Hearst PTA Meeting – Oct 8th 2026

Review of Upcoming events

Principals chat will be on Oct 9th at 9am. The social support team at Hearst is joining Principal Hills to talk about "Bullying Prevention," as part of the team's efforts for awareness around bullying.

1st and 3rd grade showcase - Oct 16th & 23rd– parents are invited to join their child's morning meeting from 9 - 9:30 am.

Community day Oct 24th, 11am-2pm. There will be a call for more volunteers to help on the day.

Upcoming Community morning meeting involving parents and children - Oct 28th.

No school on Oct 30th, Nov 2nd & 3rd

Fall Book fair will be from Nov. 13th - 20th.

Pete's Apizza dining night Nov 17th.

News

Hearst Auction 2027 will be held on May 1st at McClean Gardens – The Auction co-chairs (Cassie Anderson and Maggie Hart) from the 2026 event have agreed to organize the event again for a second year. More details are to come.

PTA Fundraising

<u>Review of what the PTA Funds are used for</u>

PTA spends $850 per student every year.

Examples of what PTA funds pay for:

- Field trips
- CLS scholarships for before and after school care
- PE aide
- Classroom supplies
- Room parent funds for class events
- Composting program

Owl Fund Campaign – Oct-Dec 2026

Starting soon. PTA is working on giving out information on what funds are used for and specific asks.

Money can be donated at Givebutter.com/OWLFUND

Hoot Force (Hearst optimizing opportunity taskforce) - Jhonna Turner from CARE Brookland

Many schools in DC don't have the PTA budget we have and can have as little as $2,000 for the whole school per year.

Hearst currently has a partnership with CARE Brookland which supports 5 schools and 1,200 students. Schools involved are: Bunker Hill, Noyes & Burroughs elementary schools, Brookland middle school and Luke C Moore Opportunity Academy, an alternative high school.

We're in our 6th year of partnership. It was established to learn from one another, and address the needs of other parts of DC, specifically in Brookland.

We're currently giving 15% of the Owl Fund proceeds, about $15,000 annually to CARE Brookland. We also donate clothing items and try to support in other ways. Hearst is the primary funder of CARE Brookland.

If any parents are interested in the partnership and want to get involved, contact Julia Krahe.

CARE DC encompasses CARE Anacostia and CARE Brookland. Jhonna Turner works for CARE Anacostia which is similar to CARE Brookland but larger and has more financial support.

Jhonna Turner visiting from CARE Brookland shared with the Hearst community what the annual $15,000 donation is used for. She said that the partnership with Hearst is more than just money, it's a relationship.

CARE Brookland Funds

Money donated to CARE Brookland funds a number of initiatives, physical and informational, for example:

Teacher passion projects that they choose and involve their students and other teachers.

Black literacy matters conference attendance. Teachers attended and started professional development with peers for example 1 teacher started a book club.

Rapid response - such as groceries, meals, backpacks, science kits, classroom equipment.

Educator enhancement team – supports teachers by providing learning opportunities such as one teacher working on a project on teaching students about money, which led to a fair for the whole school. Teacher started this after attending the black literacy matters conference.

Power our schools – aimed at getting the neighborhood involved. Getting volunteers from community to help in school, getting families more involved in kids education. There is a monthly newsletter sent out to the community and they hold events aimed to educate the community and to help the schools learn what the needs of the community are.

For example, a local company The Spice Suite is partnering with Luke C Moore to allow students to visit and learn about entrepreneurship.

Challenges the five school communities are facing include large cuts to SNAP and Medicaid benefits as well as increased ICE presence in the community.

CARE DC closet – supplies families with boots and coats to eliminate barriers to school attendance.

Other ways that Hearst can work with CARE Brookland

Hearst community day is coming up – open invitation for CARE Brookland to attend. We are having a coat drive and Jhonna will look into other needs of the Brookland community.

CARE Brookland spends about $5,000 on emergency needs and Jhonna will provide a more detailed breakdown of how other funds are spent.

Questions from the Hearst community

1. How can Hearst kids get involved?

Ideas include pen-friends, a joint field trip. No joint activities have happened to date (one of the barriers is the expenses involved with a field trip).

2. What are the PTA budgets of the schools within the CARE Brookland group?

Brookland middle has about $5,000 in their PTA budget.

DCPS provides extra 'at risk' funds to some of these schools that often gets spent on extra adults eg. teachers in the schools.

3. Why does CARE Brookland support these specific 5 schools?

These schools were chosen by CARE DC because they don't have significant PTA budgets.

4. Are there other schools in DC that give money to other schools and could our PTA's meet to share thoughts and support?

There was another organization, Hopes and Dreams which was started for PTA support but it's no longer functional. It's possible that other NW DC schools support partner schools.

5. How is CARE Brookland growing as a result of 6 years of funding from Hearst?

CARE Brookland hasn't really grown in terms of securing other funding sources. CARE Anacostia has grown significantly and is supported by Fair Chance, The Meyer foundation & Georgetown University, which supports salaries such as Jhonna's, which allows her to work on CARE Brookland. CARE Brookland aims to not be solely dependent on Hearst.

6. How can Hearst teachers get involved and support teachers at their schools?

Right now, teachers at CARE Brookland are really stressed. Jhonna said that the student pen pal idea may be popular with teachers interested in literacy.

Open Discussion

PTA Budget

Questions from the community.

1. How does the community have a say on whether we continue supporting CARE Brookland and in what fashion ie through the Owl Fund and for how much? How do we decide?

As part of the PTA funding process, we are soliciting community input. The Hoot Force and CARE Brookland funding of 15% of the Owl Fund agreement is on a 2-year rolling basis and will be reviewed in Spring 2027 during PTA budget discussion and voting. We can explore other organizations and review if we should continue with CARE Brookland.

The PTA is thinking about ranking different areas in the budget and we should explore what we are funding and confirm they are priorities for our communities. Hearst PTA is going to survey the community to identify these priorities as well as the administration. Our community is changing and our needs are changing. The PTA is also reviewing how we're spending our current allocations. All of these things need to come together when we review the budget for the next year.

When we have survey data and have had conversations with all administration the Treasurers Sima and Leighton will put together the proposed PTA budget for next year.

One parent said they would trust PTA members to make financial decisions because they are aware they have more information from administration etc.

Sara Rastegar explained the PTA wants to be good stewards of the PTA budget and wants how its money is spent to align with the community priorities.

2. How can we convey information about the PTA spending and receive input from people who aren't at PTA meetings?

PTA newsletters and community meetings, conversations and surveys.

PTA Fundraising

Our fundraising needs to increase to keep up with our increasing demands. We need to increase by 100% over few years. There are some new substantial initiatives that the PTA is funding, such as CLS aftercare scholarships and small group tutoring that has impacted many families. Currently the PTA is running a deficit – the reserve is getting spent down.

The PTA hopes that by spotlighting what PTA funds are spent on will lead to improved fundraising. A parent suggested that if we were specific about where the money goes to eg. a partner classroom at a Brookland neighborhood school that is more tangible and easier to support.

We also want to encourage fundraising participation, it's a balancing act.

Hearst Community Building

A discussion on how the PTA can support community building at Hearst. Parents commented that there aren't many events that get all of the parents together besides Community Day.

Changing the arrival procedures at Hearst from children lining up with their teachers on the field has significantly reduced the interactions between parents with each other and with their child's teacher at the start of the day. This change has come at a steep price for relationship building and parent-teacher communication. Community meetings aren't a replacement.

The Family Engagement Committee (FEC) is working on 'onboarding' information for new families. The FEC will send out another email to get more volunteers/members and continue to work on those efforts.