

SJLES PTA MEETING MINUTES

Date & location: Wednesday, September 7 at 6:30pm, SJLES Library

In attendance (38): Emily Vainieri, Jane Fisher, Jenna Groman, Meg Halvorsen, Kasandra Cresswell, Mary Brown, Nina Philipsen, Kerstin Braunstein, Tolly Peddicord, Ashley Callaway, Liz Petrella, Meg Ballman, Amy Goldsmith, Amber Drenner, Jenn Devine, Corinne Plank, Ashwini Anjanappa, Monica Baker, Sarah Day, Angie Kramer, Candace Knott, Tiffany Burns, Katie Brewer, Sener Camli, Brittany Gutierrez, Vanessa Zawodny, Linda Ferguson, Jennifer Ford, Sara Goggin, David Bridges, Maryam Diaz, Alvin Diaz, Seba Kurian, Tara Scully, Yardley Young, Kimberly Young, Carsten Vala, Katrina Vala

Next Meeting: October 12, 2022, time TBD

AGENDA:

1. Welcome
2. Monthly Updates
3. Treasurer's Report
4. PTACHC Update
5. Principal's Update
6. Adjournment

Minutes:

1. Welcome: Meg Halvorsen, PTA President, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
2. Monthly Updates
 - a. Ashley Callaway had to step down as VP 1. Emily Vainieri volunteered and the Board voted to approve her. Thank you to Emily for stepping in!
 - b. The PTA worked over the summer to create a calendar of events for the year. The calendar was sent home with all students and is available online.
 - c. Emily Vainieri gave an update on membership. 30% of teachers have joined so far and 12% of families. She thanked everyone who has joined so far and gave directions on how to sign up, reminding attendees that membership needs to be renewed each year.
 - d. Meg Halvorsen thanked Stephanie Errera for planning the summer playdates - even though weather did not cooperate for all events, they were a great chance to meet over the summer!
 - e. Linda Ferguson shared plans for Spirit Wear this year. A new vendor has been selected, which will have a larger selection - tie dye, performance tees, etc. The store will go live on Friday Sept 9 and be open for two weeks. All purchases will

come home with the kids. A second online sale will be held before the holidays. There is some remaining inventory from last year, which will be sold at events until sold out.

- f. Mary Brown, Brittany Guterrez, and Vanessa Zawodny are leading Staff Appreciation this year. A successful breakfast was provided for all staff at the beginning of the year. In addition, there will be dinners provided during fall and spring conferences, lots of plans for staff appreciation week in May, lunch on Field Day, and other opportunities to support our staff. Donations are always welcome for this!
 - g. Meg Halvorsen reminded attendees that the Back to School Picnic is on Friday - we'll have a DJ, glow sticks, and a table with membership information and spirit wear. Bring food and chairs and come have fun!
 - h. Jane Fisher and Mary Brown are working with the Art Department for Original Works - turning art into special treasures. This year's theme is space. Art and order forms will be sent home on October 20, and will be received in time for holiday gifts. There will also be a school-wide art show later this year that is supported from the PTA's program budget.
 - i. Trunk or Treat will be a new tradition this year, chaired by Brittany Gutierrez, Vanessa Zawodny, Karen Wilson and Kathy Etheridge. It is planned for Saturday, October 29 3-5pm (rain date on Sunday Oct 30). More information will be shared in an upcoming flyer, but the PTA will be looking 1) for donations (through Amazon wishlist) for candy and crafts and 2) decorate trunks! All candy will be provided directly by the PTA for safety reasons, and it will be teal pumpkin friendly.
 - j. Tara Scully is chairing Restaurant Nights. Chipotle will be in November, which gives 33% back to the school. We want to do several in the beginning of the year to allow us to offer free programs later in the year, so please let us know if you have any ideas of restaurants!
 - k. Meg Halvorsen shared kudos to the following:
 - i. Jane Fisher for the amazing job as our volunteer coordinator!
 - ii. Meg Ballman for the incredible communications work. Meg leads both our PTA Facebook page and organizes the weekly PTA news email that is sent by the school. Please send Meg any information to be included in the week's newsletter by Sunday (email goes out on Tuesday) - Sjles.ptacommunications@gmail.com
 - iii. Ashley Callaway for policy research to help us follow new guidelines. We have a new Gift Policy and Vendor Policy that are on the website.
 - iv. Candace Knott has taken on the treasurer role and has done a lot of work and research this summer to prepare the budget.
3. Treasurer's Report
- a. Candace Knott provided an update on the 2022-2023 school year budget. Last year we started with low cash on hand due to the impact of COVID - we had great fundraising, but kept expenses low to replenish our account. This year, we expect a balanced budget (in/out around \$40,000). Candace has restructured the

budget categories to allow us flexibility to meet unexpected needs. Candace reviewed the budget, highlighting the following key points:

- i. Family Fund programs and Student activities are larger this year to account for the return to normal activities.
- ii. The instructional support program is doubled this year - this covers special projects, teacher supports, grade team needs, books, and this year will include motor room improvements.
- iii. Student activities program is bigger this year - includes Field Day, school assemblies, and 5th grade committee.
- iv. Family fun is also much bigger this year - we have several new activities this year, including Trunk or Treat, parent information sessions, and the return of Multicultural Night.
- v. Teacher appreciation, other school programs, and operational expenses will remain steady this year/
- vi. For income, we have replaced some fundraisers with a Read-a-Thon which we hope will be very lucrative.
- vii. *Emily Vainieri moved to approve the budget as presented. Meg Halvorsen seconded. 26 members voted 'yes', no members voted 'no' and the budget passed.*

- b. Candace Knott presented a proposed Debit Card Policy, to allow the use of a debit card to pay for recurring transactions as approved by the membership in the budget - Quickbooks monthly fees, website hosting and Zoom. The policy allows other transactions to be paid by debit card as long as two approved people authorize the charge (Treasurer and President/other bank signatory). This will simplify tax reporting.

- i. *Emily Vainieri moved to approve the budget as presented. Meg Ballman seconded. 24 members voted 'yes', no members voted 'no' and the Debit Card Policy was approved.*

4. PTACHC Update:

- a. Nina Philipsen provided an update from the 1st PTACHC Meeting.
- b. Dr. Martirano spoke at the PTACHC meeting. HCPSS staffing is in a good position with few open positions remaining; the highest needs remain in special education. They have focused on equity and diversity in staffing to reflect the diverse community. This is expected to be a year of normalcy, using mitigation measures but will only close if the state mandates. Enrollment continues to rise. The federal government lifted universal free meals - eligible families are encouraged to sign up for FARMs. There has been a regression in academics, especially in reading, and the county has implemented new universal screening efforts to identify children who need additional needs.
- c. Legislative updates are available on the PTACHC website. There was a Board of Education (BOE) on September 1 in which they announced a proposed attendance area adjustment plan; public testimony was on September 7. There is another BOE meeting on September 8 with the budget proposal.

- d. There is a requirement for events with any structures (including tents) to have 1 person per 250 participants to have had Safety Manager Training, hosted by the Fire Department.
- 5. Principal's Update:
 - a. Mr. Notari introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the new school year. SJLES is a great school and we're in a healthy place - community, staff, parents and kids all contribute to a wonderful school culture.
 - b. Staffing at SJLES is fully filled - only two have left (one to move to middle school and one to move closer to home), and we get voluntary transfers to come to our school (word of mouth, reputation). Even all long term subs have been filled with experienced subs.
 - c. The kids love the funnel ball that the PTA provided!
 - d. Kids are getting used to school and learning new Jaguar expectations. They are focused on relationship building and doing assessments- what do they remember, what do they understand. Mr. Notari is happy with the progress.
 - e. Mr. Notari appreciates all that the PTA does - the budget and leadership team are focused on what would help the kids and how we can be flexible to meet needs. School is only as good as what we put into it - and the PTA helps keep it wonderful.
 - f. Mr. Notari opened space for questions:
 - i. The bus situation has been much smoother this year. Does the school or PTA support drivers?
 - 1. We can't do breakfast (had been done in the past) because several drivers have later routes to go to.
 - 2. We should consider a Bus Driver Appreciation Week - ask families to support.
 - ii. There are still a lot of issues with cars on Southview - they park on both sides, block buses, and are unsafe for children. Can anything be done?
 - 1. Mr. Notari will put out a reminder and continue to communicate.
 - iii. One neighborhood's children would like to request: more hopscotch, bocce court and a swingset.
 - 1. These aren't all possible, but keep the suggestions coming!
 - g. Adjournment: Meg Halvorsen summarized feedback and took suggestions for the next meeting (talk about Amazon Smile program); she then adjourned the meeting.