

November 2025 VABC Meeting Summary

Date: November 6, 2025

Location: WSHS

Attendees: Kyle Geck, Rachel Freeman, Sandra O'Connor, Jen Pereira, Amanda Babcock, Laura Avery, Cynthia Williams (Crew Treasurer), Andy McCarthy (Track Coach), Kelly McGreal (Track Coach), Jason Yovich (Parent), Becky Yovich (Parent), Sheila Dorgan (Parent), Jerry Webster (Parent), Alex Stanley (Wrestling Coach)

Main Topics Discussed

1. Updates from Athletic Director & Coaches

- Student Athlete of the Month Board:
 - Board installed opposite the gym.
 - First four athletes already featured; official announcements pending.
- Coaching Staff Updates:
 - All winter coaching positions are filled. Baseball and softball coaches have been hired.
 - Volleyball coach is stepping down; quick turnaround planned with a new hire, aiming for interviews and selection before December 12th (AD conference travel).
- Booster Club and Coaches Collaboration:
 - Coaches encouraged to utilize booster funds/support. Reps expected to attend winter season events.

1.1. Improving Booster-Clubs/Coaches/Parents Communication

- Current State:
 - Electronic and paper forms exist for fund requests.
 - Previous communication includes social media (Facebook, Bridge Bulletin), email, and website.
 - Some confusion about where forms are stored after the athletics website was taken down (Booster has its own site).
- Suggestions for Improvement:
 - Increase frequency of reminder emails to coaches and parents (3-4 per month is acceptable). Include full contact information and fund-request forms in the first outreach email.
 - Create and update a coaches' email distribution list (including assistant coaches and parent reps by request).
 - Provide lists/examples of past supported items/projects/successful requests to inspire/guide coaches.
- Discussion on Visibility:
 - Booster Club wants to be more "seen" as supporting teams beyond financial contributions (e.g., opening spirit store for events, running concessions).

1.2. Funding Requests: Meals & Event Expenses

- Reimbursement Process:
 - Request generally sent to Athletic Director first (they screen what needs to go to boosters).
 - Submission of estimated expense (e.g., for team meals at state-level events), advance approval required, then reimbursement with receipts.
 - No blanket/automatic funding level could be guaranteed; must depend on request and available funds.
 - Teams that help raise funds (via concessions, for example) are weighed in decision but all requests are considered individually.
- Notable Past Examples:
 - Cross Country: Booster-funded state meet meal (about \$350-400).
 - Girls Basketball: Supported, e.g., charter bus to VA Beach for regionals (now unlikely to be approved, standard buses preferred except for state level).
 - Track & Wrestling: Discussion of increasing support for large event registration fees, which can total several thousand dollars per season.
- Constraints:
 - VABC funds are not unlimited; may not be able to provide large per-diem/team allocations.
 - Prince William County regulation: staff meal reimbursements require pre-approval; easier for boosters to cover student meals.
- Funding Philosophy:
 - Boosters aim to support "fun stuff"/morale boosters (meals, experiences), not core operating expenses (uniforms, basic equipment).
 - Priority for incremental support and team experience enhancements rather than major funding.
 - Athletic department monitors team account health—no teams considered to be in financial distress currently.

1.3. Scholarships

- Current Practice:
 - Two \$1,000 scholarships annually (one male, one female athlete).
 - Nomination via counselor-initiated application, anonymized committee review (parents with no current students involved).
 - Pepsi provides \$2,000 annually for scholarships.
- Proposal for Expansion:
 - Suggestion (from other schools and parents): offer a male/female scholarship per sports season (fall, winter, spring), increasing total recipients.
 - Concerns: funding stability for up to 6 recipients, managing multi-sport athletes, process transparency.
- Decision:
 - Tabled for further discussion; consensus that future expansion may be possible depending on finances and logistics.
 - Potential for increasing number of recipients if funds allow at years end, as was done previously.

1.4. Funded Events/Upcoming Requests

- Cross Country:
 - Approved: Up to ~\$400 for state meet meal at Manassas Jukebox Diner (Nov., 8 boys, 2 girls, 2 coaches, bus driver).
 - Rationale: Team tradition, morale building, and direct appreciative feedback from coach.
- Wrestling:
 - Anticipated/recurring request: Funding for Airbnbs for War on the Shore tournament in January (significant savings compared to hotels, facilitates team-building, prior years' support acknowledged).
 - Coach instructed to submit formal request with invoice for prompt booster review.
- Crew:
 - Discussion of purchasing a thank-you plaque for retiring coach (consensus: should be funded by the team rather than boosters to avoid equity issues).

1.5. Spirit Wear and Booster Visibility Enhancements

- QR Code Signage:
 - Proposal to place QR codes for online spirit store around school/event venues.
 - Caveat: School phone policy prohibits student cell use, so should target concession stands, entry tables.
- Spirit Wear Inventory & Offerings:
 - Large upfront investment this year (\$13,000 two years ago, \$3,000 last year; currently restocking, especially sweatshirts).
 - Open to design/merchandise suggestions from coaches and parents (zip-ups, sweatpants, etc.), managed by Jen.
 - Discussion of timing and rationale for design updates (balance between catching up and refreshing options).

1.6. Booster Financial Report

- Current Balances:
 - Starting year: \$26,000; currently: ~\$15,000.
 - Major expenditures for spirit wear stock (~\$10,000), concessions restock, and consumption of startup funds.
 - Special mention: Field Hockey deposited fundraising of \$8,000 (with \$6,000 out as expense, net effect neutral).
- Revenue Overview:
 - Concessions are primary income source, with fall and spring typically yielding similar amounts.
 - Success of specific events/sports (e.g., volleyball's \$1,000 evening, football JV \$500) varies depending on weather, attendance, and team performance.
 - Cross-subsidy considered: not all sports raise money directly but may still receive support.
- Expense Philosophy:
 - One-off equipment, event entry fees, and meals for recognition/morale are prioritized; basic team needs addressed by athletic department.

1.7. Other Business & Initiatives

- Event Promotion & School Spirit:
 - Idea: Partner with select teams to create themed events (e.g., color-out nights, small giveaways for early attendees) to boost attendance/spirit.
 - Suggestion to use 50/50 raffles during major events (e.g., Battle of the Bridge, wrestling tournaments) — boosters are authorized for this.
 - Improved coordination for big event spirit wear sales (e.g., football playoff games).
- Upcoming Key Dates:
 - Football playoff hosting to be confirmed by Friday, Nov. 8 (game would be Nov. 14 at p.m. if at home). Crew winterization event: Nov. 15, 2025.

1.8. Action Items

- Coaches/Boosters Communication & Forms:
 - Send all coaches (and interested assistant/parent reps) an introductory email with contacts, fund request forms (electronic), and examples of past booster-funded items.
 - Create, circulate, and maintain a coaches' (and assistants'/parent reps') distribution list for regular updates.
 - Ensure forms for funding requests are available and accessible on booster club's own website.
- Expense Procedures:
 - Encourage coaches to submit funding requests in advance for meals/event fees, including a clear approval/reimbursement process.
 - Maintain case-by-case funding review (no blanket promises for event meals or travel).
 - Coaches (e.g., wrestling) to submit detailed requests with invoices for event lodging for prompt consideration.
- Spirit Wear/Visibility:
 - Install QR codes for the online spirit store at key parent-facing locations (concession stands/ ticket areas). Implement a process for receiving and reviewing spirit wear/merchandise design suggestions.
- Scholarship Program:
 - Table discussion on expanding scholarship program pending annual revenue/fundraising results. Document, assess feasibility, and revisit expansion in future meetings.
- Event Spirit Promotion:
 - Work with teams to identify games/tournaments to promote themed events or small giveaways. Organize/conduct 50/50 drawings and ensure spirit wear is sold at high-attendance events.
- Financial Management:
 - Continue monitoring profits/expenses, especially after initial outlays, to track when/if booster funds show net growth for the academic year.

1.9. Follow-up Items

- Wrestling: Coach to submit detailed Airbnb funding request with invoice for War on the Shore; boosters to expedite review and response.
- Communication Distribution Group: Finalize and test expanded email distribution list for coaches, assistants, and rep parents.
- Football Playoffs: Confirm by Nov. 8 if hosting occurs; coordinate concessions/spirit wear accordingly.
- Spirit Wear Inventory/Designs: Review inventory after surge events (e.g., football playoffs, Battle of the Bridge); invite and process design suggestions.
- Assistant Treasurer: Sandra to follow up with interested parties and move forward with vote once candidate details are received.
- Scholarship Expansion Discussion: Keep topic on agenda for future meetings; revisit after annual revenue assessment.

1.10. Key Decisions

- Approved Funding:
 - Up to \$400 reimbursement for cross country state meet meal, per coach's receipt.
- General Stance:
 - No automatic or blanket team funding; maintain one-off, request-based support.
- Scholarship Program:
 - Current two-scholarship limit maintained until further financial consideration and study.

1.11. Additional Notes

- Recognition that booster club's visibility and proactive engagement can be improved, especially for "less visible" teams.
- Emphasis on quick, clear communication and transparency in funding availability and process.
- Booster leadership and athletic department working in close partnership, with checks and balances on funding requests.
- All teams encouraged to ask for support, especially for events that foster morale, recognition, and community.

Next Meeting: December 4, 2025; action items and follow-up to be coordinated via email.