

**Minutes of the James Madison High School PTSA
Tuesday, September 14, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

In attendance: Greg Hood, Timothy Buckley; Andrea Kramer, Angela Gutenson, Becky Kong, Beth Eachus, Christine Nell, Dara Dirth, Eliza Morss, Elizabeth Terry-Humen, Gayle Schlueter, Ginger Piercy, Hale Inanoglu, Heather Ireland, Heba Singer, Janine Bruhn, Pascale Centola, Rene Newman, Robyn Nguyen, Sarah Español, Sarah Lundquist, Sharon Hong, Shelly Koshuta, Sonya Marsden, Urvi Desai

I. Call to Order and Welcome – Beth Eachus

Beth introduced herself and asked others in the room to do the same.

II. Approval of June PTSA Meeting Minutes – Sarah Lundquist

Sarah announced that the minutes from the June meeting had been posted to the PTSA website for quite some time. There were no changes requested. Sonya Marsden moved to approve the minutes as presented. Shelly Koshuta seconded the motion, and the motion to approve the minutes as presented was passed.

III. Principal's Report – Principal Greg Hood

Mr. Hood gave the following updates:

We have had a great start to the school year, welcoming students back into the building. They were excited to be back. Compared to other schools we have been lucky with regard to COVID. So far there have been two positive staff cases and one student case – very low for a high school our size. As was seen last week, there will be a letter sent weekly if there are cases. The kids are generally doing very well wearing masks.

Schoology is new to everyone, but while it's nice to not have 3 different systems, there are still some growing pains, for staff and parents (and students) alike. It might take a bit more time for things to improve.

The County Fair was held on Friday – it was Coach Lenny Schultz's dream to have an event like this before a football game, where pyramid students were invited to play games and such. The SCA is doing an incredible job planning events like this. There were several hundred students from the pyramid elementary schools, and activities included running the field – Warhawk Rush.

School Board news: How to handle pauses in learning because of COVID exposure: Students should find assignments in Schoology. There might be live streaming into the classroom, but no interface between teacher and student – they would just be listening in.

Challenges: In the freshmen especially, we are seeing more juvenile behavior because they are more like middle school students since they were gone so long.

There is a new TikTok challenge where students are doing damage to schools. It's not as significant at JMHS but there have been some recent incidents. A letter will be sent out to the community but please talk to your kids about this.

IV. Student Services Report – Timothy Buckley

Mr. Buckley gave the following updates:

This fall, students in all grades will have the opportunity to participate in a countywide Social-Emotional Screener. We are working toward overall wellness.

4th period is now broken into 3 parts: 1) Advisory – this is an FCPS-mandatory period 25 minutes long, meant to focus on building relationships. A lot of groups really do feel a bond, especially if they have been together for 4 years. There will be lessons – some school info, some student wellness – and it's great to have an influential adult who isn't their teacher and no grade is given. 2) Warhawk Time still exists – some schools gave it up – but is now 25 minutes long. 3) Return – 33 minutes, which has caused some concerns. (Each Black Day, during Return, the student will return to his/her class in order, one period each Black Day. For example, he/she would go to 1st period one Black Day, then the next day would return to 2nd period, and so on, in rotation.) During this time no new material is taught but allows for remediation, catchup, and review. Since there isn't much Warhawk Time, students should check with teachers for other times (such as before or after school) they are available to do makeups, etc. Late buses started today – they will leave school around 4:45.

October 13 will be the PSAT for all 10th and 11th graders (there was no need to sign up) and the SAT for those seniors who signed up – both are free of charge and taking place at JMHS. The signup deadline has passed for the SAT but they are still accepting signups for 2 more days. All freshmen will remain home that day, with interactive asynchronous lessons to work on. Seniors who are not taking the SAT do not need to come to school and will not be assigned anything. But better safe than sorry – please call the attendance line. It will also be an early release day.

Tomorrow is the Activities Fair – it has never been done for the whole school, but 2 whole classes hadn't yet experienced it. It will take place during Return – students will stay with their 4th period class and attend the fair. It will take place in the cafeteria and outside in back.

V. Faculty Report

A new faculty liaison has yet to be assigned. Mr. Buckley expressed thanks on behalf of the faculty for the support shown so far. Mr. Hood noted that we were one of few schools to do an in-person BTSN, so having dinner provided that night was a huge help.

VI. Student Government Report – Luke Kurcina

Beth Eachus reported for Luke that Homecoming will take place October 4-9. The theme is “Highway to Homecoming,” representing the journey leading up to the homecoming dance. There will be spirit days that week. Friday, October 9 will be an early release day because of the parade in Vienna and the football game. The dance will be held in 2 tents outside at school on Saturday from 8-11pm.

VII. President’s Report – Beth Eachus

Beth thanked the hospitality chairs – there is great appreciation from the staff for all they do. Thanks to everyone who has supported the pantry and outreach efforts.

VIII. Treasurer’s Report – Janine Bruhn

Janine provided the following report for the period August 1-30:

The treasurer position has transitioned from Tarah Weaver to Janine Bruhn. The financial review (previously called the audit) of the 2020-2021 year is nearly complete and will be presented at the October meeting. Members of the Financial Review Committee were Katy Elkowitz, Becky Kong, and Janine Bruhn. Minor record collection and reconciliation documentation is needed to finalize the report.

Summary of monthly income and expenses:

As of 30 August 2021		
	Income	2021-2022 Budget
Membership Fees net (Membership is at 285 as of Aug 30)	\$5,295	\$7,700
PTA donations	\$6,915	\$7,500
Academic boosters	\$670	\$2,000
Practice exams	-	\$5,000
MISC - Teacher appreciation	\$275	\$100
Food Pantry	\$1,160	-
2021-2022 Income as of August 30	\$14,315	\$22,300

Monthly expenses will be addressed in the Treasurer’s report beginning in October. Beth Eachus then presented the 2021-2022 budget highlights, including: Spending was low last year but will begin to pick up now. The PTSA will cover more teacher conferences and training this year. When doing staff appreciation events, the costs are higher not only because there are more staff members but because individual/boxed items cost more than buffets.

Andrea Kramer moved to approve the budget as presented. Becky Kong seconded the motion, and the motion to approve the budget as presented was passed.

IX. Committee Reports

All Night Grad – Sarah Español reported that we are hoping and planning for ANG to happen, hopefully at the Vienna Community Center. We can have old traditions and still reboot and try new things. Let her know if you want to help on the committee.

Membership – Robyn Nguyen reported that the PTSA has 352 members as of yesterday (September 13).

Staff Appreciation – Angela Gutenson reported that she and Dara Dirth are working on ideas for the fall and winter. Many people have volunteered and help is always needed and welcome.

Parent Programs – Gayle Schlueter announced that the first parent program of the year will take place on Thursday, October 21 in person in the auditorium. Brock Jolly will present on college financial aid. She is also planning other programs, including a popular program on kids and resilience. And she is looking at another program about helping your child pick the right college for them. If you have any ideas, please let her know. She also noted that some programs will be virtual.

Academic Boosters – Beth Eachus reported for Abby Shannon that many mock testing opportunities are coming up (mock ACT on September 25 and October 23, mock SAT on October 2). These provide great experience and are also a fundraiser for the PTSA. These have been online but we are looking at in-person tests as well.

JMHS Pantry and Outreach – Beth Eachus pointed out that we are not only helping families but also providing skill-building opportunities to students who help with jobs such as packing.

Directory – Beth Eachus announced that Alene Metcalf will run the online directory again. It will be available to PTSA members after the opt-out period ends, likely in mid-October.

Mad Memos – Shelly Koshuta announced that her tenure will be ending after this year and she is looking for a replacement to take over. She utilizes MailChimp, which she noted is very easy to use. She is willing to train someone, so please let her know if you are interested.

Choir – Pascale Centola announced that performance dates are on the choir website. October 20 is Mad Music Day. 11 seniors are auditioning for Honors Choir. Sarah Lundquist reported that the choirs are getting new uniforms for which they can choose pieces best suited to them.

Drama – Pascale Centola announced that the fall play, *Almost, Maine*, will be produced November 11-13. There are many ways to get involved: monthly meetings, Thespian Honor Society, and auditions for the spring musical (*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*) will be held in early December.

Band – Heather Ireland reported that September 25 will be the band's first competition at Herndon HS, as things get back to a more typical schedule.

Orchestra – Sonya Marsden reported that the members just auditioned for chairs and are very happy to be playing. Boys are no longer required to wear tuxedo jackets.

X. New Business

Mr. Hood announced that they are looking to fill the following positions: 1) Spanish-speaking family liaison and 2) classroom monitors. The latter is needed not to perform the same function as spring 2021 but because there aren't many subs so they would be used to cover classes if necessary. They might also help with office work duties at other times.

XI. Old Business

As there was no old business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.