

Greetings again CMS parents!

I'm Jake Richmond, president of your Parent-Teacher-Student Association. We're all busy, so I'll get right to the point and provide you with your three options:

1. Ignore this message and passively enjoy the benefits of the PTSA. If you don't have the time or money, we sincerely understand. Those who do will keep this thing going.
2. Email me at jacobalanrichmond@gmail.com and volunteer a small amount of your time. I'll make sure to find something that works for you.
3. Donate whatever money you can afford, which is quick and easy here:
<https://www.catonsvillemsptsa.org/join-donate>

The unfortunate truth is that not enough people are doing #2 and #3. Therefore, we are slowly draining our financial reserves and straining the relatively small number of people who volunteer.

Some of that is because last year was hard. And weird. But some of it is simply because we only have three years to get to know parents -- and for parents to get to know the PTSA, and all the things we do to keep CMS the best middle school in BCPS.

So, I need your help. I want to continue keeping my promise to avoid annoying fundraisers and still maintain the programs our teachers and students have come to love.

What are those programs?

First, if you haven't seen it yet, ask your students about the gorgeous mural painted inside the cafeteria, honoring the diversity of CMS. That was done last year, in an empty building, funded by parents like you through the PTSA. It will live on for generations of CMS students, and we should all be proud of it. (Shout out to Eric Volkmann, retired CMS art teacher, who actually painted it.)

Beyond that, ask your students' teachers what they think about the PTSA. I believe they'll speak for us better than I can.

Or just keep an eye out. Everywhere you look, the fingerprints of the PTSA are there -- in the landscaping and beautification around the building, the new "Lunch and Friends" courtyard, extra tech equipment appearing for students in need, creative merit rewards for students who earned them, 8th-grade celebrations, and the activity buses that bring your students home after the myriad clubs CMS offers. I could go on.

Basically, I'm humbly asking for your trust in our commitment to making school life great for students, teachers, staff, and me and you, the parents. And, if you can, honor that trust by donating time or money.

One last thing: This year, one more commitment I'm making is to focus on equity. We will not just be talking about it and training people on what it means. We will be DOING things to make school more equitable for students at CMS. We have just formed -- and funded -- our first official Equity Committee, led by Matt Gresick. He's looking for founding members to join him. If you're interested, email me at jacobalanrichmond@gmail.com and/or Matt himself at mattgresick@gmail.com.

Congrats on your child attending the best public school I've ever been around (and that list is LONG). I hope to have your support.

--Jake