louise Archer?

**A: Response by Principal:**

- Per Virginia state regulations, class size cap is **35 students**.
- FCPS previously aimed for smaller class sizes (~28–30), but budget constraints now require adherence to state limits.
- Teachers are experienced in managing larger classes, particularly in upper grades.

**Q:** Where to go for fingerprinting for FCPS volunteer clearance?

**A: Response by Principal:**

- Fingerprinting is conducted at **Gatehouse Administration Center**, the main office for Fairfax County Public Schools (located near Jackson Middle School).
- In the past, mobile fingerprinting units were used for FCPS staff. If there's an opportunity for a mobile or on-site fingerprinting day at the school, the PTA is open and eager to **support, promote, and coordinate**.

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## Final Reminders & Closing

- **Volunteer Training:**
  - All volunteers must complete required **FCPS volunteer training and fingerprinting** to participate in in-school or field trip events.
- **Board Availability:**
  - Although only **three general meetings** are scheduled this year, the **PTA Executive Board remains active year-round** and available to all members.
- **Contact:**
  - For questions or to volunteer, email **president@louisearcherpta.org**

## Meeting Adjourned.

- Thanks to all attendees, presenters, and volunteers.
- Congratulations again to **Dan Taylor (Treasurer)** and **Sarah Norcross (Vice President)** on their board elections.