

# MINUTES

## Benjamin Franklin High School Parents' Association

*November 1, 2016 Meeting*

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### Executive Committee

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A meeting of the Benjamin Franklin High School Parents' Association was held in the school cafeteria on November 1, 2016, commenced at 6:35 pm following a pre-meeting social that began at 6 pm.

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### In Attendance

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Fred Chambers, Pres.	Chunlin Leonhard	Joy Martin
Timmi Vernier, VP	John Lester	Cecelia Gillam-Brown
Grace Marie Rose, VP Comm.	Penny Marlar	Susan Norris-David
David Dyer, Secretary/Treasurer	Leslie Kozina	Stacy Deiteczweig
Dr. Patrick Widhalm	Linda Adams	M. Guff-Haas
Holly Gore Groh	Clifford Adams	Ragan Gankendorff
Brad Axelrod	James Milligan	Angele Givens
John Lutz	Ann Dyer	Kristin Isenberg
Francoise McHugh	Tina Shariff	Kriss Morrison

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### Approval of Minutes

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No minutes were available from the October meeting

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### Executive Committee

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Fred Chambers introduced the new members of the Executive Committee including himself, Timmi Vernier, Grace Marie Rose and David Dyer, as well as introducing Kris Morrison filling in for Christy Read (BFHS Director of Advancement) and Tina Shariff (BFHS Data Manager).

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### Parents Annual Giving

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Kris Morrison gave a report on the Parents Annual Giving drive. The goal is 100% participation which level enhances the ability of the school to obtain grants and corporate sponsorships. Any amount is welcome. The gap, or difference between funding and what it costs to educate a student is estimated at around \$1,600. Currently the 10<sup>th</sup> grade class is in the lead with a 34% participation level. The 9<sup>th</sup> grade is close behind at 33%. 11<sup>th</sup> grade is at 25% and the 12<sup>th</sup> grade is at 17%. The class with the highest participation level wins a class pizza party. The overall participation level is at 27% which is higher than the level reached at this same time last year.

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## Budget

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David Dyer gave a report on the financial status. Current funds on deposit in the Franklin Parent Association account held by the high school and maintained by the Chief Financial Officer of the school total approximately \$37,667.27. Revenue is obtained from a fee assessed at the beginning of the school year which is currently set at \$15 per student. The largest ongoing expense is funding of the afterschool tutoring program which the Parent Association last year funded in the amount of \$15,789.66.

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## Open Discussion

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A discussion was about the afterschool tutoring program and potential sources of revenues and opportunities for Parent Association funding. Among the ideas discussed for funding were the following: ACT/SAT prep, faculty wish list, teacher appreciation, a faculty party, cafeteria microwaves, a refrigerator to store food. During the discussion it was pointed out that there is an after school test prep program and that some teachers individually prepare students. The importance of communication and the filtering up of ideas from parent and class representatives was stressed. Use of name tags for the meetings, post cards, signs at dropoff of meeting days and a drawing or raffle for the meeting were proposed. Also proposed to increase interest was a drawing if a current attendee brought a new attendee to a meeting.

Tina Shariff asked that if any parent is not getting emails, then they should let her know by emailing her at [info@bfhsla.org](mailto:info@bfhsla.org) or by seeing or calling her.

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## Guest Speaker

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Fred Chambers introduced Francoise McHugh who is Ben Franklin's Grant Coordinator and Librarian. Ms. McHugh began with a discussion of the free card access to the UNO Library which provides online access to hundreds of databases, wifi access and use of the library resources. Currently, she has 200 requests from the 948 students so many more need to make use of this program. A request takes seconds and Ms. McHugh obtains and provides the UNO card to each student. 9<sup>th</sup> graders will need these cards for their classes. Also discussed was the Gateway partnership with 20 schools in the parish for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to receive tutoring in math on Saturday mornings.

On the grant side, there is a website at [donorschoose.com](http://donorschoose.com) on which are currently placed about 6 pending requests by faculty for items. The projector used in the cafeteria for this meeting was obtained through [donorschoose.com](http://donorschoose.com). Anyone can go to this site, review the pending school requests and contribute or fund a request. Those contributions receive a tax credit and school recognition. Another program discussed was at [www.nsliforyouth.org](http://www.nsliforyouth.org) which is a Department of State language study program in certain foreign countries such as China, Turkey, Russia and some Arabic countries. Her son participated in this program over the summer in China receiving full funding. A post high school language program is the Yes Abroad Program which one BFHS student used the year after his graduation with his admission to Yale deferred for that year. Information is available at [Exchanges.state.gov](http://Exchanges.state.gov). A STEM merit scholarship through Shell, the Jason Bayer scholarship, provides \$1,000 per year for four years and requires only a one page application. Finally, summer medical research opportunities were discussed including one through a parent at BFHS, Fern Tsien at LSU who has taken a few students in the summers for research work.

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## Principal's Report

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Fred Chambers introduced Dr. Widhalm who had just come from a meeting with three respondents to a Request for Quote to propose how they would build the best school building for BFHS today and then how they would make that happen with BFHS' current building. All three respondents are local companies. The courtyard was identified as a good focal point for the campus, encouraging communication and interaction. This is an ongoing process.

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## International Festival

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Fred Chambers reported for Charmaine Cooper Hussain, International Festival Chairman, that 26% of the student clubs had expressed an interest in participating in the festival with most interested in activity booths.

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## Next Meeting

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The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at a location to be announced.

The meeting adjourned around 7:45 pm.