

## **SJLES PTA MEETING MINUTES**

**Date & location:** Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 8:00pm, Zoom

**In attendance** (32): Tara Scully, Meg Halvorsen, Meg Ballman, Kathy Etheridge, Sara Goggin, Amber Drenner, Jenna Groman, Dan Notarim Mary Brown, Rachel Haak, Candace Knott, Meg Ballman, Jane Fisher, Emily Vainieri, Dina Zhuravel, Rebecca Dunne, Babatunde Keshinro, Maggie Fisher, Sandi Cresswell, Brittany Gutierrez, Avanti Shetye, Vanessa Zawodny, Marianne Gutshall, Sarah Day, Linda Ferguson, Angie Kramer, Amy Goldsmith, Seba Kurian, Maryiam Kagalwala, Tina Harkness, Nina Philipsen, Liz Petrella

**Next Meeting:** February 8, 2023 at 8:00pm, Zoom

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### **AGENDA:**

1. Welcome
2. Monthly Updates
3. Current / Upcoming Activities
4. Treasurer's Report
5. PTACHC Update
6. Principal's Update
7. Adjournment

### **Minutes:**

1. Welcome: Meg Halvorsen, PTA President, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
2. Monthly Updates:
  - a. There will be a new spirit wear vendor for spring sales - more information will be shared soon.
3. Current / Upcoming Activities:
  - a. The Read-a-Thon is ongoing until January 27. 45% of students are already participating, and Cozy Reading Night is tomorrow evening at 6pm.
  - b. Upcoming Restaurant Nights are: January 26 at Honey Pig Hot Pot in Normandy and February 6 at All American Steakhouse in Normandy.
  - c. Multicultural Night is February 16 - volunteers are still needed!
  - d. The Book Fair will be the week of March 20.
4. Treasurer Report
  - a. Spending in December was for primarily student activities for the laser light show (delayed until January due to weather) and instructional support for 5th grade small group reading materials, classroom supplies and decor.

- b. Income was received from Restaurant Night revenue - approximately \$800 in total from Chipotle, Yama Sushi, and Vocelli's.
- 5. PTACHC Update:
  - a. Nina Philipsen shared recent PTACHC updates. The meeting focused on two County Council member guest speakers who discussed school crowding, changes in school start times, and the completion of the drafting phase of HoCo by Design. There was also a presentation by the River Hill High School PTSA, who has created a committee to examine the response to recent incidents.
- 6. Principal's Update:
  - a. Mr. Notari shared updates on recent feedback from both the Staff Survey and Family Feedback Survey, both important parts of how they calibrate the school program.
  - b. The Staff Survey received 66 responses, and 30 staff members participated in optional follow-up sessions with the leadership team. They described the school as happy, welcoming, inclusive, and supportive. They shared that they are most proud of the students, having consistency, continued growth, intentional data discussions, and feeling fulfilled.
  - c. Families described the school as a community and the school year as great, normal, and engaging. Things going well are the responsive and engaged staff, recognition of students, and positive activities to engage students and provide enrichment. Families described how students are greeted by name, their love of going to school and school pride, and how involved teachers are in community events. Areas to improve include more opportunities for parents to engage, volunteer, and be in communication by teachers.
  - d. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions, including the following:
    - i. Do you teach typing? Yes - typing is taught in both technology and ELA as part of the curriculum. The program Typing Agent is also available for students to use from home via hcpss.me using school usernames and passwords.
    - ii. Are school field trips happening this year? Yes - all classes will do at least one trip. Bus prices are extremely high, so they are trying to be creative and look for reasonably priced options to offset this.
    - iii. Does the school have a math or science Olympiad team? Not currently - parents should ask the GT team if interested in this.
    - iv. Is cursive being taught, including to those who may have missed it due to COVID? Cursive is taught in 2nd grade, but not in-depth. Parents suggested that cursive writing or calligraphy could be an option for GT seminar to fill a gap for students who missed this.
    - v. Do you feel the school is well-funded or are there areas where the school needs funding? Compared to other school systems, the school is very fortunate - we are funded consistently with county standards with very limited school fundraising (only school pictures). An additional half-time reading specialist and school counselor were allocated this year which was a substantial improvement in school services.

- vi. Is there a science fair? No - and even places that had science fairs in the past have adapted to more general STEM nights.
- 7. Adjournment: Meg Halvorsen summarized feedback and adjourned the meeting.