

SJLES PTA MEETING MINUTES

Date & location: Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 8:00pm, Zoom

In attendance (22): Tiffany Burns, Meg Halvorsen, Dan Notari, Candace Knott, Mary Brown, Alyssa Lambert, Carsten Vala, Sandi Cresswell, Linda Ferguson, Ashley Callaway, Nina Philipsen, Liz Petrella, Meg Ballman, Chinedu Agbakwuru, Jane Fisher, Dina Zhuravel, Tara Scully, Brittany Gutierrez, Emily Vainieri, Katie Holl, Marianne Gutshall Katrina Vala

Next Meeting: May 10, 2023 at 6:30pm, SJLES Media Center

AGENDA:

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

Minutes:

1. Welcome: Meg Halvorsen, PTA President, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
2. Treasurer Report: Candace Knott shared the Treasurer Report.
 - a. Expenses over the past month included instructional support to teachers and teams, support for 50 students from the Book Fairy to purchase books at the book fair, preparation for May Day, purchases for staff gift for Teacher Appreciation Week, a donation to the Homewood School and a contribution to the PTACHC Scholarship fund, and other operating expenses. Excitedly, the PTA also purchased a new Gaga pit and whiteboard supplies to modernize chalkboards, as requested by the school!
 - b. The PTA collected \$9,934 in revenue in March, including a partial payout from the Readathon, book fair profits, theme park ticket profit, spiritwear sale, BINGO night, restaurant nights and donations!
 - c. The SJLES PTA also finally received our Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certificate! This has been a long process, and will save the PTA money moving forward by not needing to pay sales tax due to our nonprofit status.
3. Monthly Updates
 - a. Thank you to Sandi Cresswell and Emily Vainieri for doing an amazing job putting together the Book Fair this month!

- b. Hershey Park tickets have been distributed - please contact the PTA if you did not receive yours.
 - c. The Spiritwear sale closed and items were delivered today! Thanks to Linda for organizing and finding a new vendor.
 - d. PTA Board Positions will be available for next year! This is not a multi-year commitment, but the PTA must have a President, Treasurer, and Secretary to exist. Duties and responsibilities can be adjusted - next year's Board can decide if they want to simplify programs and events. The Board election will be at the next PTA meeting.
 - e. **Don't forget:**
 - i. **Fill out the survey for Field Day t-shirts!** All students will receive one - if no response is received, teachers will make a best guess for size.
 - ii. **Yearbook orders close April 16.**
4. Upcoming Events
- a. BINGO Night is this Friday!
 - b. Next Thursday (April 20) the PTA is sponsoring a Japanese drumming team for a school-wide cultural arts assembly.
 - c. May Day is coming up soon on May 6! The rain date is May 13. Pre-orders are now available for tickets and wristbands.
 - d. Staff Appreciation Week is May 8-12. The Committee is hard at work to prepare.
 - e. The PTA is offering a school supply box drive this year for the first time - an easy way to order school supplies for the next school year and have them delivered to your student's classroom. They will be available to order May 8 - June 16.
 - f. Kindergarten Sneak Peek is on May 24. The PTA will have a table for spiritwear, membership, school supply boxes, etc. Looking for some volunteers to support!
 - g. Field Day is on May 26 - the PTA is hosting a Snowball Social during Field Day for students!
5. PTACHC Update: Tiffany Burns and Nina Philipsen provided an update from the recent PTACHC meeting.
- a. School transportation was the primary discussion item. Adam Downes, Coordinator of Transportation, Planning and Technology, discussed the changes. For elementary school, the distance is still 1 mile, but it is measured from property line to property line, not door-to-door. There is a bus driver shortage, and the change in school start times put an additional burden on the number of drivers needed. The Transportation Office has also been severely understaffed. They are trying to fix problems by 1) better collecting data on who uses the buses, rather than planning routes for everyone within the bus zones, and 2) bringing in buses and drivers from the west coast to help fill the shortage. However they are still short. **Please remember to register for bus service** - if you do not register, you will not receive bus service. The Transportation Office is also instituting cards to swipe for drivers to check in and out, and parents to be able to track bus locations. They are also looking at ways to increase the number of walkers - e.g. "walking buses" to help elementary school students group together

to walk. However school bus loops are under the domain of individual schools to help manage the traffic and buses.

b. Question: What is our start time for next year? Mr. Notari replied that we are a Tier 3 school which is expected to be a 9:15 start time.

c. Question: Is there a possibility that we'll share buses with the high school? Mr. Notari believes that all Tier 3 schools are elementary schools, so this is unlikely.

6. Principal's report

a. Mr. Notari shared the monthly principal report, noting that it is now the 4th quarter and we are in the home stretch of the school year! BINGO Extravaganza was a lot of fun, everybody got a prize. There are lots of assessments coming up, and they are talking with students about 'giving your BEST' (Bring Effort, Stamina, and Thinking).

b. SJLES improved from a 4-star school to a 5-star school on the Maryland report card. Data is looking great, and they are closing a lot of gaps in kids who are struggling.

c. They are working to make sure everyone impacted by the transportation changes and required bus sign-ups is aware of it. Mr. Notari stressed that he did not have advance notice of any transportation changes - he shared the news immediately after receiving it. This was not a school-based decision and he immediately asked permission to share with the school community, as transparency is incredibly important to him.

d. Question: Are there still plans for 2nd grade field trip to the zoo? Yes, on May 12.

7. Adjournment:

a. Meg Halvorsen reminded attendees to volunteer for the PTA and open Board positions - there will not be any PTA without volunteers, and current Board members will provide support!

b. Question: Should we consider an in-person meeting for May for more energy / attendees? Yes! The May meeting will be in-person at 6:30pm. Spread the word to others and incoming kindergarteners also!

c. Meg Halvorsen adjourned the meeting.