

**Minutes of the James Madison High School PTSA
Tuesday, March 14, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

In attendance:

Ashley Anderson, Liz Calvert, Missy Walsh; Pascale Centrola, Cindy Chang, Beth Eachus, Sarah Español, Jennifer Hallworth, Jasmine Huang, Andrea Kramer, Melanie Meren, Regan Morgan, Eliza Morss, Ginger Piercy, Gayle Schlueter, Abby Shannon, Heba Singer, Dana Stewart, Chris Torregrossa.

I. Call to Order and Welcome – Beth Eachus

Beth welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Melanie Meren, Fairfax County School Board

Ms. Meren shared the process of developing FCPS' budget: the School Board's role is to approve a budget based on what Superintendent Reid proposes, which is then evaluated by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, which makes the ultimate school budget decision. There is a small budget shortfall this year. Melanie sees Sup. Reid taking into proper account input from community regarding priorities, programs, local needs: more teachers in classroom, arts education, connecting education to job needs, etc. Strategic planning for the future is occurring in tandem with budget planning.

Ms. Meren highlighted the local election calendar; elections are upcoming locally in April, May, June, not just November. She encouraged all to vote; election results have direct impact on schools.

III. Approval of February 15 PTSA Meeting Minutes – Beth Eachus

Beth announced that the Minutes of the February 15, 2023 meeting had been posted on the PTSA website.

Andrea Kramer moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Chris Torregrossa seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion passed to approve the February 15, 2023 meeting Minutes.

IV. Principal's Report – Liz Calvert

Thank Yous

- Bundlets for *Madison Stars* Staff Appreciation event were a huge hit.
- *New Hampshire Learning Initiative (NHLI) Training*: Anita Hartley and Mike Rath are attending training about grading and assessment; greatly appreciate PTSA's funding of the training program; looking forward to sharing learning with Madison staff.

Principal Chat (February 24): Topic of first Principal Chat was the incoming grading system, and Ms. Calvert learned that many parents are concerned about grading practices implemented this school year as well as in 2023-24. Ms. Calvert encouraged parents to contact teachers regarding specifics of this year's grading. Ms. Calvert is planning community focus groups about grading practices and how the message is coming across to the community. It is important to have community feedback in order for the administration to know precisely what parents and students are getting from the messaging.

The topic of the next Principal Chat (March 31) will be "Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs".

Grading System Plans, 2023-24: Working with *NHLI* and others regarding skills-based competency grading; experts will come in May to discuss skills assessment design, SA testing results and providing SA testing feedback. Creating high quality assessments will result in the most informative feedback.

SXSW EDU Conference (March 4-7): Ms. Calvert and other Madison pyramid principals attended; heard about current research concerning student assessment; was an excellent opportunity to learn all topics around student assessment (achievement, needs, etc.) and that our educators' concerns are being discussed nationwide

Progress Reports: Each class teacher will email a progress report, including how the teacher will calculate final grades.

Other Events at School

- Sports and Performing Arts: campus is very busy; many events for the community to attend at this time of year
 - Congratulations to Girls' Basketball and Coach Kirsten Stone for winning the State Championship!
- For fun during "March Madness," every advisory team has been assigned a basketball team
- ONE campaign: Community can buy ONE swag at JMHS; nice to see the logo all around Vienna.

Library Request for PTSA Funding: Librarians would like hold party at end-of-year to celebrate reading and for students who regularly use the library; Library no longer collects overdue fees so needs funding to support this event.

Later in the meeting Chris Torregrossa motioned that the PTSA provide \$300 to JMHS Library to fund the end-of-year event. Gayle Schlueter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

New Student Recognition Awards in 2023-24

Later in the meeting, Ms. Calvert stated she has charged Clare Rowan to research how Madison could recognize students in 2023-24 with awards that celebrate positive qualities (kindness, etc.) that are not based on academic achievement.

V. Student Services Report – Ashley Anderson (for Tim Buckley)

Thank You: Ms. Anderson, who is a counselor, thanked the PTSA on behalf of the counseling staff for the thoughtful staff appreciation events.

Academic Advising:

- March 13: End of advising for 2023-24 course selection.
- Next year's classes will be very tight; students with second thoughts about course choice must request changes ASAP.
- March 17: Deadline for students to put in requests for classes which do not already have wait lists.
- March 20: College Planning Night for Juniors
- March 29: During 2nd & 4th periods, juniors will attend 3 sessions that focus on colleges and college application information; students were asked to identify 3 preferred sessions.
- Families seeking to transfer their student from private school to Madison should register their student ASAP.

Alcohol and Drug Education: Fairfax County is requiring all students give a presentation about alcohol and drugs; the more students are informed about alcohol and drugs, the less likely they will be to use.

VI. Zero Hunger/Zero Waste – Jasmine Huang

Jasmine is a member of the Kroger National Youth Advisory Council and received \$500 grant from Kroger which she is using to partner with PTSA to promote National Zero Waste Day on April 8. The grant is being used to create a website to promote the effort. Jasmine is holding a meeting at *Trace* in Vienna on March 15 to promote the cause.

VII. Faculty Report – Missy Walsh

Thank you for furnishing the new Teachers' Lounge. Faculty are using it regularly to work, collaborate and relax.

VIII. Student Government Report – Beth Eachus (for SGA representatives)

The SGA is currently holding elections for 2023-24.

JMHS Prom:

- 8 -11 p.m. April 15, State Theatre, Falls Church
- Theme: "The Great Gatsby"
- Tickets are \$50 and go on sale April 10.
- 2024 Prom date: April 27, 2024 at State Theatre, Falls Church

IX. President's Report – Beth Eachus

Special Education Grant: The convection oven that PTSA funded to support Work Awareness Transition (WAT) is being well used by the WAT students who are baking muffins and donating them to local shelters. Their muffins have also been donated to Madison Staff Appreciation events.

The students have started a hydroponic garden and will have a booth at the Ayr Hill Garden Club to sell the herbs they grow.

Baccalaureate Ceremony: June 5, time TBD, Vienna Presbyterian Church. This event is a PTSA tradition. The night before graduation, JMHS seniors and their families gather to hear the reflections of faith-based leaders. Madison music groups also perform. The PTSA is seeking volunteers to help coordinate the event.

X. Treasurer's Report – Beth Eachus (for Janine Bruhn)

The Treasurer's Report will be posted separately on the PTSA's website. The PTSA remains very healthy financially.

XI. Committee Reports

JMHS Food Pantry and Outreach – Beth Eachus

- Distribution Change: Instead of the weekly bags of food going home with students to families-in-need, this month the Pantry switched to a system in which parents come biweekly to pick up food and meet with a counselor to determine if there are other needs. This system works much better for families.
- Giving Day: Saturday TBD in April. Needs for the Pantry shelves are food, hygiene items, menstrual products, cleaning supplies. An email will go out to the community soon to announce the Giving Day.

- **Student Engagement:** Madison students are welcome to help; will be assigned tasks that preserve the privacy of families-in-need. Spanish Club students have been particularly involved. Krista Cunningham is the liaison for students who access the Pantry.

Staff & Teacher Appreciation – Beth Eachus

Recent and Upcoming Staff and Teacher Appreciation Events:

- **March:** *Stars of Madison*, red carpet event with *Bundtlet* cakes from *Nothing Bundt Cakes*
- **April:** *Anita's* burrito breakfast
- **May:** lunch from *Potbelly*
- **June 7:** *Crumb!* cookies on (the morning after graduation)
- **June 16:** last-day-of-school celebration with lunch from the *Sandwich Shop*

Membership – Beth Eachus (for Robyn Nguyen)

There are no new memberships to report, but PTSA membership numbers are healthy.

Academic Boosters – Abby Shannon

- **Mock Testing**
 - PTSA made \$612 from recent Mock test
 - April: planning for Mock SAT, date TBD
- **Academic Awards:** Close to finishing up the distribution of recognition items (pins, etc.)

Student Directory – Eliza Morss (for Sarah Lundquist)

Many thanks to Sarah Lundquist who worked with *Membership Toolkit* to get the Student Directory up-and-running. The Directory has been available for families to access since February. A family's initial listing contains only parent/guardian name(s), email(s) and student name(s) and grade(s). Families are encouraged to update their Directory listing. To do so, they must log in to verify their account and then update the information they wish to be visible to other Directory users.

Families that chose to Opt-Out do not have Directory listings.

Membership Toolkit does not track how many times the Directory is used, but it does track how many family accounts have been updated.

Parent Programs – Gayle Schlueter

- **Parent Coffee** (March 8): Topic was summer plans; had good-sized group discussing camp, volunteering and work ideas for students as well as preparation for college admissions. Gayle thanked Chris Torregrossa for the topic.
- **Rachel Bailey** (March 28 – virtual): The topic will be “Resilience”; a Zoom link for attending the presentation will be sent soon.
- **Dr. Jed Applerouth** (April): This presentation will be a college-related topic. Suggestions for topics are welcome.

All Night Grad (ANG) – Jennifer Hallworth

Tickets sales are rising; 2023 lawn signs are still available for sale. To encourage ticket sales, ANG held a raffle for a big TV for all current ticket holders; the winner was very excited.

This year and going forward, the theme for ANG will be “Warhawk Wrap,” as in “wrapping” a movie, with movie premiere-themed décor that will be used year-after-year.

Athletics – Liz Calvert, Beth Eachus, Sarah Español, Melanie Meren, others

- Congratulations to the Girls' Basketball Team and Coach Kirsten Stone for winning the State Championship!
- Article in March 14 Washington Post mentioned Madison Softball
- Boys in the county are advocating for the addition of high school-level Boys' volleyball; proposal has to go through multi-stage approval process
- Madison's Special Olympics basketball team will be playing in tournament at Marshall HS on March 17; game at 7 PM.

MAD Drama – Eliza Morss (for Sarah Lundquist)

On March 25, *Mamma Mia!* Broadway star Coco Cohn will conduct a musical theatre workshop for MAD Drama's *Mamma Mia!* cast and crew.

MAD Drama presents *Mamma Mia!*

- Thursday, April 27, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, April 29 at 2:00 p.m. (new matinée time) and 7:30 p.m.

Marching Band – Andrea Kramer

- State Assessments: March 17 & 18 at Langley HS. The performances are free, and the bands benefit from an audience.
- Jazz Band: Concert at Madison on March 24. The performance will include guest musicians; admission is free.
- Winter Guard: competing at South County HS on March 25; State Championships are April 1-2 in Hampton Roads area.

Choir and Orchestra – Beth Eachus

Both groups

- Recently had State Assessment performances
- Will go to Disney on March 14 for 5-day trip

The Choir

- hosted Carthage College Choir, March 13-14
- had 4 students chosen for the All-State Choir; several are Alternates
- May 31: Choir Pops Concert

XII. New Business

There was no new business.

XIII. Old Business

There was no old business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.