

**Minutes of the James Madison High School PTSA
Tuesday, November 9, 2021**

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

In attendance: Greg Hood, Timothy Buckley, Elizabeth Dean; Abby Shannon, Andrea Kramer, Angela Gutenson, Becky Kong, Beth Eachus, Christine Nell, Dara Dirth, Eliza Morss, Elizabeth Terry-Humen, Gayle Schlueter, Gwen Riddle, Heather Ireland, Heba Singer, Irina Smirnoff, Janine Bruhn, Jennifer O'Beirne, Pascale Centola, Rene Newman, Rita Monner, Robyn Nguyen, Sarah Español, Sarah Lundquist, Shelly Koshuta, Sonya Marsden, Urvi Desai

I. Call to Order and Welcome – Beth Eachus

Beth welcomed all to the meeting.

II. Approval of October PTSA Meeting Minutes – Sarah Lundquist

Sarah announced that the minutes from the October meeting had been posted to the PTSA website for the last few weeks. Andrea Kramer moved to approve the minutes. Gayle Schlueter seconded the motion, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

III. Principal's Report – Principal Greg Hood

Mr. Hood gave the following updates, assisted by Instructional Coach Dr. Elizabeth Dean:

Grading: Mr. Hood gave a high-level view to address questions surrounding grading this year. One shift is a focus on skills-based assessments, and application of knowledge is paramount. The days of the bell curve are gone and we are not merely sorting students anymore – focus is on all students doing well. It is now hard to find good jobs with only a high school diploma so college is the path most students need to take. Using knowledge is more important than just gaining knowledge. Dr. Dean said they wanted to look from the student perspective and held “empathy interviews” to better understand. She noted that COVID exacerbated what already wasn't working. Studies show that students under excessive pressure to excel (or who attend a high-achieving school such as Madison) are in the same risk category as if they are living in poverty, have a parent who is incarcerated, etc. Madison had not done well historically, within FCPS, serving ELL or economically disadvantaged students, so beginning approximately 5 years ago, focus on supporting these student populations was increased, resulting in improved grades, attendance, and graduation rates.

Almost every teacher/subject was grading on a different scale, which has been impossible for students to keep up with or understand. The administration is utilizing the book *Grading for Equity* by Joe Feldman to help implement changes. A rolling gradebook, 4.0 scale, and skills-based assessments have already been put in place in many subjects. Dr. Dean said teachers have really been trying to make changes over the last few years for the benefit of students. Mr. Hood said that the number of both D's and F's have been reduced recently while there has been an increase in A's and B's. Madison has also been helping to train other administrators and staff in FCPS on new grading policies. It is likely that an informational night at Madison will be offered to help parents further understand how grading works.

4th period: We are still making adjustments to how this is structured. There will be fewer lessons in advisory time and Warhawk Time will be increased. There will be no more return periods starting November 19. We will see how it goes and move forward from there.

IV. Student Services Report – Tim Buckley

Mr. Buckley gave the following updates:

He noted that Warhawk Time can only go in this direction (expanding) if the students use it responsibly. If that doesn't happen and students leave campus, etc., administration will have to pull it back.

SIS Parent and Student Vue will be available Saturday morning at 6:00 am for middle school and high school. He reminds parents to look at that 1st quarter grade as a snapshot in time – that is, by the time you see it, it's already outdated, 2 weeks in the past. You should look more at the student's current grade. FCPS will not send senior grades to colleges until the end of 1st semester. At that time GPAs will be readjusted, but only by a tiny increment.

The SEL screener occurred in mid- to late October, and they will receive info at the end of November. They will work within advisories to address issues. The SEL will be given 2 more times this year, and they look to see if data improves.

They are soon beginning wellness screenings. Next week the freshmen (through their PE class) will be screened for SOS (signs of suicide). Juniors will be screened in the 2nd week of December, sophomores and seniors later in the year. For this screening they will watch a video and take a quiz. If an answer is flagged, we will support those students immediately. Every year, we are able to flag students showing signs of depression.

In January we will start talking about next year's classes. We plan to use the model from last year – no general Curriculum Night. One session will be held virtually per grade level. Questions can be asked so all will benefit from hearing the answer. There will be 3 weeks where different departments can highlight their electives. Academic advising will begin in February-March. Mr. Buckley stressed the importance of having conversations about choosing appropriate levels based on this year's grades, and counselors will help to ensure this happens.

V. Faculty Report – Dr. Elizabeth Dean

Dr. Dean is the new faculty liaison. She said if anyone wants to read *Grading for Equity* to let her know, as well as contacting her with specific grading questions. She thanked the PTSA for all they have done for the faculty.

VI. Student Government Report

Beth Eachus reported from Luke Kurcina that they are working on Wellness Week, which runs December 6-10 to get students into a good frame of mind before the holidays.

The SGA food drive kicked off yesterday. The donations first stock the Madison pantry then Food for Others. Mr. Hood noted that the competition is different this year – there is a points system for different items. The drive runs until sometime before Thanksgiving.

VII. President's Report – Beth Eachus

Beth encouraged people to consider nominating a faculty member for the Outstanding Employee Awards, as the teachers have worked so hard this year. She also thanked the hospitality committee for their efforts in showing our appreciation for the staff.

The Madison Pantry helps families at risk with essential needs to help those kids feel more like part of the community. Our annual Winter clothing drive has been set up via Signup Genius and we have had a tremendous response. Please continue to watch the signup as more items will be added as needed. We worked with the Committee for Helping Others (CHO) to match students with bicycles if they need them for work or school.

VIII. Treasurer's Report – Janine Bruhn

The financial review (formerly referred to as the audit) was presented by Katy Elkowitz, who was part of the committee with Becky Kong and Janine Bruhn. They worked with a checklist provided by the Virginia PTA.

The review committee completed the review of the August 1, 2020 - July 31, 2021 Madison PTSA and All-Night Grad financial records on September 8, 2021. The Financial Review Committee found the records to be organized and complete. They thanked Tarah Weaver for her work as Treasurer during a significantly challenging time.

The following recommendations are provided to help future Board members effectively manage the recordkeeping good practices:

1. Recommend the Treasurer complete the portion of the audit checklist prior to passing the books on to the audit team/new Treasurer to be sure that the contents are complete and comprehensive.
2. Recommend that monthly reconciliation take place for both PTSA and ANG budgets. We suggest the following process be utilized beginning with the 2021-2022 year:
 - a. Monthly bank statements will be passed by the PTSA president to a 3rd party without signature authority (not the Treasurer) who will reconcile both the PTSA and ANG QuickBooks account on a monthly basis. Katy Elkowitz has volunteered to help in this capacity.
 - b. Katy will complete the reconciliation in time for the Treasurer to provide a report each month that will be added to the PTSA and ANG Treasurer's binder reflecting the reconciliation.
3. Recommend a more detailed Treasurer report be captured in the PTSA meeting minutes. We suggest the 2021-2022 Treasurer's monthly report include the summary of monthly income and expenses. This can be provided by the Treasurer to the Secretary in advance for detailed capture in the minutes.
4. Recommend the end-of-year Treasurer report be labeled with the beginning and end date as well as the date the report was generated. The team found nothing out of order with the 2020-2021 budget plan vs. actual.
5. Recommend the 2021-2022 Treasurer complete forms ("request for disbursement of funds" or "transfer of funds") for all checks and deposits (vs. using an email as the record).

If anyone would like to review this document in greater depth they can contact Janine at treasurer@jmhsptsa.org.

Sonya Marsen made a motion to accept the financial review as presented. Gayle Schlueter seconded the motion, and the motion to approve the financial review as presented was passed.

Janine provided the following report for the period October 1-31:

- 2020-2021 financial review: The review has been completed and will be presented to the membership for approval at the November 9th meeting.
 - Once approved, the report will be submitted to the Virginia PTA prior to the due date of November 15, 2021.
- The 2nd payment of membership dues will be paid to the Virginia PTA this month.
 - On or before December 1st we will send payment for an additional 44 members (total 516) at \$165. (It was noted in a later report that 1 new membership had just come in, bringing the actual total to 517.)
- The PTSA taxes have been completed with the accountant Turner, Leins & Gold LLC.
 - The tax records will be submitted to the Virginia PTA prior to the November 15th deadline.
- Virginia PTA compliance actions/submissions completed in October:
 - Monthly membership dues
 - Bylaws and organizational structure
 - Insurance declaration

Financial status through October 2021:

- PTSA revenues through October are \$21,194. The PTSA account has had expenses of \$4,488 to date.
- ANG income in October is \$669 for a total of \$2,644 to date.

Monthly income and expenses – this report reflects October activity:

	Oct 2021	Total
Income		
200 Membership and donations, net	\$0	\$0
210 Membership and donation revenues, gross	\$0	\$0
211 Donations - general	\$1,120	\$11,485
213 Membership dues	\$872	\$8,725
Total 210 Membership and donation revenues, gross	\$1,992	\$20,210
Total 200 Membership and donations, net	\$1,992	\$20,210
300 Academic booster revenues, net	\$0	\$0
310 Donations - academic boosters	\$200	\$2,431
311 Practice Exam expenses	\$0	\$323
Total 300 Academic booster revenues, net	\$200	\$2,754
380 Food Bank Donations	\$0	\$688
Total Income	\$2,192	\$23,653
Cost of Goods Sold		
250 Costs of Membership	\$0	\$0
251 Cost of directories	\$800	\$800
252 National, State, and County Dues	\$1,770	\$1,770
Total 250 Costs of Membership	\$2,570	\$2,570
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$2,570	\$2,570
Gross Profit	-\$378	\$21,083
Expenses		
600 Student and Parent Support	\$0	\$0
610 Food Bank	\$277	\$371
Total 600 Student and Parent Support	\$277	\$371
700 Community and Hospitality	\$0	\$0
702 Hospitality committee expenses	\$0	\$3,102
Total 700 Community and Hospitality	\$0	\$3,102
800 Administration	\$0	\$0
801 Insurance	\$0	\$343
803 Website and On-line accounting fees	\$214	\$243
Total 800 Administration	\$214	\$586
Total Expenses	\$491	\$4,059
Net Operating Income	-\$868	\$17,023
Net Income	-\$868	\$17,023

IX. Committee Reports

Membership – Robyn Nguyen reported that the PTSA has 516 members as of today. (Beth Eachus then brought forth 1 new membership.)

Staff and Teacher Appreciation – Angela Gutenson reported that at the end of October – to mark the end of the quarter – the teachers enjoyed a smoothie surprise. Thankful Thursday started at the beginning of November. This is a (donated) gift card raffle each week through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. Dara Dirth added that there is some sort of event every month through the school year. There will be a Fall Treats day, with donated goods, on November 19. In December, the committee will provide a grab-and-go breakfast.

Choir – Pascale Centola reported that the choir and orchestra are going to the Kennedy Center this Friday. Four seniors made Virginia Senior Honors Choir. The pie fundraiser was successful and pie pickup will occur on November 16. District choir auditions are due November 15. The Snowman in Concert will be held December 11 at 10:30 am. December 15 is the Winter choir concert.

Drama – Pascale Centola reported that *Almost, Maine* runs this week. On November 17 there will be a student interest meeting for both the February One Acts and the spring musical. Auditions for the One Acts will be held December 1-3 and auditions for the musical will be held December 7-11.

Orchestra – Sonya Marsden echoed much of the choir report, highlighting pie pickup and The Snowman in Concert. There will be a Dining for Dollars event on November 16 at Panera to benefit the orchestra. Senior regionals are coming up. The Winter orchestra concert will be held December 7.

Band – Heather Ireland reported that the marching band won 1st place at the state championship. This is the 3rd consecutive win. They are selling White House ornaments; for more information, contact Heather. Registration is now open for the Turkey Trot on November 21 to benefit the band and the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department. The band will hold their Tiny Tots concert on December 2-3 and are hopeful for a good turnout from the Madison community because performances will be only in the evening – there will be no daytime performances this year. December 14 is the Winter band concert.

Academic Boosters – Beth Eachus reported that she will work with Abby Shannon to target dates in December for an Academic Awards assembly. The letters earned 2 years ago are available and will be distributed, even if kids are no longer connected to JMHS. There are no impending mock tests currently but they will be scheduled for the first part of next year.

JMHS Pantry and Outreach – Beth Eachus reported that there will be a Giving Day on November 20, and in addition to other items previously mentioned, there is a great demand for hygiene items and cleaning supplies.

Parent Programs – Gayle Schlueter reported that on December 6 there will be a virtual program with Rachel Bailey. The topic will be reducing parent stress and anxiety. Gayle hopes to have 2022 dates set by next month.

Directory – Beth Eachus reported for Alene Metcalf that all should have access to the directory now. This year it is available to all parents, regardless of PTSA membership status.

All Night Grad – Sarah Español reported that ANG money is coming in, and they will start writing checks to get entertainment scheduled. The committee is busy planning, and they need to get kids excited to buy tickets.

X. New Business

Eliza Morss announced that the Fairfax County Council PTA (FCCPTA) is looking for an ambassador to be a liaison for Madison and its feeder schools. They want one for every pyramid to help disseminate information and foster closer connections between FCCPTA and the local PTAs. Eliza made flyers available – contact Erin Anderson, FCCPTA's Ambassador Chair, at ambassadorschair@fccpta.org if you are interested.

Athletic Boosters – Mr. Hood noted that we currently have 4 district champion teams: football, golf, field hockey, and girls' cross country. It was noted that on Friday night there will be a parking conflict with both football and the play coinciding. Mr. Hood will investigate whether we can get extra police assistance for exiting cars.

Beth Eachus thanked Shelly Koshuta for her work on Mad Memos and it was announced that Elizabeth Humen-Terry will be taking over production.

XI. Old Business

As there was no old business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.