

## **SJLES PTA MEETING MINUTES**

**Date & location:** Wednesday, November 9 at 8:00pm, Zoom

**In attendance** (37): Candace Knott, Jenna Groman, Meg Halvorsen, Jane Fisher, Vanessa Zawodny, Emily Vainieri, Brittany Gutierrez, Liz Petrella, Sandi Cresswell, Mary Brown, Tiffany Burns, Angie Kramer, Chelsea McWatters, Talia Skyles, Meg Ballman, Tolly Peddicord, Nina Philipsen, Tali Skyles, David Bridges, PL Lim, Marianne, Tara Scully, Kerstin Braunstein, Dan Notari, Stef Oh, Katrina Vala, Carsten Vala

**Next Meeting:** December 14, 2022, at 8:00pm, Zoom

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### **AGENDA:**

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

### **Minutes:**

1. Welcome: Meg Halvorsen, PTA President, opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
2. Monthly Updates:
  - a. We held a fantastic trunk or treat! Thank you to Vanessa Zawodny, Brittany Gutierrez, Karen Wilson, Leela Noble, Sameena Quai, Lily Park, and everyone who decorated their trunk! Also thanks to Linda Ferguson and Corinne Plank for organizing the 5th grade pumpkin sale.
  - b. Most spirit wear came home with students this week. Linda Ferguson is managing any issues with the vendor - please let her know if any items were incorrect at [sjles.spiritwear@gmail.com](mailto:sjles.spiritwear@gmail.com). There are still a few remaining items that will be available for sale at the Turkey Trot in limited sizes.
  - c. We collected 31 coats, 14 hat/scarves, and 7 pairs of gloves during the coat drive for the Kindness Pantry! Thanks to Christine Den Herder for organizing.
  - d. Over 60% of staff have now joined the PTA!
  - e. Kathy Etheridge has led the Campus Enhancements team for more planting - thank you for making the school pretty!
3. Current / Upcoming Activities:

- a. We are holding a toy drive during the month of November - thanks to Ashley Callaway for organizing! We have received 42 toys so far, which Ashley drops off for Toys for Tots every week.
  - b. Original works orders sent in and will be shipped to school by Dec 2. Thank you Jane Fisher, Mary Brown, Ms. Peddicord, Ms. Skyles, Angie Kramer, Jaye van Acht, Corinne Plank, Linda Ferguson, Emily Vainieri, and Beverly Weber for all of the support. 229 orders were received, totalling \$8,691. The school receives 33%.
  - c. Grant proposal submissions due Friday 11/11 and the grant team will meet later this month to make decisions.
  - d. Turkey trot is on Sunday! Thank you Mary Brown, Linda Ferguson, Christine Den Herder, and Marianne Gutshall for organizing. Many posters have been received - surpassed last year. Volunteers are still needed.
  - e. The next restaurant night is on Monday 11/14 at Chipotle - thanks for organizing, Tara!
  - f. Conferences are coming up and the Staff Appreciation team (Mary Brown, Brittany Gutierrez and Vanessa Zawodny) have planned meals. The sign-up genius for donations were filled - thanks so much everyone!
  - g. After winter break we will have the Read-a-thon, Cozy Reading Night, Ice Cream Social, Multicultural Night and the Book Fair.
4. Additional Discussion Items
- a. The bike rack near the walker's entrance needs replacing - bike wheels are too tall to fit in the rack which prevents kids from biking.
  - b. Attendees asked what other items people could donate to the school / teachers - teachers suggested colored dry erase markers, sanitizer and wipes.
5. Treasurer Report
- a. Candace Knott provided an overview of the budget. We have an increase in net assets of \$2,839 which is higher than expected, so we will vote on a reallocation proposal. Spending costs are also lower (Teachers Closet is being retired and replaced by a Tissue Delivery Service), which will be factored into the reallocation proposal.
  - b. Candace noted that all donations have helped with Family Fun and Teacher Appreciation programs. For the Trunk or Treat, for example, donations reduced PTA costs to only \$500. Thank you to everyone for contributing!
  - c. The PTA has purchased outdoor recess supplies (frisbees, balls, cones) and indoor recess supplies (legos, magnetiles, markers, paper).
  - d. Candace put forth a budget adjustment proposal for the following: 1) purchase of a gaga ball pit by request of the school and 2) increased funding for the 5th grade celebration. Funding for these items would be reallocated from unexpected fundraising revenue and a decrease in costs for the Teacher's Closet.
    - i. Emily Vainieri motioned to approve the budget adjustment proposal that Candace presented. Tara Scully seconded the motion.
    - ii. Members discussed safety concerns around the gaga ball pit. Mr. Notari is already discussing with Howard County risk management.
    - iii. 13 members voted 'aye' and 2 members voted 'nay.'

- iv. The motion passed and the budget adjustment proposal was approved.
- v. Purchase of a gaga ball pit (request by school)
- vi. Increased funding for 5th grade celebration

6. PTACHC Update

- a. Tiffany Burns shared this month's PTACHC Update. She and Nina Philipsen have created a [Google doc](#) to track updates from PTACHC meetings.
- b. The Board of Education decided to move back start times for high schools and middle schools, but this could impact elementary school start times as well. Many challenges are being considered, particularly for bus planning.
- c. HCPSS Central Office shared updates on asynchronous days in lieu of snow days - aligning with the emails we have already received. Asynchronous assignments will be on material already learned so that students can do it independently. Students will have up to 10 days to complete assignments,
- d. HS13 is opening next year. 321 students from Mt. Hebron High School are moving to Howard High School to alleviate overcrowding, but no SJLES families.

7. Principal's Update

- a. Mr. Notari shared a thanks to the PTA for the new Keurig machine and all staff appreciation work - the staff feel appreciated and the treats are welcome surprises.
- b. Reflecting on recent events, Mr. Notari noted that the Trunk or Treat was "awesome" and the 1st cultural arts event (free through Howard Community College) was fantastic - thank you to Jane for organizing this! The Mt. Hebron orchestra also came and played the Star Wars theme - the students loved it. At the end of the first quarter, the school held Jaguar Huddles and Pumped Up Recess. Both went well and students are excited about the pizza certificates with awards.
- c. Coming up soon is American Education week - there will be two visitation days, more information will be shared soon. Conferences are the week of Thanksgiving, and report cards will also be shared on Monday.
- d. Feedback is really important to find areas for growth or identify issues they aren't aware of. Thank you to the parents that have taken the survey so far! The feedback also lets the school address misconceptions - for example, there was concern about too many staff wellness days, but there haven't been any yet, only holidays and teacher work days for report cards. There were also requests for standards and curriculum information - this is all available on the county resource pages.

8. Adjournment: Meg Halvorsen summarized feedback and adjourned the meeting.