

W. Charles Akins High School PTSA
Wednesday, September 6, 2023
Akins ECHS – CCC (Room 146)

MINUTES

In attendance: Trudy Richards (parent/secretary), Eliza Saenz (parent), Robin Sanchez (parent), Odalys Cerrato (parent), Jessica Longoria (teacher), Marie Mechinus (parent), Shekema Dunlap (staff), Connie Miralrio (staff/parent), Melissa Contreras (staff), Meg Kozel (staff/VP), Jess Rest (community member), Paula Hawn (parent), Nathan Willis (community member/treasurer), Mikayla Fowler (community member), Cecilia Gutierrez (teacher/parent), Teodoro Gutierrez (student), Joanna Rowley (parent), Angelica Ancira (parent/president), Gessie Wilson (parent), Laura Castaneda (teacher), Michael Herbin (principal)

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 pm

Topic: Angelica Ancira welcomed guests and introduced the executive board members.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Trudy Richards presented the minutes from the May 2023 general meeting.

Action: Cecilia Gutierrez made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Melissa Contreras seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Meg Kozel said that financial reconciliation for the 2022-23 school year is underway and should be completed on schedule.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Ancira announced that PTSA is still looking for Membership and Fundraising Chairs and offered handouts of the job descriptions. She said that free trainings on these roles are available on the Texas PTA website. Richards noted that these positions could be covered by two people in co-chair positions to lessen the load on one individual.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Ancira announced that Texas Roadhouse will be providing lunch for Custodian Appreciation Week on Tuesday, October 3. The menu will be barbecued chicken, mashed potatoes, corn, and rolls.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Ancira has reached out to the cheer squad to see if they need any assistance from PTSA for the Homecoming dance (to be held Oct 13). She hopes for a response by next week.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Ancira announced that PTSA will continue to help with ticket sales at Blue & Gold Night and asked for thoughts on other ways to raise funds at this event, like food or merchandise sales. She said that she has her food handler's certificate if PTSA wanted to sell food. Contreras said the event will be held October 25 and that academy coordinators will be meeting soon for planning and will send out more details to organization sponsors. Richards asked that PTSA be invited to those planning meetings.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Ancira asked attendees to brainstorm ideas for membership recruitment for students, parents, and teachers/staff. Each table then reported out their suggestions.

Ideas for students:

- offer meetings during FIT (facilitated by Meg Kozel)
- opportunities for scholarships for student members
- opportunities for graduation service cords for student members
- invite STUCO reps/class officers to join
- inform parents that students can (and should!) join
- offer rewards like swag, food, tardy forgiveness pass, parking pass discount
- promote opportunities for volunteer hours
- advertise benefits with presentations at club meetings, flyers throughout school, etc.

Ideas for parents:

- publicize meetings and include details about babysitting, translation, etc.
- door prizes at meetings
- food at meetings

- ask about barriers to attendance
- consider alternative times or modalities for meetings (mornings? online?)
- find technology (swivel camera?) to use for online meetings

Ideas for teachers/staff:

- provide donated lunch, teachers pay for lunch and get a “free” membership
- monthly drawings for new and/or current members
- monthly events for PTSA members only (ice cream party, cookies, etc.)
- partner with STUCO to provide free vouchers to Teacher of the Month recipients
- parking spot raffle for members
- Friday afternoon class coverage (by Herbin) raffle
- publicize incentives at upcoming September 25 professional development day

Action: The PTSA Executive Board will employ many of these suggestions throughout the coming year.

Topic: Nathan Willis presented the draft 2023-24 budget. He noted that there had been an additional \$500 deposit since the hard copies were printed, which resulted in a corresponding increase to the beginning cash balance, the total funds available, and the balance to be carried forward. Willis detailed all anticipated income and expenditures.

Action: Joanna Rowley made a motion to approve the 2023-24 budget with the corrections as noted above. Contreras seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Willis presented the treasurer’s report for August, including income from shirt sales and memberships. Ancira asked that she be reimbursed for expenses for security incurred at the Senior Sunrise event sponsored by senior parents.

Action: Jess Rast made a motion to approve the reimbursal. Paula Hawn seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Topic: Richards announced that PTSA currently has 64 members, which is quite high for this early in the year. Goal for the year is at least 150 members. Parent Gessie Wilson asked how many students attend Akins and Richards said about 2,600.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Richards discussed some fundraising plans for 2023-24, including spirit nights at Whataburger, Texas Roadhouse, and potentially Chuy's and other local restaurants, helping with Blue & Gold Night, and merchandise sales. She reiterated the need for a chair or two for this position who would be supported by the Executive Board members who are currently filling these roles.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Michael Herbin provided the principal's report. He noted that the campus is nearly fully-staffed and that there were only two vacancies at the beginning of the year, one in Life Skills and one in Special Education. Herbin said that administration is emphasizing security and safety by requiring all students to wear IDs at all times and enforcing parking passes. He gave a list of upcoming event dates, including the Title I Principal Coffee (Sept 21), student holiday/staff development day (Sept 25), Parent/Teacher Conference Day (Oct 9), Homecoming (game Oct 12, dance Oct 13), and Blue & Gold Night (Oct 25).

Action: None taken.

Topic: Academy Coordinator Liaison Melissa Contreras provided academy updates. Academies have been recruiting and selecting student ambassadors, planning the October 9 parent/teacher conference day, and preparing for Blue & Gold Night.

Action: None taken.

Topic: A+FCU representative Mika Fisher announced new student interns Natalia Luna and Leticia Martin. She also reminded attendees of A+FCU's generous refer-a-friend bonus program and detailed financial literacy presentations that they can offer to students and families. Teachers interested in signing up for a presentation can do so on the A+FCU website.

Willis announced that the PTSA had recently asked for financial support for the student scholarship initiative and that he was happy to report that A+FCU had agreed to donate \$500 toward this program.

Action: None taken.

Topic: Richards announced the newly-created PTSA Student Recognition Committee, and said that we are currently looking for parents, students, and teachers to join this committee who will

set parameters for the awarding of student scholarships and graduation cords. These awards will only be offered to paid student members of the PTSA, so should be good recruiting tools for this year.

She noted that to avoid nepotism and for complete transparency, all identifying information will be removed from applications and scholarship recipients will be selected by an impartial committee of teachers, not by PTSA members or the Executive Board.

Action: Attendees interested in being a part of this committee signed up with Richards post-meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35pm.