



Hello John Adams Families!

I wanted to take a quick moment as my last month as PTA President to say thank you to all of you; parents, teachers, administrators and staff who responded to our call and joined the PTA this school year and making 2018 – 2019 school year yet again another successful year. Together we achieved PTA's core mission – *"to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children"* by all the programs and events we supported and met PTA's goal - *Promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community. Raise the standards of home life. Promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth* by inviting guest speakers each month at our PTA meetings who gave presentations that focused on these goals. Below is a highlight of some of what we were able to accomplish together as PTA:

#### • Membership

Because you joined, our membership grew from 61 last school year to 97, increasing not just parents' membership but also teachers, administrators and staff membership.

#### • Academic Events

**Summer Reading** - The PTA celebrated its participants in the joint PTA and Alexandria City Public Library-sponsored Summer Reading Program shortly after the start of the new school year. Our John Adams readers in K-5 read 650 books over the summer. The most books, 212 in total, were read by our 2nd graders. Our top reader, a 2nd grader, read 42 books and our first ever kindergarten participant read 19 books! Our 4th grade classrooms had the most participants in the summer reading program. All participants in the contest were recognized by Ms. Canton and received reading medals from the PTA.

**Science Fair** - PTA bought the trifolds for students to display their projects on for \$385.00 and personalized ribbons awarded to the participants for \$304.07. We had a great turnout of student participants and families who came to see their hard work in display throughout the school. We also honored the memory and legacy of Dr. Dunzo, a dedicated and passionate PTA member and volunteer who started the Science Fair at John Adams. The PTA presented her family a certificate of honor in her memory to her family and presented a plaque in her honor to the school which is currently placed in a glass case on the wall near Mrs. Canton's office.

**Spelling Bee** - PTA paid the \$160 Enrollment fee and \$280.32 for awards, ribbons and name tags. John Adams's winner 5<sup>th</sup> grader Abem Dinku went on to compete at District Spelling Bee in Fairfax County Spelling Bee, representing our school proudly. This was the first time that John Adams got to compete at this level, thank you to the hard work put in the year before by our last PTA Vice President Steve Royster to have us join Fairfax County to compete at District level. The PTA also gave a \$25 gift certificate to our spelling bee winner.

**Reflections** - The PTA sponsored the National PTA's Reflections Art Contest at John Adams in the Fall. This year's theme was "Heroes Around Me." All JAES participants in the contest were recognized at a PTA meeting in February - all received art medals and enjoyed pizza and cupcakes while watching a presentation of the submissions. The first-place winners in the primary and intermediate age groups for visual arts, literature, photography, dance, and music composition advanced to the City of Alexandria contest where they were judged against the first-place winners from other Alexandria elementary schools. Four JAES students placed in the City-level contest--Brooklyn Bostic (Visual Arts/Primary), Cora Wilson (Dance/Primary), Brooke Hunnicutt (Visual Arts/Intermediate), and Lucy Hunnicutt (Music Composition/Intermediate) - and were recognized at a ceremony at the Durant Arts Center in March.

#### • Dual Language

In a joint effort with representatives of the PTA of Mount Vernon Community School, the JAES Dual Language Committee presented the Dual Language Advocacy Document initially to the ACPS School Board Candidates and later to the new ACPS School Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings, Jr. The four points of the petition are: 1. Improve accountability through reporting of progress in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English and Spanish, and robust data sharing. 2. Expand the Dual Language Program to middle school. 3. Implement innovative strategies to recruit and retain Dual Language staff. 4. Expand the capacity of the Dual Language Program at John Adams to receive kids from the City of Alexandria by lottery, not only from the neighborhood area. These advocacy efforts led to the current middle school planning effort. The Dual Language committee also has been actively working throughout the school year to increase awareness and pride at JAES about its Dual Language Program and the advantages it brings to the community. The committee organized the first Dual Language Bingo Night at John Adams. It was a successful event that was attended by 120 people and enriched by the support of JAES School Directives, PTA, Teachers, students, and families.

#### • School Support

For Teachers' Mini Grants this year, the PTA funded the following projects - \$350 to Ms. Thomas for book stations in her 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom to encourage readership in her classes, \$350 to Mr. Stanley to purchase sensory objects, blocks, toys, games, and puzzles, \$350 to Ms. Keen to purchase floor seats and wobble stools and other flexible seating options for her co-taught inclusion kindergarten classroom, \$276.83 to Ms. Dykhuis for Art Lending Library, \$350 to Mr. Wood for Gymnastics Certification, \$94.63 to Ms. Godfrey

for Book Club Books, \$251.58 to Ms. McCabe and Ms. Herron for In-Class Reading Program Books and \$126.96 to Ms. Landfried for intervention tools for SpEd students in inclusion settings. The PTA also spent \$990.36 for Field Day, \$152.76 for Clothing Supplies (School Nurse), \$690 to purchase Swim caps, Bathing suits and Transportation cost for all 4th graders for 4th grade PE Swimming Program. Additionally, after extensive research we finally identified and purchased equipment to wirelessly expand the sound system in the Cafetorium for \$946.87. In combination with the soon to be upgraded projection screen, this will provide for better visibility and hearing of school events and performances.

#### • Community Engagement

The PTA spent \$88.00 for Hispanic Heritage Night and \$272.01 for International Night. In this year's Career Day, 35 parents participated, and the PTA provided lunch to all of them for a cost of \$197.30 as our token of appreciation for taking out the time to make positive impact on students. For Teacher & Staff Appreciation Gifts, the PTA spent \$1,988.81, Parent Teacher Conference Teacher Dinners \$472.11 and Staff Lounge Supplies \$141.45, \$708.00 for MCM Fun Run.

#### • Fundraising

The PTA raised \$175.85 at Scramble Family Fun Night, \$449.00 from election bake sale, \$193.50 from food and drink sale at Family Splash Night at Chinquapin, \$6,262.47 raised by 5<sup>th</sup> grade committee for 5<sup>th</sup> grade promotion and \$3,800 from Spring2Action.

#### • After School Programs

**Yoga for Kids** - For the first time this year, the PTA sponsored Yoga for Kids taught by Ms. Lisowski to 17 4th and 5th graders on Thursdays and 27 2nd and 3rd graders on Wednesdays for 4-week sessions each, the 1st group between Nov. 29th - Dec. 20th and the second group between Jan. 9th - Jan. 30th.

**STEM Club** - Also for the first time this year, the PTA organized to have Alexandria 4-H Youth Development provide after school classes to students who submitted application. Mr. Reginald Morris taught 10 students grades 3 - 5 "*Science Fun with Kitchen Chemistry*" and 7 students grades 4 -5 "*The Power of the Wind*" for a total of 6 weeks class each that was very interactive, engaging and fun.

**Book Club** - The PTA also for the first time had 2 book club sessions for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grader boys led by Mrs. Emily Godfrey.

For more detail information of the PTA budget and spending, go to <https://www.johnadamspta.org/treasurer-report>

#### • PTA meetings

In October, we had Dr. Tillman Author of "Parenting on Purpose" and ACPS Superintendent Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings. In November, we had Allyson Halverson from SCAN Northern VA give presentation on "Creating Resilient Families". In December, we had Elaine Scott from City of Alexandria Government give presentation on "Overview of Alexandria City Government and how it works" and Gustavo Samayoa ACPS Dual Language Coordinator and his team give presentation on "Understanding the Dual Language Immersion Program at John Adams". In February, we had Matthew Shuster give presentation on "Odyssey of the Mind", Kaitlyn Blume of Alexandria Kiwanis Club give presentation on "Kiwanis K-Kids" and Alexandra Espinoza and Janelle Krupicka give presentation on Titan Robotics - this PTA meeting transpired to a formal agreement being made between Alexandria Kiwanis Club and John Adams and as a result, for the first time John Adams, becoming the only Elementary School club, will launch "Kiwanis K-Kids" club, starting as a pilot with a group of 4th graders this year. Also, from the connection made from this meeting, it transpired to Mrs. Canton following up and putting JAES into a partnership that lead to John Adams being awarded \$10,000 from Amazon and a robot with some materials. In March, we had Dan Quigley ACPS Technology Integration Specialist give presentation on "Safe use of technology and recommended online resources" and Stephanie Holzinger give presentation on Higher Achievement. In April, we had Jackie Pastore Environmental Coordinator from MOMs Organic Market give presentation on MOMs organic mission, the organic safe ingredients products only they sell, items they do not sell and ingredients that are banned from their stores, and the various programs they run to promote health, environmental protection and better community. In May, we had Dr. Polly Panitz Behavioral and Developmental Pediatrics give presentation on "Managing Challenging Behavior" and Reginald Morris give presentation on 4-H Youth Development purpose and programs. For copy of meeting minutes which has copy of each of these presentations go to <https://www.johnadamspta.org/meeting-minutes> and then click on the PDF of the specific month.

It was truly an honor serving all of you as PTA president and proud JAES parent and I look forward to our continued success together as John Adams family in the coming year and years forward. I wish you all a great rest of school year and fun summer and look forward to all of what we will accomplish as PTA next school year and every year thereafter.

Sincerely,

Mariam Fikre

Stay in touch at: \* [www.johnadamspta.org](http://www.johnadamspta.org) \* [www.facebook.com/JAESPTA](https://www.facebook.com/JAESPTA) (Like us!) \* [jaespta@gmail.com](mailto:jaespta@gmail.com)