

GEORGE MASON PTA: JANUARY 8, 2024 // MEETING MINUTES

Scholarship Fund of Alexandria presentation – Rosie Weidermeier

- 1) College counseling, help fill out FAFSA
- 2) Scholarships (All needs based scholarships are \$3k & 4 year commitment)
- 3) You can support the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria by making cash donations, or by hosting an Honor-A-Teacher party – once you reach \$3k in donations, that teacher can award a scholarship in his or her name to a deserving student in the spring
- 4) Annual Gala is at the Mark Center – it's a fun night & raises money for the scholarship fund
- 5) You can read applications for the Scholarship Fund – each application is read by 3 readers – this is virtual – probably a 2-3 hour commitment –

Student Support Team Presentation

1. Overview of Student Support Team Members:
 - a. Guidance Counselors: Ms. Alstom Harrison (full-time to George Mason) & Ms. Wickard (Mondays only, goes to Barrett & MVCS as well) – classroom lessons – individual counseling short term, group counseling short term – crisis intervention.
 - b. Ms. Mitchell is our psychologist – specializes in learning disabilities – does assessments for IEP, cognitive, social emotional learning, comparative assessments – figure out how to better support or to provide an IEP.
 - c. Mrs. Robinson – school social worker – her #1 focus is attendance. She also works with IEP team – makes sure there are no barriers to prevent success – e.g., if a kid needs a coat, she gets them a coat – works with the nurse to make sure health needs are assessed.
 - d. Mrs. McGeorge (nurse) is also a key part of the student support team.
2. Hazel Health Overview
 - a. Hazel Health is a contractor that provides licensed professional counselors and LCSWs, who provides therapy during school hours and after school virtually. FCPS also uses this vendor.
 - b. Mental health is one of the top barriers to learning
 - c. Hazel is free to students regardless of immigration status or ability to pay. (The only disqualification is if a particular student is already receiving therapy elsewhere.)
 - d. How to access? 1) referral to care 2) intake process 3) therapist creates a plan – then discharge process and ongoing follow up process.
 - e. Referral can be either through school/SST or through parents (can use online account) – this can be either during school (there is a separate room where the kids can use an ipad to talk to the therapist)
 - f. GMES SST provides short term counseling, focused on IEP – Hazel provides more intensive, longer-term care beyond what the SST – this can be 6-10 sessions depending on the child's needs (follow up can be scheduled).

- g. Hazel Health provides **confidential therapy** – what happens is between students, therapists, and parents.
 - h. **Parents need to consent to treatment.**
3. Mason Market is a Capital Area Food Bank partner – we are your local food bank – 195 family visits to Mason Market since Oct 16 2023; Capital Area Food Bank gives us a monthly allotment, but what we raised in the Turkey Trot stayed with our community – we gave “extras” that were nice treats for our families, like varieties of cereals. Alfred Street Baptist Church has been a very generous supporter. Be The Good Project. PTA has supported the Mason Market with holiday gift card drive as well as endowment for Baroody after school activities.

Mason Market wish list – you can drop these items off in the office:

- Toilet tissue (4 packs, please!)
- Bar soap
- Deodorant (men and women)
- Toothpaste
- Children’s toothbrushes
- Cooking oil
- Masa flour
- Feminine products/pads
- Diapers (all sizes; open packs of unused diapers are fine!)

BE SMART (Jen Earley)

Firearms are the leading cause of death of children. Be SMART has five different components:

- **Secure guns in your home & in your vehicles** – you can get a gun safe or a lock – there are vehicle gun safes – trigger locks and cable locks are given away by the [Sheriff’s Office](#). Make sure to keep ammo and gun locked separately.
- **Model Responsible Behavior** –
- **Ask about Unsecured Guns in Others’ Homes and cars**
- **Recognize the Role of Guns in Suicide**
- **Tell Everyone You Know to Be SMART!**

Andrew Corso is the co-lead – besmartALX@gmail.com if you want more info or text SMART to 644-33

Mr. Finan - 3rd week of each month you are welcome to come have lunch with your child – starting next week!