

## **SJLES PTA MEETING MINUTES**

**Date & location:** Wednesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm, Zoom

**In attendance:** (31) Meg Ballman, Chelsea Berube, Martin Brooks, Mary Brown, Tiffany Burns, Ashley Callaway, Ally Capecci, Riju Chakraborty, Sandi Cresswell, Stephanie Errera, Kathy Etheridge, Linda Ferguson, Jane Fisher, Tony Fludd, Christina Fredette, Jenna Groman, Meg Halvorsen, Candace Knott, Siva Kumari, Maria Laskey, Lan Lu, Dan Notari, Pradeep Pandyala, Becky Poirer, Shelly Post, Lucas Rempert, Kyle Robson, Tara Scully, Emily Vainieri, Vanessa Zawodny, Dina Zhuravel

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 3<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm

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### **AGENDA:**

1. Welcome
2. Monthly Updates
3. Upcoming Events
4. New Items of Business
5. PTACHC Update
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Principal Report
8. Adjournment

### **MINUTES:**

1. Welcome: Meg Halvorsen, PTA President, welcomed attendees to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.
2. Monthly Updates:
  - a. Meg Halvorsen shared an update on the membership drive and spiritwear sale, noting that each have been strong and that we need to submit an order for additional spiritwear.
  - b. The Back-to-School Picnic was well attended and the DJ did a great job. It was great to see the community back together.
  - c. The PTA hosted three (3) Paint Nights, a new event for this year, which were a big success and made over \$1,200 in profit. Kudos to Tiffany Burns for leading this event and to all the volunteer helpers! Meg Ballman will send a survey to attendees to ask for feedback on the Paint Nights; initial feedback was strong but will need a microphone for future events.
3. Upcoming Events:
  - a. Movie Night: Tiffany Burns and Maria Laskey are chairing this new event for October 22. Jenna Groman and Mary Brown have volunteered to be on the committee.

- b. Turkey Trot: Mary Brown and Linda Ferguson are chairing this annual event on Sunday, November 14. Vanessa Zawodny and Chris Bechis have volunteered to be on the committee.
- 4. New Items of Business:
  - a. Flu Vaccine Clinic: Volunteers have been needed for past years, and Mr. Notari will follow-up with Meg Halvorsen if that is needed. Mr. Notari will also confirm whether or not siblings are able to come or if it's only available to SJLES students.
  - b. Teacher Supplies: There was a Sign-Up Genius to collect supplies for teachers, but not much is needed now. The school is well stocked in tissues and hand sanitizers, and more child-sized disposable masks have been ordered. Other needs may include sheet protectors and sticky notes.
  - c. Grant Opportunities for PTAs: Jenna Groman has started a spreadsheet to track available grant opportunities; we can review these later this year and see if there are any types of grants we may want to consider for the future. Ashley Callaway offered to help in this area.
  - d. Flyers in folders: Meg Halvorsen asked the administration and teachers whether they prefer flyers are sent home with all students or to the youngest / only in each family. Mrs. Berube noted that they usually do youngest and only, but this is particularly challenging for the paras this year due to other increased demands on their time. The PTA may be able to help by organizing the papers; Mr. Notari will look into this more and see how volunteers can be most helpful, but also noted that we should focus on email and only send papers when needed.
  - e. School Playground: An inquiry was raised about the school playground and if the PTA is able to fundraise for a new one. Mr. Notari noted that any donation over \$500 needs to be approved by the Board. If specific questions are sent to him in an email (e.g. how old the playground is, how often playgrounds are replaced), he will do research and get back to us.
  - f. Grade Level Parents: While room parents aren't needed, teachers are interested in "team parents" for each grade level (possibly 3-4 per grade) to help when needed. Meg Halvorsen and Jane Fisher will look at volunteer coordination for this. These same volunteers may be able to help with the folder coordination.
- 5. PTACHC Update: Tiffany Burns was unable to make this week's PTACHC meeting, but will provide an update next month after receiving the minutes.
- 6. Treasurer's Report: Kathy Etheridge shared that she has reformatted the PTA budget and created new categories to be sure it is clear and balanced. Fundraising has been successful so far. Kathy raised several questions and will submit an updated budget for vote at the next meeting based on the following discussion items:
  - a. Yearbook: Currently we operate under a model in which we order a certain number at a set price (\$16.47 for 350 copies of a 56 page book) and we determine how much to charge families. Kathy and Meg Halvorsen have been reviewing the contract with Strawbridge and different options for cost / contracts. For the budget, this should be considered a fundraiser, not an expense.

- b. Original Works: Jane Fisher noted that this should also be considered a fundraiser, as we only pay for paper up-front - however it is a fundraiser for the art department, and the PTA generally receives a percentage.
- 7. Principal's Report: Mr. Notari noted that Ms. Capecci and Mrs. Berube are doing administration internships this year; and thanked them and Ms. Poirer for joining tonight's meeting. He thanked the PTA for taking on new roles and coming together to support the school.
  - a. Mr. Notari noted that school has been in session for one month. The staff have gone above and beyond to set routes and create structures; and the students are doing a great job managing both independent and group work.
  - b. COVID-19: The County is bending over backwards for mitigation measures - CO2 sensors, HEPA filters in every classroom and cafeteria, the lunch tent, and more. Bus and lunch seating charts have been challenging, but Ms. Coleman and the team have done a great job of handling these. In the first month of school, there has been only 1 case of COVID at SJLES and everyone is doing a great job wearing masks.
  - c. Halloween: The County has left the decision on celebrating Halloween up to the schools; only 10 elementary schools were still celebrating and likely fewer this year. Mr. Notari acknowledged that it is a sensitive topic on both sides and difficult to change traditions, but he feels strongly that we should focus on traditions that all kids will be able to participate in; it's difficult to have kids who don't celebrate and may even stay home. Instead of standard Halloween celebrations this year, teachers will incorporate fall-themed activities and the school will have fun spirit week activities such as a Pumped Up Recess that is always a hit. The PTA will help plan an event for outside of school hours in future years. Mr. Notari provided an opportunity for parents to share their feedback.
  - d. Reminders: Mr. Notari reminded everyone about the Flu Vaccine Clinic and Picture Day next week. Profits from Picture Day get used for staff and students!
- 8. Adjournment: Meg Halvorsen noted that she will clean up the PTA closet (Vanessa may be able to help) and is working on documenting what we have in the PTA closet. She is looking for new ideas for an appreciate gesture for teachers during conference week, as some will be virtual - Mr. Notari will let the PTA know if teachers will be in the building or not. Meg Halvorsen then closed the meeting.