

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

## MINUTES

**In attendance:** Trudy Richards (parent/secretary), Meg Kozel (staff/VP), Nathan Willis (community member/treasurer), Cecilia Gutierrez (teacher/parent), Angelica Ancira (parent/president), Michael Herbin (principal), Melinda Van Horn (staff), Belynda Montgomery (parent), Tiana Green (former student/presenter), Teo Gutierrez (student), Tierra Lemuel (student/co-chair Student Activities Committee), Shekema Dunlap (staff), Connie Miralrio (staff), Adrianna Vasquez (student/co-chair Student Activities Committee), Leah Duran (student/STUCO rep), Brian Peña (community member/rep from Congressman Lloyd Doggett's office)

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 pm.

**Topic:** Angelica Ancira presented the minutes from the November 2023 general meeting.

**Action:** Meg Kozel made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Belynda Montgomery seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Topic:** Willis presented the treasurer's report for November, noting that all expenditures are well within the budgeted totals and that we are on track for a strong balance entering into the spring.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Ancira announced that the Phill the Box donation station has been installed in the middle of the school parking lot and will be there through at least May 1. She noted that all items must be placed in plastic bags before being put in the bin and that she and Richards were working on getting signage placed on the bin to that effect. Ancira asked PSS Connie Miralrio if she could leave a supply of bags with her in case donors needed them and Miralrio agreed.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Ancira announced that a total of 292 pies (or funds to buy pies) were collected for the Pies for Teachers project, including 100 from Jessica Rest, 50 from RBFCU, and 25 from another Akins' family.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards said that the PTSA spirit night at Texas Roadhouse on November 8 brought in \$82.30 in income. In addition, the concessions from the 10/27/23 football game brought in \$487.48. PTSA plans to sign up for additional concessions for the 2024 football season. Ancira said she will help to coordinate with AISD staff next fall.

Montgomery suggested selling pre-frozen water bottles in the stands during hot games.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards announced that PTSA currently has 97 members and that the winner of the November staff basket was Dr. Shekema Dunlap. There will be another membership incentive drawing for teachers and staff in January or February.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Co-chairs from the PTSA Student Activity Committee (SAC) presented their goal of promoting student membership and boosting morale on campus with activities like the planned December 14th hot cocoa bar for students, which will be held in the courtyard during both lunches.

They asked that since students participated in the work of concessions, the SAC be allocated some percentage of the revenue from that fundraiser as well as \$3.50 of the dues collected from each student member.

Ancira said that the Executive Board would consider this request at their January meeting.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Herbin provided the principal's report. He thanked PTSA for the pies and for help with the Thanksgiving luncheon. He congratulated the theater department on their recent production of Clue and announced several upcoming fine arts events.

Herbin also said that this week is EOC/STAAR retesting and next week, finals begin. Friday, Dec 15 through Wednesday, Dec 20, will be half days for finals with no lunch provided to students.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Academy Coordinator Dr. Shekema Dunlap provided academy updates. GTA competed in FFA tournaments, ABL2E participated in SWAT training, helped with Brown Santa, and hosted the YMCA Youth and Government contest. ECHS has two seniors who are eligible to graduate with their associate's degree a semester early and PTECH students visited with architects about the repurposing of Simms Elementary School.

Gutierrez added that SSA students in TAFE competed and will have several students advance to the state level in March 2024.

Eighth graders from feeder high schools will begin visiting Akins Monday, December 11, and the Academy Fair will be held January 24.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Student Council (STUCO) president Leah Duran said that the organization had decided on five potential prom themes, which will be voted on by seniors. Seniors will meet January 10 and 11 to discuss prom plans and hear about an option to fundraise to have their ticket prices covered.

Ms. Hartfield will be taking over as STUCO sponsor in January.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** A+FCU representative Nathan Willis said that scholarship applications opened November 1 and will close February 2 at 11:59 pm. Students or their parents must be an A+FCU member to apply.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards detailed requirements for cords and scholarships as part of the Student Recognition Committee. All of this information will be provided to students in January.

#### Cords:

- Open to paid PTSA members only
- Requires 75 hours of community service over four years, including 15 hours of PTSA-specific service
- Can count PTSA meetings/events and PSS events as hours of service
- Can count hours used for other organizations/programs
- Will be verified using the generic school form
- Willis will set up a tracking system
- Potential to create a Blend course for PTSA
- For the time being, will use Remind for volunteer opportunities
- Deadline for submission is May 1
- Need to pick a cord color (likely will be a multicolored option to avoid conflict)

#### Scholarships:

- To be eligible for 2024, students must be a PTSA member by February 7, 2024
- Still not sure if giving 1 \$500 award or 2 \$250 awards
- Will promote in newsletters and at Coffee with the Principal events + CCC
- No leadership requirement for 2024 (may add this in subsequent years)
- Requires 75 hours of community service over four years, including 15 hours of PTSA-specific service
- Can count PTSA meetings/events and PSS events as hours of service
- Potentially add option to take Financial Literacy courses for service credit
- Requires one essay of no more than 250 words (topics TBD)
- Letter of recommendation not required
- Applications due one month before senior breakfast
- Winner(s) to be announced at senior breakfast
- Panel of 3 reviewers to be selected by the PTSA Board
- Blind review process to avoid bias
- Applications will be scored on a rubric that takes into account levels of engagement

Melinda Van Horn asked if Mr. Garcia had been consulted regarding the graduation cords. Richards said that she was unaware that this was necessary, but would do so.

**Action:** Richards will consult with Mr. Garcia regarding cord requirements to get approval.

**Topic:** Richards presented Kozel with some books as a gift for her upcoming baby and thanked her for being an integral part of the PTSA Board.

Richards introduced Brian Peña from Congressman Lloyd Doggett's office, who listed a variety of services that the Congressman's office can provide, ranging from passport/visa assistance to reference letters for military academies to access for Capitol visits in Washington DC. Richards said that the PTSA plans to partner with the Congressman's office in the spring to provide voter registration drives to eligible seniors.

**Action:** None taken.

Meeting adjourned at 6:27 pm.