South Middle School PTA
General Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 24, 2026 at 6:30

Attendees:

Members: Abby Harky, Carla Walloch, Ivette Ramirez-Defever, Ryann Uden, Briana Hall, Cassie Hrtanek, Karen Radek, Lisa Smith, Meagan B., Brian, Deanna

Guests: Steve Prorok, Sheri Rosen, Aubrey DeMuth, Lisa Smith

1. **Welcome/Call to Order:** Abby Harkey
   Attendance - For those attending, please put your name in the chat.

2. **Meeting Ground Rules**
   a) We are all volunteers, and we try our best.
   b) Everyone is treated with respect.
   c) Participation is encouraged - everyone's input is valuable.
   d) Remember the mission of the PTA in all that we do: "To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children."

3. **Principal's Report:** Steve Prorok

Principal Prorok thanked the membership for the support, mentioning the stocking of the staff lounge and being amazed by the generousity. He thanked for the breakfast, the sixth grade activities, and the dinners at the PTA conferences. He mentioned that the support doesn't go unnoticed and is appreciated. He also expressed thanks for the new games in lunch room, saying they were a big hit, and kids were loving them. He thanked any parent that has volunteered. He knows it can hard for parents to be involved with middle school, so last year they opened it up to have 8th grade parents volunteer in the lunchroom and now they are opening it up to more. They want to keep finding ways for parents to be involved. He also mentioned that the golf team took 4th place in state, 6 shots off 1st, which is impressive as it is club at South and a not sport. Cross Country is doing well, probably will see some compete at state. Girls basketball is underway, the musical is too, lots of things happening. He thanked the parents for support and said if there is anything they can do to support the PTA let them know.

4. **Assistant Principal's Report:** Sheri Rosen / Aubrey DeMuth

Assistant Principal Rose echoed Principal Prorok's comments and had no further report.

5: **Teacher's Report:** **any teacher present can report*

Lisa Smith expressed thanks for the South families and students, commenting that she was happy to be here as part of community.

6. Treasurer's Report: Ivette Ramirez-Defever

Treasurer Ramirez-Defever reported that Jay, the previous treasurer, left everything in order and the financials were in good shape. Sarah had done well with the fundraisers and there were no deficits. The 26-27 budget for the year has been created and will be updated over the next few weeks. The income and expenses have been managed well and there are no deficits.

Treasurer Ramirez-Defever went to bank and everything has been set up for her to act as treasurer, including the creation of a Zelle account to facilitate transactions in the future. In terms of expenses, it is protocol to always have two people approve the expenses. She stated that the PTA loves volunteers and are happy to reimburse them for activities. She encouraged reaching out to anyone on the board as needed. Old school paper forms are available for reimbursements, and soon there will be new electronic form to expedite and help keep track of the payments.

7. Secretary's Report: Ryann Uden

Secretary Uden presented the minutes from the June 12, 2026 Meeting for discussion and approval. President Harkey motioned to approve the minutes for the June 12, 2026 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Vice President's Report: Carla Walloch

No items for discussion so Vice President Walloch introduced herself as a parent with a 6th grader at South, and 4th grader and Kindergartner at Westgate. She is happy to support PTA by serving in this role, and encourages anyone to reach out with thoughts/questions.

9. Committee Reports:

a) Directory Spot/Membership – Karen Radek
   Membership - Karen Radek is taking on this role new this year and thanked President Harkey for the support. All the membership data has been sent to the state and when it comes back it will go into Givebacks.
   Directory Spot – Karen is taking this over from Heather Lepold. Anyone that has questions or concerns can reach out to Karen at the membership email or karenradek@gmail.com.

b) Reflections – Karen Radeck
   Karen is also South Reflections' chair. South has been registered and Karen made contact with school's main office about promoting in school. Promotion will start next week.

c) High School Liaison/Prospect: Dianna Miello volunteered to serve as the Prospect High School Liaison.

d) High School Liaison/Rolling Meadows: Brian volunteered to serve as Rolling Meadows High School Liaison.

e) Hospitality/TAW: Cassie Hrtanek
   i) Cassie reported that the first main event is the dinner for teachers during parent-teacher conferences. It will be done the same way as the last 4/5 years with a sign-up genius sent out for people to contribute drinks and desserts. Lou Malnati's will be provided for dinner.
   ii) Cassie asked for an update on the budgeted amount for hospitality this year. President Harkey responded that the budget was being finalized, with some

adjustments being made with possibly some increases in the hospitality budget. She said to connect directly with her for more info.

iii) Treasurer Ramirez-Defever also mentioned that Cassie would connect with her for questions.

f) Social Media (Instagram): Brianna volunteered to serve as the Social Media (Instagram) point person.
   i) President Harkey mentioned that a PTA Instragam account was going to be created to keep parents informed. Instagram would be used due keep things more private versus Facebook.

g) Spirit Wear: *available*
   i) This position is available. There are many ways to do this, it could be up to the person, If someone wants to help and remain behind the scenes, this could be a good way to help out.

h) Website: Brian volunteered to serve as the website point person.
   i) This would be a good way to support the PTA for someone to work behind the scenes and maintain a website for the PTA to post agendas, minutes, etc.

i) Yearbook: *available*
   i) Present Harkey mentioned that someone was needed to take on this role. Two teachers head up the South Yearbook Committee currently. One has done it before and one is new to the position.

j) 8th Grade Activities;
   *Dance: Kim Powers & Katie Bjes
   *Hallway Decorations: *Available*
   *Picnic: *Available*
   i) President Harkey will coordinate the 7th grade parent volunteers for the dance. A chair/co-chair is still needed for the hallway decorations and picnic. Please reach out to her if interested. This is a great event, a one-time responsibility that happens at the end of the year.

10. President's Report: Abby Harkey

a) Shout outs! 6th Grade Chill Out, Stock the Lounge, Staff/Teacher's Back to School Breakfast, and Picture Day. THANK YOU to those who helped out with time or donations!

b) We still need a handful of volunteers for the 6th Grade Hangout after school this Tuesday, September 29th. The event will not take place unless we have the volunteers.

c) 7th Grade Hangout is in the works and we will have a date to share soon.

d) Cassie will be working on feeding the awesome staff/teachers for the Parent/Teacher conference in October.

e) We Need YOU! Please consider stepping up and taking on a role this year. Many of these positions are behind the scenes and a great way to be involved without a lot of commitment. Please reach out to me if you are interested in anything listed above. We have streamlined these volunteer needs to those most necessary, so please volunteer.

f) Re-take Picture Day is Tuesday, October 6th.

g) A new monthly PTA Newsletter, *The Chirp*, will be sent out starting in October. Since we only have 4 meetings. Not sure when these will go out each month, but they will have information and sign-up genius links, etc. This will be another way to let you know what is going on.

h) A new company is being considered for 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony Pictures; stay tuned. There were some complaints from a few from last year's graduation, so the PTA is looking to see what might be possible. Will inform everyone with updates.

i) AHC (Arlington Heights Council of PTA Presidents) is looking for a President-Elect; please reach out to me for details. You will gain experience/knowledge from other schools and hang out with other PTA presidents from D25.

j) There are ONLY four General PTA meetings this year. All meetings will be held on Thursdays at 6:30 pm, virtually. Please mark your calendars with the following dates; November 19th, February 25th, and April 8th. Pat yourself on the back if you made it to the first one tonight! Only three more to go.

10. New Business:

Principal Prorok commended President Harkey on the meeting and thanked all the parents in attendance. He also shared that he has gotten a lot of positive feedback about the sixth grade mixers. Students said they felt great coming to South because of those mixers. One of the kids is going to say that to the Board of Education at the meeting on Tuesday. Those mixers made people feel better to come to South as a community. President Harkey agreed that the mixers were a great addition to the sixth grade preparation activities.

11. Unfinished Business:

12. Adjournment

President Harkey moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 pm. The meeting was adjourned.