

8th Grade Parent Meeting Notes

There are approximately 274 8th graders this year.

Mrs. Roberge attended who is the 8th grade team lead this year.

1. Academics

a. Shakespeare Unit—This will occur in May and is part of their English classes where they will read Romeo & Juliet. We partner with the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company who sends 4 of their actors, for a couple of weeks, to us to help the students understand aspects of the play and how to perform them, the Shakespeare way. They will show them how to sword fight onstage, die onstage, swoon, and many other techniques used in Shakespeare plays. The classes usually have small groups that then act out a scene in the play and have a lot of fun with it. The cost of this is high (\$4000 total). The school is applying for a grant and if they get it they will get \$2000 so we have to help fundraise for the remaining amount.

b. Service Credit—The state of Maryland has a graduation requirement of 75 service hours to graduate. If your student has been in a Howard County school from 6th grade till now, no worries as they already have 50 of those hours. They will earn the remaining 25 hours this year so that when they go to high school that requirement is already finished. In the past (pre-Covid) 8th grade had visited the Days End Farm Horse Rescue to do this credit. This year they are revising it and they are unsure how it will look but it will probably be something environmental and will be done during the school hours. There will not be a cost with this, just wanted to let you know this is coming up.

2. Dance

Every year prior to Covid the 8th graders have had a dance. The parents usually help plan it with the staff and decorate the cafeteria and help with clean up. The staff usually takes care of things during the dance and ask the parents to not attend. The students usually pick the theme and therefore that will dictate the dress code for the dance. We would like to get about 5 to 6 different theme ideas going so that the kids can choose later in the year. Please ask your student what kind of dance would they like. For example, my student already suggested some kind of costume dance.

We would also need a DJ so if you know someone that could possibly do this for free or at a low cost, please let us know. We have to see how Covid is to decide if the dance can be indoors or outdoors, but parents seemed interested in making an outdoor dance happen. May have to rent tents etc. So there might be a small fee to cover some costs if needed. We will have to play it by ear.

3. T-Shirts/Sweatshirts—The last two years the PTA has paid for the 8th grade t-shirts, but that was because that was all they could do for the class as none of the other programs occurred. So we will have to go back to what was done pre-Covid and have everyone purchase their T-shirts. When my oldest was in 8th there was an option to purchase a t-shirt or sweatshirt and the cost was \$16/\$26. They will have the year on them with the all the student's names in the number as in previous years and we are hoping to get a good deal this year. We will offer on the form if you wish to donate extra t-shirts so that we can make sure each 8th grader will get one.

4. 8th Grade Trip

Pre-Covid the 8th graders typically went to Six Flags for their class trip, usually an extended day field trip. This year Six Flags is not really an option and we are trying to think about other ways for them to celebrate at the end of the year as a class. Ask your student what is something they would like to do and of course as usual we have to see what Covid is doing at the end of the school year. Cost would be determined closer to the end of school year, however the earlier we can decide on something the quicker Ms. Roberge can see about getting buses.

Ideas—Rent a movie theater

Roller Skating

Baltimore Cruise

Main Event in Columbia

Some wanted more outdoor venues such as a picnic somewhere. A suggestion has come through with having it at a farm, with activities/carnival games that has an open place to have lunch. With parents helping out at different stations to help with crowd control. Need to work out some details.

5. Fundraising

We need to raise some funds. The more we can the less it will have to come out of pocket.

We are starting things off with a fundraiser at Sweet Frog in Laurel next Wednesday, Nov. 18. I have attached the flyer to the email. Fundraiser goes all day.

I also suggested doing another restaurant night in Feb/March possibly at Red Robin or somewhere similar and ending with a fundraiser at Rita's in Kings Contrivance as future events.

I asked everyone to give me ideas for a bigger fundraiser some ideas are

Taharka Brothers Ice Cream—for \$60 you get 8 pints delivered to your door. Super easy. Some felt that this may be too pricey for some to participate in.

Fisher's Popcorn—They have a virtual option in that everything is shipped directly to you. I have attached the profit chart from what they sent me this morning to look at.

Double Good Popcorn—their website is www.doublegood.com. They give 50% back to your organization and it can be done virtually as well. Look it over.

Car Wash—Hammond clubs have done them over by the Wendy's on Gorman so we can look into that.

If anyone has any other ideas please forward them to me (lisaloveless@aol.com) or Ms. Roberge (Amada_Roberge@hcpss.org.)

6. End of Year Ceremony

We are unsure if there will be a traditional end of year ceremony. Pre-Covid it would be at either Hammond or Reservoir auditorium where students can showcase some of their work and be recognized with families attending. What we do depend on Covid restrictions that HCPSS will have at that time.

Ms. Roberge said that if they can't do an inside one, maybe we can see about an outside or we could do like they have in the last two years with a drive thru and she would also like to have a swag bag for each of the students.

7. Wrapped up the meeting talking about how now is the time to start getting your student at Hammond and/or Reservoir to get them used to the schools. Attached is a list of upcoming concerts, and plays that the two schools will be doing. From experience, getting even just a little bit familiar with the high school they will be attending will help ease anxiety for both student & parents. It did make a difference when my oldest started at Reservoir to have been a little familiar with the building, even though it was a just a section of it.

Winter sports are starting on Monday so if your student is interested in a sport, I would suggest looking at each schools calendar to see when games/matches are being held and check it out. Be advised that there may be caps on attendance in some instances.

Hammond-- <https://hahs.hcpss.org/calendar>

Reservoir-- <https://rhs.hcpss.org/calendar>

Also Ms. Roberge did say that starting in December the high schools will start visiting PVMS to go over scheduling. They will be getting their course catalogs. **We may organize a parent meeting to help with this process if there is enough interest.-Please let me know.**

Stay tuned for information about checking out ARL (Applications & Research Laboratory (ARL) which offers programs to all of the high schools in Howard County. They are going to have a Virtual session coming up next month to check out the programs they offer. Especially if they are looking to enter the Engineering program called Project Lead the Way, they need to start that journey in 9th grade. You can check them out at <https://arl.hcpss.org/>

The PTA website does have an 8th grade tab to help keep you up to date on stuff going on. You can find it at <http://pvmspta.weebly.com/8th-grade-activities.html>

Also if anyone would like to make a donation for the 8th grade activities you can easily do so online at <https://pvalleympta.memberhub.com/store> There is an 8th grade activity category. If you would like to write a check please make the check out to PVMS PTA and write on the check memo line "8th grade activities". Put donation in an envelope marked 8th grade activities and turn in at the front office and they will get it to us.