



Orientation Summary
Tuesday, September 19, 2017
Holton-Arms School

Introduction: How to Maximize the PCW Partnership in Your School Community

Parents Council of Washington (PCW) President Kathy Stallings welcomed PCW representatives and parent association presidents from member schools and thanked Holton-Arms for hosting the event. In its 53rd year, PCW is excited to announce this year's theme, "Raising 21st Century Citizens."

Kathy introduced VP of Programs Cal Daggitt, who thanked fellow Orientation co-chairs Elaine Vining and Malvika Paddock. Cal introduced all PCW Board members, who in turn identified their liaison schools.

PCW is a non-profit organization, comprised of 15 volunteer board members and one part-time administrator. The mission of the organization is to promote excellence in education by fostering closer communication among parents, students and independent schools. Nearly 60 member schools pay annual dues (based on student body size) to support nine PCW programs. Board members serve as liaisons to member schools and welcome questions and suggestions from PCW school representatives throughout the year.

Three Steps to Being an Effective PCW Representative

- 1) **Connect** with your school community: determine how best to get the word out about PCW events!
 - Identify the key players in your school to help share PCW news and information — options include the communications director; grade-level reps/parent association executive boards; administration (e.g., head of school)/faculty
 - Reach out to these contacts by phone, email or in-person to alert them to upcoming PCW programs, with the goal of determining the best way to publicize events
 - Consider reaching out to your PA executive board with a quick introduction to PCW (the PCW website offers a helpful PowerPoint presentation for download, click [here](#))
 - Talk up PCW at coffees, school gatherings
- 2) **Share** PCW information! The monthly PCW Checklist offers blurbs to cut and paste as well as links to flyers, etc.

- Forward program information as appropriate to your PA president to include in community emails and newsletters
 - Contact your communications office to see if information can be added to your school calendar or website
 - Print flyers for display at school meetings, coffees, bulletin boards, faculty lounges
- 3) **Engage** your community of parents, faculty and administrators by personally encouraging them to attend events, support programs and building awareness of our available resources.
- Do your best to attend PCW events and bring friends!
 - Share what you learn by forwarding the program summary to your PA president, faculty or administration, as relevant
 - Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter

Breakout Session: Each table of attendees and PCW Board members reviewed the list of annual PCW programs and discussed ways to maximize the benefits of PCW membership at their schools. Some notable mentions include:

- If your school is sponsoring a free program open to the public, you may be able to have it posted on the PCW Facebook page. Please send information to your PCW school liaison for consideration.
- The PCW Best Practices program offers a great forum every year, highlighting topics and perspectives from different member school leaders. Familiarize yourself with the Best Practices e-binder (see PCW [Resources](#)) and help PCW identify the appropriate administrator to encourage your school to offer a submission to this coming year's e-binder.
- In closing, the more effort you put in as a PCW representative, the greater the benefit to you and your school community.

Keynote Speaker: Holton-Arms Head of School Susanna Jones

Susanna Jones offered her perspective on this year's PCW theme of "Raising 21st Century Citizens" through an interactive, multi-media presentation. She began by inviting all participants to spend a few minutes with others at their tables to brainstorm qualities that a 21st century citizen will need to thrive.

Ms. Jones then played "*Shift Happens 3.0 updated*," a five-minute video featuring a rapid display of facts, emphasizing the lightning-fast pace of change in recent years across many areas. The scope and speed of change, coupled with information overload and the need to prepare students for jobs and problems that do not yet exist, challenges schools and parents alike. Click [here](#) to watch the video.

Following the video, Ms. Jones asked the audience to re-visit their lists and brainstorm further on requisite skills and qualities for a 21st century individual to succeed. The audience contributions are noted below:

- Ability to manipulate information versus rote acquisition

- Critical thinking
- Global perspective, cultural competency
- Broader understanding of languages, including coding
- Agility, adaptability
- How to approach a problem, not just solve it
- Compassion
- Self-awareness
- Broad sense of world history and your place in it
- Math and technical skills
- Writing
- Interpersonal skills, ability to work with others
- Environmental awareness
- Sense of responsibility for and to each other – both actual and global
- Maintaining a balanced digital diet
- Respect and recognizing that often there is more than one right answer
- Grit, internal motivation
- Gratitude
- Embrace of change and challenge
- Kindness
- Observant
- Self-regulation
- Mindful
- Acceptance

Ms. Jones continued by sharing her own perspective on foundational values, together with newer skill sets our children can cultivate to succeed:

Qualities We Want our Children To Have	
Old-Fashioned	More Contemporary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Integrity • Resilience • Creativity • Flexibility • Risk taking • Sense of purpose • Communication skills • Civic Engagement • Self-care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discernment • Digital citizenship • Cultural competencies • Global Competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge - Perspective - Communication - Action • Growth Mindset • Environmental Stewardship

She identified several qualities from both lists for special attention, including:

- **Digital Citizenship:** Children spend an enormous time in the digital realm, which reduces face-to-face interaction. Data suggests that kids are not happy with this isolation. Ms. Jones encouraged parents to manage these devices and monitor usage:
 - Talk to children about their technology use
 - Make dinner a no-phone zone
 - Model the right behavior
 - Consider device-free vacations and weekends

- **Growth mindset:** Dr. Carol Dweck of Stanford University pioneered this concept of emphasizing the importance of the process of learning over innate ability. Perseverance is critical, together with seeing mistakes as learning opportunities.

How to cultivate these qualities in our children?

- Create structure and set clear expectations about your values. Model the behaviors you want to cultivate. Be mindful how you talk about these values -- what you do or do not say.
 - Encourage integrity and empathy
 - Start young; it is easier
- Give love, care and support
- Give your children responsibility and hold them accountable: e.g., chores, making their beds (note that research suggests that this simple morning act sets up the day for success)
- Let them fail (do not be a helicopter or snowplow parent)
- Let them be bored (it stimulates their creativity)
- Finds ways to spend time outside, preferably in nature and as a family
- Help them find a sense of purpose (expose them to different activities and environments and encourage their interests)
- Expose them to different cultures and ways of thinking (travel, books, museums, conversations modeling curiosity, appreciation and flexibility)
- Encourage them to get a job. Ms. Jones referenced a timely article in the *Washington Post*: “Fewer Teens Live the Wild Life. Or, Sadly Get a Job” (9/22/2017, B1). The article highlights that fewer teenagers have part-time jobs. These early jobs yield important interpersonal skills, increased resilience and determination.