

**Minutes of the James Madison High School PTSA
Monday, November 9, 2020**

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

In attendance: Timothy Buckley, Greg Hood, Tammy Peters, Andrea Kramer, Angie Gutenson, Becky Kong, Beth Eachus, Braden Holt, Carter Schoenberg, Chris Lande, Christine Nell, Cindy Weinberg, Debra Steppel, Delia Troy, Donna O'Harren, Elizabeth Terry-Humen, Emily Korff, Francesca Branson, Heather Ireland, Heather Rosen, Heba Singer, Janine Schraml, Joceline Nahigian, Laura Vallance, Leslie Conroy, Luke Kurcina, Mara Gecan, Mary Ann Rashid, Nruti Patel, Ravi Myneni, Rene Taylor Newman, Rob Pflughardt, Robyn Nguyen, Sally McConville, Sarah Lundquist, Shudong Huang, Sonya Marsden, Vijaya Raghu, Wendy Pearson, Yelitza Luna

I. Call to Order and Welcome – Chris Lande

The link to the recording of this meeting will be posted later this week. A mailing was sent home from the PTSA – please join if you haven't already. Only members of the PTSA may vote on PTSA matters. The "armchair" fundraiser is our only one, so please donate.

II. Approval of October PTSA Meeting Minutes – Sarah Lundquist

Sarah noted that the October 2020 PTSA minutes had been posted on the JMHS website for review. Chris asked for any feedback; no comments or changes were suggested. Donna O'Harren made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Beth Eachus seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

III. Principal Report – Principal Greg Hood

Mr. Hood gave the following updates:

We had a great Senior Day – it was a drive-through. Approximately 446 seniors signed up to attend. 1142 students came today to pick up 2nd Quarter materials, which went very successfully.

Return to School: On October 26 small groups of students began – ELL, some with disabilities (15 students); November 4 cross-curricular cohort began with the concurrent model as an FCPS pilot (made up of 77 freshmen, 7 of whom are virtual, then 35 for 2 days and 35 students for the other 2 days). This is a great opportunity for those teachers – learning what tech to use, how it works; those teachers can help train and inform others. This concurrent model is used in many nationwide districts. We know it's not ideal but it is better than virtual. November 16 – a small group of students with disabilities (24) is scheduled to start; January 26 is the scheduled date for the remainder of all in-person students. That group is comprised of 75% in-person and 25% online students, for a 1662/558 split. The in-person will be divided into Groups A and B (each have an even and odd day) – 831 students will be in the building at one time.

Conditioning has been going on for a while – this Thursday at the School Board meeting a decision might be made to allow athletics to be inside beginning mid-November. This group would include robotics and debate. Groups like theater, music, SGA, DECA, marching band may start at the end of November. On January 11 or 26 all other clubs can meet in person. Some teachers will remain virtual and might have sponsored a club, so that might bring changes. This timeline and groups might differ from school to school.

A Madison student tested positive for COVID-19 from Senior Day. This student was virtual – was never in the building but had contact outside with other students. This shut down a couple of affected programs for a short period. There was no contact in the drive-through. The health department is responsible for contact tracing and reaches out to those impacted.

What are the metrics for decisions on opening, especially as cases are increasing in the area? The Superintendent works with Fairfax County Health Department to decide that. Many things hinge on what the current situation looks like.

A question was asked regarding getting gifts or other items to teachers. You can mail it or drop it off in the office.

IV. Student Services – Timothy Buckley

Updates: We are now in 2nd Quarter and teachers are finalizing 1Q grades. On Wednesday StudentVue and Parent will go live so you can see grades. No report cards will be mailed.

This Wednesday is a 2-hour early release, but this doesn't change classes. 4th period will be skipped. Students should still go to class! Attendance will be taken.

The week of Thanksgiving: W-Th-F are student holidays. Monday is already asynchronous. Tuesday will now be a catch-up day to give more continuity that week. This applies only to Madison.

The staff is working on courses for next year and will start posting information soon for Curriculum Night, etc.

When parents are making the decision whether to stay virtual or go in person, Mr. Buckley notes that they shouldn't have to change a lot of schedules in January. 4th period will need to be altered. They are trying to keep everyone in the classes they are in and not have wide-scale change.

V. Faculty Report – Tammy Peters

Ms. Peters said the teachers love the coffee mugs – thank you! She asked the math department what parents can do. The answer: Encourage students to use office hours more. That's the teacher's only time to meet your student! Reach out if your student is struggling. Students can pop in to office hours – they don't always have to make an appointment for Mondays; check with the teacher in question, though. Wednesday/Friday during 4th period is a bonus time.

VI. Student Government Report – Luke Kurcina

Luke extended thanks from Vincent Nurmi for a great Senior Day. The SGA did sponsor a "Halloweek" spirit week but there was low participation, mostly because of the PSAT and catch-up day.

The canned food drive started today and runs through December 11. The SGA has coordinated with many Madison pyramid schools to set up drop boxes. They would love help from the PTSA to get the flyer to parents.

Q&A Fridays on Instagram: the SGA is trying to use different social media platforms and pose questions on pressing issues – get student feedback, concerns, etc. Instagram is the main source for advertising – follow them at @jamesmadisonsga.

In mid-December they will have a holiday spirit week – spirit days, dress up, competitions.

VII. President's Report – Christopher Lande

Chris reported that materials pickup today went well. The mugs were a good idea for teachers since we couldn't have the traditional breakfast. Senior Day was fun and the school is trying to organize something for freshmen. Mr. Buckley and Mr. Hood discussed this – they are trying to figure out how they can do it. It would most likely occur in waves, not all kids at once, and probably in the new year.

VIII. Treasurer's Report – Tarah Weaver

Tarah was unable to attend but budget information will be posted later. A lot of schools who normally had big spring fundraisers (carnivals, etc.) are in bad shape, but we are doing okay right now.

IX. Committee Reports

Academic Boosters – Beth Eachus reported that two rounds of mock testing were done with 75 kids, virtually, with a proctor. We are looking at booking more rounds, included some with extended time. A mock PSAT is being explored with Applerouth.

Awards – A ceremony is typically held for students with a GPA of 4.0 and above and National Honor Society semi-finalists. Beth and Mr. Buckley are trying to find a way to honor them. It was noted that Marshall did a drive-through for academic letters. We're not sure how soon we can make something happen. If you have any ideas, please send them to Beth at 2ndvicepresident@jmhspta.org.

Athletic Boosters – Chris reported that an athletic Town Hall is planned for tomorrow night. Another pop-up store with a new supply of JMHS swag will happen soon.

JMHS Pantry and Outreach – Beth thanked everyone who has donated so we have lots of food we can provide. This also meant a work transition skills-building opportunity for those students involved.

The PTSA is sponsoring a Giving Tree (see Mad Memos) to address very specific needs. The signup looked full but there are still slots. A bin is placed outside of school M-F for dropoffs. Please attach the signup to the item so it can be identified.

We also work with CHO to provide bicycles to students who need them for work.

Parent Programs – Sonya Marsden announced that we had a great Getting into College program by Jed Apple-routh. The whole thing will be posted on our site because of tech problems that occurred. There are no upcoming programs right now, but be on the lookout later for winter and spring.

Staff Appreciation/Hospitality –The travel mugs were well received.

Loyalty – We need someone to coordinate the Amazon Smile program. Please be sure to link your account before you begin holiday shopping!

X. New Business

Mr. Hood said they are working on an idea to bring freshmen back in groups for school tours – like a mini Bridges program.

XI. Old Business

There was no old business.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.