

SJLES PTA MEETING MINUTES

Date & location: Wednesday, October 7th at 6:30pm, Zoom

In attendance: (16) Diana Choi, Katia Klein, Daniel Notari, Alexcia Redd, Tina Harkness, Ward Morrow, John Nichols, Linda Ferguson, Kathy Etheridge, Maria Laskey, Meg Halvorsen, Tara Scully, Mary Brown, Emily Vainieri, Jenna Groman, Elizabeth (last name unknown)

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 4th at 6:30pm

AGENDA:

1. Introduce Board Members
2. Upcoming Events
3. Treasurer Update
4. PTAC Update
5. Administration Update
6. Spiritwear and Membership
7. Other Business

MINUTES:

1. Introduce Board Members
 - Diana introduced Board Members in attendance.
2. Upcoming Events
 - **Halloween:** Diana shared that the PTA will be leading a virtual decorating contest, to allow the children to celebrate Halloween in an inclusive manner. Children will be invited to decorate a pumpkin or other fall item with school spirit. There will be an anonymous judging process (led by either the PTA Board or faculty members) and the winner will get spirit wear or another TBD item.
 - **Virtual Book Fair:** Diana is in contact with Scholastic to organize a virtual book fair. This may be delayed 1 week from original schedule. We could use someone to take this on – contact Carolyn Adams to volunteer (sjlesptavolunteer@gmail.com).
 - **Virtual Parent Chats:** These are being planned by grade.
 - **Restaurant Nights:** The PTA is exploring ways to ‘give back’ to the local community by encouraging SJLES families to visit and support local and SJLES family-owned restaurants and other

small businesses. Tara can help coordinate arrangements with Historic Ellicott City. Please let us know if you know of any SJLES family-owned small businesses so that we can include them. The PTA can use some additional help with this.

- **Turkey Trot:** The PTA is exploring ways to honor our tradition in a different manner. Linda said they are discussing a virtual run/walk, to be held over a week, with a central location to drop off canned food and pick up charms. Tara offered to host this at her house. We can explore whether families could send a short video or photos that can be compiled to build a sense of community around it – will need to discuss privacy implications.

3. Treasurer Update

- Diana and Kathy are getting the banking set up, and Kathy will provide an update at the next meeting.

4. PTAC Update

- John provided an update from recent PTAC meeting. Important deadlines include:
 - i. Submissions for the Reflections Program are due by December 18.
 - ii. The cutoff date for questions for the BOE Candidate Forum is October 16th – send questions to debate@ptac.org. The PTA can send a proposed email to Mr. Notari for permission to send an email blast.

5. Spiritwear and Membership Drive

- Membership: Membership (including family, parents and faculty) includes 31 members for a total of \$506. The Membership Drive is lower than normal, but this is expected in the current environment. Everything will be going to support teachers.
- Spiritwear: There have been 26 purchases of spiritwear for a total of \$317. Faculty spiritwear can be delivered to the school.
- Donations: The PTA has received \$449 in donations.

6. Administration Update

- Mr. Notari discussed the importance of maintaining a sense of community. He is proud of the teachers – they are working day and night on behalf of the kids, and he thanked parents for partnering with the teachers. He will continue the admin chats (e.g. Coffee & Conversation). The MAP was this week for 2nd-5th grades – this was challenging to administer virtually, but many things worked well and will learn from this for next week's math assessments. He shared updates on in-person small group initiatives, including school-based learning centers, special education, and county-wide evening tutoring. These all depend

on staff volunteers. Mr. Notari and Ms. Redd are meeting with all grades to discuss how to be good stewards of the school in the virtual environment. Weekly Spirit Days will help keep kids engaged.

- Ms. Redd encouraged all parents to reach out to teachers and send words of encouragement / “fanmail” – it would mean a lot to them in this environment. We all have wide circles and should encourage all parents to do this. The PTA can explore how to have Teacher/Staff Appreciation throughout the year instead of only specific days.

7. Other Business

- Diana thanked Meg and Paul Halvorsen for the great looking and user-friendly website. The PTA is working to drive more traffic to website. Carolyn and Paul are looking at how to put the fall decorating contest on it.
- Anyone interested in volunteering or just finding out more about volunteering should email Carolyn Adams (Volunteer Coordinator) sjlesptavolunteer@gmail.com
- Link to PTA website: <https://sjlespta.org>
- Follow PTA on Facebook (official notices & events): <https://www.facebook.com/SJLESPTA>
- Join PTA families group (discussions/sharing/connect with community): *St John's Lane PTA Families*