



South Middle School PTA

PTA General Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2021

I. 7:00 PM: Call to Order: Julie Carlucci

- A. Welcome & Introductions

- B. Attendance: Julie Carlucci, Lauren Rogers, Ann Williams, Donna Ekl, Amy Ashcraft, Dr. Jim Morrison, Catherine Olson, Kim Thoma, Janet Iacovelli, Sheri Rosen, Steve Perkins, Fred Nickl, Jenny Skidmore

II. 7:10 PM: Administrative Reports

- A. Secretary's Report: Amy Ashcraft
 - 1. Action Item: Move to approve meeting minutes from November 2020 meeting. Motion passed.
 - 2. Correspondence: Verbal thank yous from teachers for treats.

- B. Treasurer's Report: Donna Ekl
 - 1. Monthly Report: December 2020
 - a) Checking account balance:
 - (1) End: \$2635.06
 - (a) Deposits:
 - (i) Yearbooks: \$3853.28
 - (ii) Membership: \$324.45
 - (b) Checks:
 - (i) Membership refund \$46
 - (ii) Cultural arts: BMX \$475 in January
 - (iii)

- (c) Outstanding:
 - (i) Spirit Wear: \$780.81
- b) Savings account balance:
 - (1) End: \$21,437.99

C. Vice President's Report: Lauren Rogers

- 1. Nothing to report.

D. Principal's Report: Dr Jim Morrison

- 1. Thank you for the food to restock the pantry. The staff really enjoy it!
- 2. Starting full in-person/full remote this Thursday.
 - a) We are finalizing desks in classrooms.
 - b) Look in the Cardinal Corner to see student numbers in each classroom
 - (1) 16 students in a classroom results in less than 6 ft distance between students.
 - (2) We are trying to spread students out, but the greater number of students in a classroom will affect the amount of close contacts. We are keeping close track of what students are next to each other, and trying to prevent kids from moving seats.
 - (3) $\frac{1}{2}$ of the classrooms have greater than 16 students.
 - (4) Question: Did families change their minds once they saw the student numbers per classroom? A: Not really, over 60 families making changes, but in both directions (in-person and remote).
 - (5) Students will not be locking lockers, and will only be using them to place their coats and boots. This does seem to be working, and has reduced congestion in the hallways. There is not much control over distancing in hallways.
 - c) We have a new lunch system.
 - (1) Each day students can request lunch.
 - (2) Refer to the menu on Cardinal Corner.

- (3) Students can go into Schoology, put a request in for lunch, and lunch will be available.
- (4) Lunch is free for everyone! Today about 20 people took advantage of it.
- d) End of the quarter is Friday, Jan 22.
 - (1) Try to get last minute assignments in.
 - (2) Verify grades in Schoology before report cards.
 - (3) Contact teachers with questions.
- e) Conferences on Feb 11 & 12.
 - (1) Teachers will send invitations to certain students for Spring Conferences.
 - (2) Teachers by teams will pull in parents/kids. If you would like a conference, call your teachers.
- f) We are in the process of 5th to 6th grade transition.
- g) Graduation gowns just came in.
 - (1) Graduation pictures are April 5 & 6.
 - (2) There will be no sharing of gowns this year.
 - (3) We will figure out a way to get kids their gowns ahead of time.
 - (4) We may have all remote kids come Monday April 5 to get pictures taken.
- h) 8th Grade Graduation:
 - (1) Trying to figure out the best way to do an in-person graduation ceremony.
 - (a) Possibly an outdoor event: Possibly include stands, video monitors, people lining up in the parking lot with kids, tuning to an FM station, running through graduation live, kids getting out of cars and receiving diplomas.
 - (2) We don't want to wait to make plans and then get stuck trying to plan graduation last minute. To get this graduation process set up, we need to get it started now. We are working with Thomas to develop this process, and more information will come.

- i) Feb 16 & 17. Pictures for all students.
 - (1) Some remote parents want kids to come in, and we will work with them to schedule. Parents can also take a picture of their child with a camera, then send the picture in.
 - (2) Question: Will there be a picture retake day? No, not yet. All schools trying to get dates scheduled.
 - j) Honoring kids this week with Cards Awards.
 - (1) Caring, Accepting, Responsible, Dedicated, Service.
 - (2) Each team selects one child to represent each trait.
 - (3) There is a wall against the library that each child signs, and they also will receive a t-shirt & certificate. We are trying to keep traditions as much as possible.
3. Additional reports from Associate Principals Sheri Rosen and Steve Perkins
- a) CARDS: Including both remote and in-person learnersm, which creates a longer process.
 - b) Assessments:
 - (1) Fastbridge Winter assessment.
 - (a) Students who fall 25% and below in Fall Winter MAP will take this assessment.
 - (2) No winter MAP, but will be in Spring.
 - (a) We are doing process monitoring, for those in the 25th percentile and below, Special Education students, and interventions.
 - c) Cultural Arts:
 - (1) Matt, BMX: He focuses on bullying prevention, resilience, and a growth mindset.
 - (a) March 19, Friday before spring break.
 - (b) Will be virtual, but will be live.
 - (c) Matt has ways to make it interactive.
 - (2) Also working on having Mr. Nicki.
 - (a) Virtual assembly for 6th graders.

- (3) Hoping for another all school assembly in 4th quarter - not finalized.
 - (4) Question: Can 7th graders be included in Mr. Nicki, since they missed it last year? A: Will talk to 7th grade to see if they can be included. PTA can help facilitate if needed. We might utilize a different day or use a recording. We haven't finalized it yet.
 - (5) Question: About the all school assembly. Could be do something about Holocaust for 8th grade? A: Nothing finalized yet, and we're in early talks with 8th grade teachers.
 - (6) Question: Possibly something to replace field trips? TAFT replacement. A: We are in the beginning stages of the investigation. For PTA, if you are hearing of other school's ideas, please share. Understand that 7th grade has lost a lot of opportunities.
4. Teacher Liaison Report: Janet Iacovelli
- a) Teachers working on the end of the quarter.
 - b) It is very exciting to have the students coming back on Thursday.
 - c) Thank you to all of the parents who have been substituting. It has made a great difference.
- E. President's Report: Julie Carlucci
- 1. Everything in is flux, and we are trying to think of 'out of the box' ideas.
 - 2. We are keeping an open mind, and maybe there will be more options now that more students are in.
 - 3. We may need more volunteers to support upcoming activities.
 - a) Parent volunteers should always check in with staff to understand rules when in the building.
 - 4. Activity nights on hold.
 - 5. Cultural Arts: We could use more help.

III. 7:25 PM: Committee Reports

A. ABC/25 Liaisons: **OPEN**

B. Activity Nights:

1. 6th Grade: Lynn Repak - No report.
2. 7th Grade: Holly Connors - No report.
3. 8th Grade Dance: Mary Zei, **OPEN** - No report.

C. Cultural Arts: Sheri Rosen (Admin), **OPEN (2) - See Assistant Principal's section**

D. DirectorySpot : Ann Williams - No report

E. High School Liaisons:

1. Prospect: Jen Strimling - No report.
2. RM: Catherine Olson
 - a) $\frac{1}{3}$ of D214 started back 5 days-a-week this week.
 - b) Students have had transitional things such as selections for next year
 - (1) No placement tests for D214 this year. Some teachers have given parent's input. Parents did a survey, and teachers will give parents more guidance on where students will be placed.
 - (a) Teachers will work directly with schools. They do not necessarily share with parents.
 - (b) Janet: We will meet with the HS, and they ask specific questions about specific students when unsure of placement. It's not up to teachers for placement - we give input. HS is working more with parents this year than in the past. We did survey students and asked them where they would like to be placed. Ultimately the placement will be up to parents.

(c) Jim: Parents have input and the HS is reaching out to parents. HS still receiving data from middle schools, and asking about certain kids.

F. Hospitality/Teacher Appreciation: Kim Thoma, Ann Williams

1. Ann: We are looking at utilizing a food truck option for Spring conferences- Buona Beef, as well as other options.
 - a) Kim: Does the count change for staff? A: No, the number is the same as the fall.
 - b) We are working with Sheri to finalize details and keep everything individualized.

G. Juvenile Protection - **OPEN**

H. Legislation: Shannon Silverman - No report.

I. LMC Coordinator: Margaret Zapata - No report.

J. Membership/Marketing: Catherine Olson

1. Not many changes this time of year
2. 561 total memberships:
 - a) 518 parent
 - b) 39 faculty
 - c) 4 community
 - d) Membership is down 30 members from last year. Total student count is down 30 kids as well.
3. We might see some memberships trickle in, but the bulk of new memberships is in Spring.

K. Publicity/Social Media - **OPEN**

L. Reflections - **OPEN**

M. Scholarship Application Reader: Julie Carlucci, **OPEN**

1. Ann/Donna: applications are out and sent to all the HS.
2. AH council of PTAs offer 2 different scholarships (\$9000):
 - a) Students have had to have been in D25 schools for at least 3 years to apply.
 - b) Traditionally there is a breakfast in May, but will not be doing that this year.
 - c) Please promote this scholarship within D25, so parents understand what the scholarship is.
 - d) We are hoping this information gets posted on D25 website/
3. Donna: April 30, Zoom scholarship winners and families presentation:
 - a) Awards will be presented.
 - b) A link will be available to the public.
 - c) Nominated teachers will also be able to be on Zoom call (from winners), and the presentation will be more interactive than the video from last year.
 - d) We need one more reader: Ann and Donna provide a packet, and the reader will fill out the survey grid.

N. Spirit wear: Kim Siergey-Thoma, Kristin Warnstedt

1. We have \$180 more than last year at this same time.
2. The Spring catalog is due in 2 weeks (mid Feb).
 - a) We are trying to add more items because there will be no live sale from 6th grade orientation.
 - (1) 6th grade orientation will probably be Zoom. Spirit wear can have a representative or slide to present.
 - (2) Kim needs 5th grade PTA info: Jim to send a link to elementary school principals.
3. Thanks to Kim for all of her work.

O. Student Pictures: Lauren Rogers - No report

1. Feb 16 & 17 during PE (in person students).
2. Remote students can come in at specific times (Lauren will work with Kathy H to set up) or send in a picture.

3. Will we send out a request for 2 - 3 helpers, if needed.
4. Make-up pictures will be in March.
5. Graduation pics: April 5 & 6
 - a) Parent suggestion: Can kids wear their own gowns? Can we share that information? Just came in today, and Jim will put in Cardinal Corner. He is still working on finalizing details, but will most likely put it in next Cardinal Corner.
 - b) Questions: Are we considering signs like last year? Julie thinks we can consider it, if there is consensus.
 - (1) We were waiting to see what staff was planning for 8th grade before making a decision. We can move forward, just need to make a motion. We'd like to get signs out earlier than last year.
 - (2) The signs were lots of work last year, and we'll need more volunteers or a new process.
 - (a) Nicole Escobedo designed last year - maybe she can design again but different?
 - (b) People were ordering from a sign vendor and PTA felt the push to get out earlier.
 - (c) Will staff help to deliver again? Or, we can give to students to assemble themselves. Maybe ask the 8th grade dance volunteers to help?
 - (d) Janet: A lot of teachers loved delivering the signs last year.
 - (i) When could Jim find the time for teachers to do this?
 - (ii) What about Mondays?
6. 8th grade event: We are going to assume we can't have everyone together, so we should look at alternatives.
 - a) There will be no boat this year.
 - b) We can look at other avenues, since we don't see that we're having a dance.
 - c) Can we have a picnic at the race track? Socially distanced?

- d) Let's have a sidebar zoom and invite 8th grade parents to brainstorm ideas?

P. Sunshine: Lynn Repak / **OPEN** - No report

Q. Technology/Website Coordinator: **OPEN**

R. Volunteer Coordinator: **OPEN**

S. Yearbook: **OPEN** / Catherine Olson

- 1. PTA traditionally negotiates contract, and handles distribution and sales/
- 2. We have two new yearbook advisors, and have reached out to give them ideas. The vendor has also given input on empty pages.
- 3. We can't guarantee that the yearbook will be available at the end of the year.
- 4. PTA can help manage remote pictures.
- 5. Yearbook entries typically close at the end of March.
- 6. We should give parents guidelines on taking pictures at home.
 - a) Nicole Escobedo can change the background in the pictures from home and put in a new one?
 - b) What is the process for sending in pictures? Want to make sure that every student has a picture. Jim will coordinate with advisors and Catherine - set up zoom.
 - c) Possibly conduct student interviews and include in the yearbook?

IV. 7:57 PM: New Business

- A. Kim: We usually send cards to teachers for big events. Can we get Ms. Solis (6E) a card?
- B. Do we have a lot of new students this semester? 19 new students for the new school year, which is lower than the average. Did any new come in January? Not this month.
- C. Any celebrations at school that you would want PTA to help fund? Giveaways? Not yet, but can bring ideas to the leadership team (Jim).
 - 1. We are looking for donations for Cardinal Cash. What do you normally give out? Sports tickets, Cubs bobble heads, South spirit wear (stuff that hadn't sold), Amazon Echo dots, gift cards.
 - 2. Typical value is between \$5 - \$10.
- D. Donna: scholarship morning will be broadcast April 30

V. 8:05 PM: Adjournment

- A. Motion to Adjourn: Motion passed.

Secretary: Amy Ashcraft

Reviewed by President on:

Approved by General Membership on:

Resources:

District 25 Website: <http://www.sd25.org/>

South Middle School Website: <http://www.sd25.org/south>

South PTA Website: <https://southpta.org>

Northwest Cook Region District 37 Website: <http://www.ilpta-d37.org/>

Illinois PTA Website: <http://www.illinoispta.org>

National PTA Reflections Information: <http://www.pta.org/Reflections>