



Merryhill Midtown- Parent Teacher Student Organization

Minutes of the November 5, 2020 MMPTSO General Meeting

I. Welcome- Priya Chisholm

The meeting was called to order at 5pm. Priya stated that due to Covid 19 County Health Regulations, the meeting will take place virtually. Participants were asked to write their full name and grade level in the chat for attendance purposes. Furthermore, there was a link to a digital attendance sheet posted in the chat box to capture all attendees who filled out the form.

Present: Priya Chisolm (President), Melissa Chechourka (Vice President), Stacey Edgar (Treasurer), Jackie Simon (Secretary), and Elaine Westphal (Head of School). Other attendees listed in alphabetical order: Lauren Ceello, Amy Choe, Sarah Citrin, Tarah Gold, Yoko Mortel, Shephali Patel, Mellonie Richardson, Sam Smalls, Adriana Smith, Rosemarie Speth, Kim Tanimoto, Tamara Todd, Stacy Toledo, Katie Vavao and Dominique Williams.

II. Approval of the May Meeting Minutes- Priya Chisholm

The minutes for the October 1, 2020 meeting were approved as submitted.

III. Update from Administration- Elaine Westphal

There was no formal discussion item. However, Ms. Westphal discussed that the last few weeks have been going smoothly and students have settled into procedures. Classrooms were initially very quiet, but kids seem to be getting more comfortable as they familiarize themselves with campus. Staff is working on streamlining the asynchronous part of the day. What is working? What isn't working? Parents were encouraged to share their thoughts about how asynchronous learning is going, particularly for Second graders and younger students.

- Conferences will begin on 11/20/20 which is a good time to communicate with teachers and share how the learning is going for your family.

- Families were reminded to follow safety procedures and be ready during drop offs. EVERYONE in the car must be wearing a mask. This is a County guideline, not a Ms. Westphal guideline.
- If kids are not ready to get out of the car (masked, backpack ready, window down for temperature check), please do not get in line.
- Being ready helps keep the traffic lines moving.
- Coming early, prior to drop off or pick up time, does NOT help and clogs traffic and staff's ability to park. Coming later in the drop off period is quicker.
- OA families are encouraged to participate in conferences too.
- ❖ Parent in the chat asked "is there any sense whether we may be able to return full time given our class size?" Ms. Westphal replied that class size is not the issue in returning to full day. Social distancing requirements from the Governor and local health regulations are the deciding factors. Six feet has to be between each desk or table. The school does not have the space for the entire school to attend socially distant.
- ❖ Parent asked in the chat, "Have we considered using outdoor space?" Ms. Westphal answered that there is not enough of it to provide for the entire school. Also, with the weather changing, outdoor space is not feasible or sustainable.

IV. Event Fundraising- Melissa Chechourka

- A. Mountain Mike's Pizza- no update yet, but families reported attending.
- B. Fleet Feet- Stacy Toledo
 - a. The flyer was recently sent out. This fundraiser will run through the month of November at all local stores.
 - b. Customers need only show a digital or printed copy of the flyer.
- C. Minted- December- Priya Chisholm
 - a. Receive a 20% discount on cards
 - b. 15% donation will go to MMPTSO. Code is "fundraisemerryhill."
- D. 8th Grade Class- Jackie Simon
 - a. A history of the Spring Open House coupled with the Silent Auction and raffles being a fundraiser for the 8th grade class was explained. Due to Covid, the 2020 Spring Open House was cancelled and the back up plan to utilize the Back to School Picnic was also cancelled. We still have several auction/raffle items, but we do not know what can be used and what has expired or businesses that have closed due to Covid.

- b. Typically, this event raises between \$70-\$100 per student toward the Disneyland graduation trip. Disneyland is currently closed, so it's unknown if that will be an option in 2021.
- c. Last year, the 8th graders had money, but Disneyland was closed, so we purchased Amazon gift cards and gave them out in the 8th grade graduation parade.
- d. Fundraising needs to be done to support the kids, but typically, Merryhill does not encourage fundraising for these types of things, especially individually.
- e. See's holiday candy fundraiser is an option for individual students to raise money. This option can be completely run online without contact. Money would not be distributed evenly. Students who sell, will earn money. Jamba juice cards are another option for individual students. Jackie Simon has volunteered to coordinate the fundraisers and no money is required up front.
- f. Online auction might be an option, but more research needs to be done. There is also the possibility that if the Spring Open House is held in 2021, 8th grade reps could contribute their items to supplement the 7th grade items. 8th graders would make money from their items only, which would be shared among all students.
- g. Ms. Westphal has mixed feelings. It's hard to plan for the possibility of having an event cancelled. She does not like fundraisers because it puts more pressure on families. She believes it's "weird" to sell things to buy our own kids something.
- h. Jackie Simon explained that many kids raise money toward things that they want ie. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc. Money needs to be raised and PTSO should not be in the habit of writing a check to cover this year's 8th graders, because it sets a precedence that is not sustainable.
- i. Whether it's a gift card or an experience, there needs to be money.
- j. Melissa Chechourka reexplained the Open House revenue is shared among all students.
- k. We have just under 40 8th grade students.
- l. Stacey Edgar mentioned that we do not need to decide whether it's an event or gift card, but we do need to think about fundraising.
- m. Priya asked if parents would like to share more info to contact Jackie Simon.

V. Special Committee- Bylaw Updating- Jackie Simon

- A. Much progress has been made so far.
- B. Zoom meetings continue and all members are welcome to attend.
- C. Next meeting is November 9th at 6pm.

VI. Recent Events- Priya Chisholm

- A. Book Character Pumpkin Contest- winners were announced in the last newsletter. Congrats to the winners.
- B. Magic Show- was attended by 29 kids. A lot of great messages and fun times.
- C. Virtual Halloween Contest- Thank you to Jessica Gonzalez and Nicole Bilich. 5 winners and all 5 will receive a FREE dress pass and \$10 gift card to In-N-Out Burger. Those will be mailed on Friday.

VII. Upcoming Events- Priya Chisholm

- A. Run to Feed the Hungry is 11/26/20 and is virtual. Contact Dominique Williams for more information to join the Merryhill Midtown Team (refer to the flyer previously sent out). 27 participants so far and dogs can participate as registered runners now. Head out to Fleet Feet to get your run gear. Dominique will send an email to participants to share where Chalk marks will be around town to support the run.
- B. Trimester Teacher Appreciation- (11/13) Tarah Gold shared that Jen is helping to make it happen. Bao dumplings will be delivered for the morning.
 - a. A parent asked about the OA staff to see how they might be included. Jackie Simon explained that the entire staff list was provided to the TK Reps, but a few teachers live out of town. Reps were encouraged to coordinate.
 - b. Another parent asked about Teacher Appreciation which she thought to only be in March. Priya Chisholm explained that Trimester celebrations are done as well as in the event in the late Spring.
 - c. A parent suggested that appreciation should also go to the custodial staff.
- C. Stuffed Animal Drive- Jackie Simon and Ms. Westphal have connected about making it work. No collection boxes can be at the school. We are trying to figure out how to make it happen in December for the Sacramento Food Bank Family Services.

VIII. Online Dangers Webinar for Parents Only- Shephali Patel

- A. Ms. Patel has 2nd and 4th grade children who play games online. Recently, her daughter shared that she made a new friend online and it got her thinking that there are hidden dangers and that maybe something that can be done to support our MH families. There are 3 options she found:
- a. Webinar by “Cybersafety Cop-Total Safety Solutions” which is \$950 for a 90 minute webinar with a Q & A. There is a pre recorded option which is \$600. However, knowing now that there is a concern for how 8th graders will be celebrated, maybe this is too expensive. She did not want to cannibalize the budget.
 - b. There is an option to have Sac PD come and discuss the topic, as they have in the past, for free. She has a North Sac PD contact.
 - c. Lastly, Ms. Patel put together a worksheet with sites for hints and tips for safety online. Priya screen shared the worksheet for reference. Shephali is encouraging more edits and expertise.
 - d. She is not making a motion to spend the money for \$950 at this time. She would vote no because she would rather not spend that much money at this time.
 - e. There was open discussion, particularly around online games for MH kids. She would like her kids to play with kids from the school and maybe a Roblox directory of usernames could be compiled.
 - f. A parent discussed that you can create a “community” on the game, but you have to pay for that capability.
 - g. Another parent mentioned that the Screenagers event had a gamer on the panel who might be a possible connection. Jackie Simon referred Shephali to Ms. Dayton and Mr. Lemus, staff, that are within the school that may be able to assist.
 - h. Shephali hopes to offer something in the spring.
- ❖ Adriana Smith commented in the chat that she attended a free webinar that was put on by the local FBI that talked about the dangers of the internet. She has a child in the Elk Grove school district and the name of the session was “Internet Crimes against Children and Internet Safety.”
 - ❖ Stacy Toledo posted in the chat, “The Sac PD officer who spoke a few years ago about cyberbullying was good.”
 - ❖ Melissa Chechourka shared, “we have a few parents who are local PD who may be able to assist with contacts there.”
 - ❖ Mellonie Richardson shared that “It would be nice to have some cool gamer meet with kids directly - they may hear them differently.”

- ❖ Sarah Citrin mentioned “I could perhaps ask about this through the US Attorney's Office, if you can share again the formal name that I just missed.”
- ❖ Adriana Smith proposed an online game night for all grade levels.
- ❖ Sam Smalls mentioned that anti-virus ware has to be updated in order to stay safe.
- ❖ Sarah Citrin commented regarding the gaming aspect, “If we pursued an idea like this, I would ask that we present it in a way that doesn't introduce the idea of video games to kids who do not yet play. (We are trying to keep ours in the dark for as long as possible, and our daughter would be sad to be left out of something all her classmates were doing.)”

IX. Treasurer Report- Stacey Edgar

- A. Review of current finances- The total balance as of 9/29/20 is \$7853.96. Monthly deposits and expenses were reviewed including \$750 for the School Cents program which was mailed to the prior treasurer and a \$50 parent donation.
- B. A refund of \$400 will be issued from Challenge Success for the virtual event recently held which cost less than the original price paid last year, but postponed due to Covid.
- C. Mountain Mike’s funds and Amazon Smile payments will be coming soon.
- D. Stacey walked the group through signing up for Amazon Smile and designating MMPTSO for donations.
- E. There were no questions or discussion on the finacials.
- F. The Treasurer’s report included 2 attachments:
 - a. July 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020
 - b. 2020-21 MMPTSO Actual vs Budget

X. Resources- Priya Chisholm- Resources were reviewed as listed in the agenda.

Next meeting is on Thursday, December 3, 2020.

Meeting is adjourned at 5:59pm.

Submitted by Jackie Simon, Secretary _____