

**Minutes of the James Madison High School PTSA
Tuesday, October 9, 2018**

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

In attendance: Greg Hood, Timothy Buckley, Beth Eachus, Marcy Davidson, Sarah Helmicki, Ellen MacGregor, Anne-Stuart Kirkhorn, Suzy Snyder, Maria Carolina Petit, Gaynita Williams, Rene Newman, Monica Ansel, Sandra Allen, Lenka Denmark, Ann Kuhlkin, Cathy Wasilewski, Shelly Koshuta, Shannon Sieff, Jenny Thompson, Rossana Carney, Monica Cramer

I. Call to Order and Welcome – Beth Eachus

II. Principal Report – Principal Greg Hood

Mr. Hood noted that the school held the dedication of the Lenny Schultz Fieldhouse on Friday, 10/6. In addition, he described some new policies for football games. Backpacks are no longer allowed at games to prevent illicit items coming into the stadium area. In addition, side games of football, basketball and Frisbee have been eliminated to cut down on injuries. Lastly, certain parts of the area surrounding the football field have been sectioned off to avoid having students wandering off. Often these are younger, non-high school students, and the area has been closed off for their protection.

There is a new curator for the JMHS webpage. Plans are to make changes so that the site is more user friendly. There might be a focus group with parents for their input.

Mr. Hood gave some insights to the new professional development strategy for teachers. He provided the “why” to explain the changes to professional development. Given the speed in which our world is changing, schools must adapt what they are teaching students to prepare them for their futures. For example, students will likely need different types of skills in the future. Some examples of our changing world include:

- There is a prediction that half of all existing jobs will be automated or outsourced in the future.
- Many jobs that students will have in the future don't exist now.
- Languages are easier to translate so language barriers, in effect, disappear.
- In 2020, a \$1000 computer will have the same processing capability as a human. In 2040, a \$1000 computer will have the same processing capability as all humans.

Formerly, students with knowledge had power. Now, knowledge is easily attainable through automation and computers, so the new skill has to be how students can filter through all the information to identify what is important. Teachers must adapt their lessons to provide these skills. The new professional development strategy should help enable teachers to teach for the future.

III. Student Services – Timothy Buckley

Mr. Buckley announced that the PSAT will be held on 10/10/18. Students will have a 2-hour early release on that day. FCPS covers the cost for freshmen and sophomores to take the test. Parents must pay \$20 for their juniors' tests to be scored. There has been some confusion about this policy. Fewer juniors had paid for the PSAT, so the deadline for parents to pay has been extended. A discussion about the PSAT ensued. Mr. Buckley answered questions for parents, explaining that the PSAT is administered across FCPS with the same policies. Some parents questioned whether it was valuable for freshmen to take the test, suggesting that instead of the county paying for the freshmen test, that they pay for the juniors instead, since the juniors' tests count toward the National Merit Scholar program. Mr. Buckley explained that score report will be available sometime between December and February.

Mr. Buckley also discussed a program in which 33 Korean students would attend JMHS for the day on 10/11/18. He noted that there was a plethora of students (more than 60) interested in “hosting” the Korean students for the day. While there are many benefits to the program, the opportunity for both the host and Korean students to gain an “international perspective” is invaluable. There are plans for a delegation of Chinese students in February. Another visit from a delegation of Costa Rican students may occur in the future as well.

Mr. Buckley noted that Ethics Day is in the planning stages for the Seniors. He explained that Ethics Day chair, Monica Cramer, would provide more details about the day later in the meeting.

IV. Approval of September PTA Meeting Minutes – Beth Eachus

Beth Eachus asked for comments to the September PTA meeting minutes. No comments or changes were suggested. Marcy Davidson made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Anne-Stuart Kirkhorn seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

V. Faculty Report – Ms. Petty

Ms. Petty was unable to attend the meeting. She will provide a report at the next PTA meeting.

VI. Student Report

SGA members were unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Hood reported on their behalf that the homecoming events were very successful this year. More than half of the school attended the dance with attendance at 925 students. Faculty and staff were pleased with the efforts of the SGA.

VII. President's Report – Beth Eachus

Beth thanked the parents and local community groups for the many donations that continue to come into the school for families in need. There are several opportunities to contribute. These include:

- Food Pantry
- Winter Clothing Drive – led by Jill Feeko. Donations of gently used coats, scarves, mittens and other winter gear are sought for families in need. Sizes are needed for not just high school students but also for their parents and siblings.
- The BRAWS (Bringing Resources to Aid Women's Shelters) organization is providing/donating feminine hygiene products
- Susan Kenney, a JMHS parent, is researching food donations that can be constituted by adding water.
- JMHS School Spirit Wear Drive gives the opportunity to donate gently used high school spirit wear to students in need.

Beth also provided a report for the Hospitality Committee. She thanked the committee for organizing the distribution of "Fall Treats" to the teachers. She also thanked parents who filled the donation Sign Up Genius to provide the treats. Treats must be brought to the school by 10/15/18. They will be delivered to teachers on 10/16/18.

VIII. Treasurer's Report – Marcy Davidson

Marcy Davidson reported that the 2017-2018 school year treasurer audit was completed. Highlights included:

- Monies are increasingly moving online. However, online transactions are not currently monitored as closely as paper transactions. As a result, a recommendation was made to create some new policies and procedures to remedy this situation.
- A recommendation was made to have better receipts for reimbursements from the PTA.
- A recommendation was made for more accurate accounting for All Night Grad. Marcy indicated that All Night Grad will start to track their finances using Quick Books for better monitoring.
- Another issue for All Night Grad is the collection and distribution of cash and prizes. A recommendation was that both cash and prizes must be signed for to verify that these are distributed appropriately.
- Lastly, also related to All Night Grad, when large amounts of cash are withdrawn from the account, more than 1 person must be involved.

Marcy provided additional information about the Treasurer's Report. She noted that Membership in the PTA is doing well. We are \$2000 under budget, but money is still coming in as more people join the PTA. She also said that All Night Grad will have its own budget due to the size of the account to help simplify the accounting.

Marcy explained that a decision was made for a CPA to do the PTA taxes. This will help ensure that the proper steps are made to maintain the PTA's non-profit status.

Shannon Sieff made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Ellen MacGregor seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed

IX. Committee Reports

Membership: It was reported that some staff would like to formally join the PTA.

Hospitality: The committee thanked the PTA and parents for all the support for their programs/events.

Ethics Day: Monica Cramer reported that she is seeking parent volunteers to help facilitate during Ethics Day. She requested that parents of seniors abstain to help the seniors feel less self-conscious in case they knew their facilitator. These volunteers will facilitate discussion based on scenarios that the seniors will observe. No prior knowledge is required. The students will primarily provide the content by sharing their personal thoughts. Parent volunteers will need to move the conversation forward. The commitment would be for 6 hours on Ethics Day (Nov 16) between 8am and 2pm. Some training will be provided that morning. There will also be a free breakfast. Help is also needed with set up and cleanup.

All Night Grad: Cathy Wasilewski reported that meetings for All Night Grad will start in November. She is still looking for a committee co-chair, someone to help with security and entertainment, as well as someone to send letters to local businesses for donations.

Academic Boosters: The fall Academic Award ceremony will take place on Nov. 13. Those honored will be students who have had all A's in their classes for the previous year. Only those students who have never received this award before will have their names announced at the ceremony. Those students who are National Merit Finalists will also be recognized. It was also noted that mock testing will also be provided in November. Mock testing has been well received.

Food Pantry: Anne-Stuart Kirkhorn and Rossana Carney discussed the potential for a hygiene product drive. There is a plan to add items to a sign up genius. These items can then be given to students in paper bags. Products might include shampoo, soap, toothpaste, etc. Students on free or reduced lunch could pick up a grab bag of these products, but in the future, these will also be available in the food pantry. Anne-Stuart and Rossana are also looking for ideas for Thanksgiving. Kebra Krol is putting together a coffee and breakfast for the ESOL teachers and ESOL families. The event will be from 7:15-9am on 10/16. Volunteers welcome.

Parent Programs: Monica Anshel noted that the first planned parent program would take place on 10/16 from 7-9 pm in the auditorium. Students from Oakton HS are invited. The topic is Little Know Secrets of Paying for College.

Directory: AtoZConnect is available to all students. After the initial waiting period, an email was sent to all parents who can either confirm previous years' information or self-populate their information. Parents who chose to opt out did not receive an email to include their information in the directory.

Rewards Programs: Ann Kuhlkin provided the registration numbers for Harris Teeter and Giant for parents who shop at those stores. When parents link their store rewards cards to the JMHS, these organizations will then donate money for purchases made at their stores.

XI. Old Business: No news to report.

XII. New Business: No new business

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.