

**Minutes of the James Madison High School PTSA
Monday, September 9, 2019**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm.

In attendance: Greg Hood, Timothy Buckley, Beth Eachus, Sarah Helmicki, Ellen MacGregor, Tarah Weaver, Sonya Marsden, Tammy Peters, Kebra Krol, Jenny Thompson, Pascale Centola, Rania Fadlallah, Wendy Pearson, Holly DePaul, Kate Frederick, Heba Singer, Carolyn Ubben, Christine Nell, Robin Nguyen, Jennifer O'Beirne, Leslie Conroy, Abby Shannon, Angela Gutenson, Sarah Lundquist, Denelle Collazo, Naomi Hutchins, Courtney Chadwick, Sarah Espanol, Linda Khan, Cindy Goss, Ann Kuhlkin, Jane Miscavage, Yangchil Ly, Sylvia Martin Estes, Cathy Sontheimer, Shelly Koshuta, Monica Ansel, Katrina Smart, Luke Kurcina, Braden Holt, Anise Jreige

I. Call to Order and Welcome – Beth Eachus

Beth welcomed those in attendance and asked for everyone to introduce themselves.

II. Approval of May PTSA Meeting Minutes – Sarah Helmicki

Sarah Helmicki presented the May 2019 PTSA minutes. Sarah asked if there was any feedback. No comments or changes were suggested. Tarah Weaver made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Sonya Marsden seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

III. Principal Report – Principal Greg Hood

Mr. Hood welcomed everyone to the first PTSA meeting of the year. He explained that JMHS works very closely with all the administrators and staff of the pyramid. They held a joint pyramid meeting at the beginning of the school year. A speaker at the meeting was Ted Dintersmith, a 1970 graduate of JMHS who has produced a documentary "Most Likely to Succeed" and written a book "What School Could Be." Mr. Dintersmith inspires teachers to address the shortcomings of traditional school. Mr. Dintersmith has been asked to be the keynote speaker at the 2020 JMHS graduation, 50 years after he was the student speaker of his own graduation in 1970. Madison HS is celebrating its 60th Anniversary this year, so many themes for the year are about connecting with our past and looking toward our future.

There are approximately 2280 students enrolled this school year with more than 600 freshmen. JMHS is projected to have 2400 students in the next 3-4 years. As a result, JMHS has a planned addition that should begin in January 2021. Plans are to add a 3rd floor in the space above the current library as well as expand the cafeteria. Overall 14 classrooms and 2 science labs will be added to the school.

There have been some minor staffing challenges since there was a dip in enrollment when staffing for the school year took place earlier in the year. However, there was a surge in enrollment at the beginning of the year. Mr. Hood is working on filling the gaps, including looking for 2 special education teachers.

Mr. Hood also explained that the school is moving to a singular grading system on the 4.0 scale. Ninety-five percent of teachers use the scale this year. He expects the school to be unified in this system by 2021. The school is also moving toward Standards-based Grading. He will elaborate more on this topic in future meetings.

Lastly, Mr. Hood said that there has been one major change to the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) document. With this change, schools will be more lenient when students are in possession of drugs or alcohol. As a result, he and other FCPS principals have asked for increased support from the county for support/intervention staff to help students who have been caught in possession of drugs and alcohol.

IV. Student Services – Timothy Buckley

Mr. Buckley followed up on Mr. Hood's discussion about the change to the SR&R document. In response to the changes, JMHS will have a full time SAPS (Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist) on staff 1 day per week. Heather Price will be in this role. She will be meeting confidentially with students who are referred to her either by parents, teachers or counselors. With her intervention, there is hope that students who might have abuse problems will get the help they need rather than punishment that does not address the root problem.

Mr. Buckley also discussed the new Mentor Program that was initiated this year and was partially sponsored by the PTSA. While there are some things that they will change for future classes, the program is going well so far. The largest number of freshmen attended Flight School this year (515).

Lastly, Mr. Buckley talked about Ethics Day for seniors. That will be held on Nov. 18 this year. On that day, seniors are bused to the Vienna Community Center. They discuss four different ethics issues with community leaders and PTSA members. They will be seeking volunteers to help on that day. Contact Mr. Buckley or Monica Cramer if you are interested.

V. Faculty Report – Ms. Tammy Peters

Ms. Peters introduced herself as the new teacher representative for the PTSA. She thanked the PTSA for the catered breakfast at the beginning of school and the dinner for Back to School Night. She mentioned that teachers are interested in joining the PTSA and suggested that a competition between departments might boost teacher participation.

VI. Student Government Report

Luke Kurcina, Sophomore Class President, shared that the “County Fair,” an event held before the first football game to honor former football coach, Lenny Schultz, was a success. Many families attended and enjoyed food, face painting and other activities. He also shared that the Freshman class elections will be coming up soon.

Braden Holt, Junior Class President, explained that the SGA is working on the Homecoming festivities. With the school’s 60th anniversary, the theme is “Back to the Future.” Homecoming Court members will be nominated by teachers and students. The selection process will be entirely online. The homecoming pep rally and parade will take place on 10/4 before the game. The dance will take place on 10/5. Spirit Week days have been set. Advertising for the event will begin soon.

VII. President’s Report

Beth thanked Sylvia Martin Estes who has been in charge of planning the senior class Baccalaureate for the past 3 years. The event took place after the last PTSA meeting, so Beth recognized the work that Sylvia did to put together the interfaith celebration of the 2019 senior class.

Beth shared that the PTSA received a \$1900 donation from Hunter Mill Church of the Good Shepherd for the JMHS pantry. The use of the JMHS pantry has grown over the past year to support 30-40 families. Through the pantry and support from other sponsors, families have not only received weekly groceries, but also clothing, bikes (CHO), feminine products (BRAWS), hygiene products and school supplies. Susan Kenney will be one of the co-chairs for the pantry this year. We are looking for a co-chair with flexible hours. Contact Beth Eachus if you are interested.

Beth also noted that the first SAT mock test took place on 9/7 and was sold out. The first ACT mock test will take place on 9/21. It is also fully subscribed.

VIII. Treasurer’s Report

Tarah Weaver shared that the 2019-20 audit was completed. Recommendations will be presented in the October PTSA meeting.

Beth reviewed the 2019-20 School Budget, which was only minimally changed from the previous year.

- Additional moneys were allocated for Teacher and Staff Appreciation, Baccalaureate/Convocation, and Special Education Outreach.
- Budgets for Minority Achievement and Madison Outreach had minor changes but are linked together with funds that are co-related.
- In May 2019, the PTSA voted to restrict \$10,000 in reserves for the upcoming Madison renovation.
- The final Net Income was budgeted at a loss of \$9600 as we seek to spend what we bring in each year as a 501c3 organization.
- Current actuals do not reflect the expenses WISIT conference that the PTSA supported for teachers that took place over the summer. 18-19 YTD actuals are closer to \$32,000.

Wendy Pearson made a motion to accept the 2019-2020 PTSA budget. Linda Khan seconded. The motion passed and the budget was approved.

IX. Committee Reports

Membership – We have 2 new committee chairs for Membership, Linda Khan and Robin Nguyen. They reported that membership is going well. In 2018-19, the total income from membership and donations for the entire year was approximately \$27,000 (\$10,236 – Membership, \$13,664 – Donations, and \$3,155 – Academic Boosters). For the 2019-20 school year, the total from these revenue items is already \$20,000 year to date.

Hospitality – Kebra Krol thanked everyone who supported the initial school year events, including the Welcome Back to School Breakfast and BTSN dinner. Kebra is looking for a co-chair as her youngest child will graduate from JMHS this school year. Please contact Kebra Krol or Beth Eachus if you are interested. The next events for Hospitality are Fall Treats on 10/23 and Grab & Go breakfast on 12/4.

Ethics Day – Mr. Buckley introduced Ethics Day during his discussion. The chair for the event is Monica Cramer. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Monica Cramer or Beth Eachus if interested.

Academic Boosters – Ellen MacGregor noted that the mock testing is already underway this year. The SAT took place on 9/7 and the first mock ACT will take place on 9/21. She is looking for someone to help with registration on 9/21, which only entails being at the school between 8:30 and 9am to make sure the room is set and confirm that nothing is needed. Contact Ellen or Beth if you can help. The second round of mock testing will take place on 11/9 (SAT) and 11/16 (ACT). We will be offering “extended time” for this test for those with accommodations.

Pantry – Beth talked about the pantry and reiterated that the PTSA is currently supporting 30-40 families with the pantry. Food/supplies are provided about one time per month during the summer and one time per week during the school year. The PTSA has support from outside organizations for these families as well:

- BRAWS – Helps provide feminine products to families
- CHO – Bicycles

One parent asked if there was a need for diaper collection. Beth will see if this is a needed addition for the pantry.

Parent Programs – Sonya Marsden presented the scheduled parent programs for the year. There was also a flyer provided with the options. On 10/15, there will be a program on paying for college. On 11/11, there will be a program on helping students handle stress. The February 19 program will focus on Drugs and Vaping Prevention and Recovery, and Heather Price, our SAPS representative should be there as well. On April 16, there will be a program on Navigating College Admissions. There may be one or two additional parent programs. One is tentatively scheduled for October 8. This will be a webinar about when to take the ACT/SAT and how to choose which test to take. There may also be a spring program on suicide prevention (date TBD.)

All Night Grad – This was a very successful event for the class of 2019. If you are interested in helping, more information will be forthcoming.

FCCPTA – Ann Kuhlkin and Jane Miscavage updated the group on the most recent Council of PTSAs meeting. Dr. Brabrand spoke about his desire for transparency in the boundary policy that is being revisited at this time. In the coming months, there will be a study to review the boundary policy to determine the framework for how changes will be made to school boundaries in the future. There will be community engagement in the process. One thing that is driving the need for boundary changes is the planned new high school in the west side of the county. The total project will be long term and Dr. Brabrand will continue to provide open communication.

Loyalty Rewards – Ann Kuhlkin requested that all parents join Amazon Smiles which is a rebate program through Amazon in which a percentage of all purchased dollars on Amazon is donated to the JMHS PTSA. Now that Giant and Safeway no longer participate in a loyalty program for schools, Amazon and Harris Teeter are the only ones who will make this type of donation. Please subscribe!

Chorus – Katrina Smart reported that JMHS will be hosting the March Chorus State assessments. Also, there will be a Snowman event in December that is coordinated with Orchestra. This is a community event in which families can come and do crafts and a sing along for the holidays. Auditions for district chorus are will be in the near future.

Director – Jenny Thompson reported that this will be the 3rd year in which we have provided an online directory. It is password protected. After the Opt-out period, Jenny will start collecting/validating student information for the

directory. That should take place in early October. After that time, the directory will be available for use with all participating families at JMHS for the 2019-2020 school year. Jenny is also looking for a co-chair as her senior is graduating in 2020. Contact Jenny or Beth if you are interested.

Drama - Ellen MacGregor reported that A Mid-Summer Night's Dream is the fall play. It will run Nov 14-16. It is a huge cast of 57 students, not including the stage support, so there will be a great deal of student participation. The spring production will be How to Succeed in Business Without Even Trying.

Band - Sylvia Martin Estes noted that last year's Marching Ensemble won the Virginia State Championship in November 2018. The band is looking to repeat that success this year. There is a Vampire theme this year, "From Dusk to Dawn." The band will compete in 5 different competitions this year.

Athletic Boosters - Jen Sorrell could not attend the meeting, but sent a note that Beth shared. She encouraged all families to join the Athletic Boosters. In addition, they are looking for volunteers for their Mark McGinley Memorial Golf Tournament Fundraiser. The event will take place on October 21. The first Athletic Boosters meeting will take place on 9/16.

To finish the committee reports, Beth Eachus encouraged everyone to get involved in the Madison community. There are many options available. Communication is provided to parents through many different avenues. Jennifer O'Beirne manages the website and asked for those who wanted to add/change content to contact her directly. Beth Eachus sends out the E-news for the PTSA, and Shelly Koshuta puts together the monthly Mad Memos. Each of these communication tools provides a great deal of information for the Madison community.

X. New Business

A parent asked about providing Christmas décor through the Pantry. Beth offered to look into whether that would be of interest to the recipients.

Mr. Hood noted that JMHS is no longer accepting students from outside our boundaries who want to pupil place in order to participate in AP classes. Since our school is now oversubscribed, we do not have space to accept any additional students outside of our own boundary.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm.