



## TJ PTSA General Membership Meeting Minutes

02/15/2024 at 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

### Attendees:

Executive Committees: President: Neelam Janardhan; First VP of Programming and Events: Laura Marschoun; Second VP of Membership and Fundraising: Julia Li; Third VP of Communications: Maggy Li; Treasurer: Seema Lohia Singh; Secretary: Sanjay Parthasarathy

Committee Chairs: Academic Support Committee (ASC) Chair: Partho Banerjee; Health and Wellness Committee (HWC) Chair: Elizabeth Das

Principal: Dr. Ann Bonitatibus

Others: Hospitality Committee (HC) Vice-Chair: Priya Dodla; Academic Support Committee (ASC) Vice-Chair: Sridhar Madduluri; SGA Activities Director: Grayson Stotz; Health and Wellness Committee (HWC) Vice-Chair Ann Payne; and other 35 attendees (not all are members). Total TJ PTSA members in attendance: 38

**Location:** Franklin Commons, TJHSST

### Agenda:

- I. Call to Order and Welcome: Nell Janardhan (5 mins)
- II. Agenda Adoption: Nell Janardhan (5 mins)
- III. Approval of 2023-11-02 GM Meeting Minutes (3 mins)
- IV. Special Presentation: Danielle Armstrong and Patricia Gertsman (25 mins)
- V. SGA Report: SGA Secretary - Grayson Stotz (10 mins)
- VI. Principal's Remarks: Dr. Ann Bonitatibus (10 mins)
- VII. Nominating Committee Election: Nell Janardhan (30 minutes)
- VIII. Treasurer's Report and Presentation: Seema Lohia Singh (10 mins)
- IX. Committee Reports (25 mins)
  - A. Academic Support Committee – Partho Banerjee/Sridhar Maddaluri
  - B. ANGP Committee – Laura Marschoun, Michele Hyde, Monica Kumar
  - C. College Outreach Committee – Radha Somanchi
  - D. Diversity Committee – Michele Hyde
  - E. Health and Wellness Committee – Elizabeth Das
  - F. Hospitality Committee – Colleen Bucher/Priya Dodla
  - G. Membership & Fundraising - Julia Li
  - H. Newsletter and Communications - Maggy Li
- X. New Business and Announcements: Nell Janardhan (5 mins)
- XI. Adjournment

### **Call Meeting to Order**

- A quorum was determined to be present and the President called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
- The President introduced the Executive Committee members
- The President reminded the assembly of the meeting rules that were sent out in advance, and highlighted a few of them:
  - GMM will use Robert's Rules.
  - Please be respectful and courteous at all times.
  - Raise your hand to request being recognized.
  - Only speak when recognized by the President.

### **Agenda Adoption**

- The proposed agenda was published on the website and notified via the weekly membership newsletter. Motion to approve the agenda was seconded, and the agenda was adopted.
- Mr. Semonsen raised his hand and asked when the appropriate time to discuss his thoughts on the Nominating Committee process is. The President proposed that he can bring his thoughts/ideas during the Nominating Committee election portion of the agenda if time permits.

### **Approval of 2023-11-02 GM Meeting Minutes**

- The 2023-11-02 GMM draft Minutes were available on the TJ PTSA website, and notifications of the minutes were sent via newsletter posts and dedicated email.
- The President solicited comments/corrections to the minutes. There were no comments or corrections to the 2023-09-14 TJ PTSA GM Meeting Minutes; and the minutes were approved as presented.

### **Special Presentation: Danielle Armstrong and Patricia Gertsman**

- The President introduced Danielle Armstrong (Social Worker) and Patricia Gertsman (school psychologist), and Lee-Lin Finkbeiner (Family Liaison).
- Danielle and Patricia presented their survey results on 3 questions asked to students:
  - What do you wish your parents knew?
  - What do you need from your parents?
  - What question do you have for your parents?
- Some surprise at the number of respondents (40), perhaps from survey-fatigue (almost every 2 weeks)
- One member commented that many videos were rolled out but not personalized, and may lose interest in the 'tidal wave of online stuff'.
- To access student services, students should start with the counselors who know how to triage, and have all the information needed to guide next steps. Danielle and Tricia also attend 8<sup>th</sup> period and are available as needed (open-door policy)
- Danielle and Patricia suggested parents use the survey data as a conversation starter, and revisit their tone and availability to the students. For students internally driven, ask students if there are alternative ways to approach the problem. When not sure what to answer, validate the student's feeling and emotion!
- Dr. Bonitatibus suggested the 'why strategy' - to get to the crux of what is driving a behavior/perception
- The PPT slides will be shared with the PTSA members,
- One parent commented that the survey comments are very typical of how kids think and it is good for kids to see others feel the same way.
- 2 parent support workshops are planned: 'Body doubling' on 3/15 to improve executive functioning, and 'It's different now' on 4/15

### **SGA Report - Grayson Stotz**

- Student Government Association (SGA) had a successful Winter Bash (1/5) with Gingerbread Contest, Karaoke, Movie, etc. and Valentine Gram (2/12) with Valentine's packages containing lollipops, chocolate, and a handwritten note by SGA were delivered to students.
- They are currently preparing for the upcoming TJ's Got Talent (2/25) with over 20 submissions. This year the event will be free but SGA will be selling concessions.
- Later in the year, SGA will be planning the annual J-Day (Jefferson Day). They are polling the students for an overall theme and each class plus SGA plus Staff will have a sub-theme. They will send registration form for students clubs wanting to participate
- Active involvement of the Mental Health Coalition (MHC), Human Relations Committee (HRC) and Student Advisory Council (SAC) were appreciated

### **Principal Remarks - Dr. Ann Bonitatibus**

- The Principal – Dr. Bonitatibus – thanked the PTSA for the treats on Valentine's day, and for the parent sweet donations, volunteers who helped make Lunar New Year and Black History Month celebrations a success
- Dr. Bonitatibus appreciated parents/volunteers who lent their personal home items to be displayed during the cultural celebrations at TJHSST
- Informed about staff/role changes due to retirements and promotions Teachers participating in 'FCPS Innovate AI' to create efficiencies and new models for student learning
- District accessing how to do common assessments grounded on the same standards across all schools
- Encouraging internships – 2 positions in English dept., and 1 in Spanish
- Dr. Bonitatibus is teaching a class and has a great appreciation of the admin-teacher dynamics
- Student Principal Advisory Council (SPAC) is giving feedback on mid-term exams and advice to give teachers
- Student-led exploration in progress on the use of ION to post messages from clubs and activities vs. Facebook or generic TJHSST web pages
- 7 Regeneron scholars (finalist: David Cao), 25 Science Fair students advanced to Regionals. Thanks to parent judges, judges very impressed with TJ students' narratives
- Thanks to Mr. Bourjaily. 161 TJ students are registered to vote.
- Thanks to attendees of curriculum night.
- Dr. Bonitatibus reinforced the importance for rising sophomores, juniors and seniors to choose their courses wisely since it will drive staffing
- Encourage parents to attend the information nights conducted by Student Services.
- Dr. Bonitatibus reiterated the importance of the Honor code – it is NOT ok for kids to bully or make racist remarks. Kids should realize the impact on victims. The school will not tolerate lapses and will take strong action. Please report instances where student feels threatened, dis-respected
- Please encourage students to utilize their counselors, tutor.com and 8<sup>th</sup> period. Sometimes, teachers 'sticky' a student into 8<sup>th</sup> period to ensure they get the help they need. Teachers form a team and offer tutoring. On the flip side, students should not use 8th periods solely only for studying and tutoring. Students need social interactions, so encourage them to use some of the 8<sup>th</sup> period to explore clubs. Reach out to counselors for details on support programs.
- FCPS offers transport after school (late bus) on Wed and Thursdays only. Other jurisdictions are welcomed to use them for the bus depot that makes sense for them.

### **Nominating Committee Election**

- 5 parents (Liz Das, Vinnie Sawant, Hui Chen, Shiwei Luo and Dunia Pardo) self-nominated themselves for the Nominating Committee, which will set forward qualified candidates for the next Executive Committee. Next year EC election is scheduled for 5/23/24
- Each nominee shared a brief summary of their experiences and interests.
- No new nominations received from the floor

- The President declared the nomination process closed and called for a vote on all the candidates in a single “voice” vote,
- Members elected the five members of the Nominating Committee
- With time remaining on this agenda item, the President recognized Mr. Semonsen to voice his perspective on the Nominating Committee process.
- Mr. Semonsen stated that VA PTA amended their bylaws to allow that the Nominating Committee should bring forward “at least one” person for each office. He suggested a standard practice for the nominating committee to advance ALL qualified candidates and let the members vote on the
- Mr. Das spoke next, he mentioned that the nominating committee should take their roles seriously by reviewing, interviewing, vetting all candidates
- Ms. Luo, as member of last year’s NC, informed that the nominating committee did vetted more than 1 candidate per office
- Ms Sawant spoke and she is in agreement with Mr Semonsen
- Ms Pardomade the point that the Executive Committee does actual hard work and NC should bring forward the best candidates suited for each role

#### **Treasurer’s Report - Seema Lohia Singh**

- Treasurer presented her report. PTSA Revenue and spend plan are on track
- Treasurer shared the finances, achieved 105% of revenue goal established Oct 5, 2023 (\$40K actual vs/ \$38K planned). The budget assumed equal revenues from member dues and from donations, to ensure no over-reliance on either donors or membership dues. Donations have not reached the goal (\$13.345K vs budget of \$17.7K).

#### **Committee Reports**

- **Academic Support Committee - Partho Banerjee and Sridhar Maddaluri**
  - Navigating TJ Math & Science’ Webinar held on November 15th, with teachers from Math and Science (Dr. Phillips, Ms. Stewart, ), and a counselor from Student Services: and Mr. Burke. Was well attended
  - Coffee with counselors was canceled due to weather conditions. While a make-up date is not possible due to time constraints during this busy period of academic advising.. Ms Genetin, along with the counselors have categorized and answered all questions asked and it will be published in next week’s newsletter,
  - The Academic Support Committee joined forces with the College Outreach Committee to provide luncheon for the Student Services Team during Counselor Appreciation Week. This event was on Feb 5th.
  - The committee is planning a ‘Navigating TJ for Humanities’ webinar in Spring
  - The committee will likely continue to volunteer and provide snacks during the AP exams.
- **ANGP (All Night Graduation Party) - Laura Marschoun**
  - First VP provided an update for the ANGP Committee. With no parent volunteering to step in, Laura Marshoun, Michele Hyde and Monica Kumar will be co-leading the ANGP planning.
  - Laura updated the members on the sales of tickets, yard signs, and TJ cups. Orders have been placed and pickup is scheduled for March. She gave a brief update on the monthly timeline action items and reiterated the importance of the underclassmen parents to step up for the last

9-12 hours before the party. She also asked Senior parents to volunteer overnight to ensure that the students will have a fun and safe night.

- **College Outreach Committee**

- The president gave an update on behalf of the COC Chair. Due to the cancellation of the 'Coffee with Counselors' event, this committee plans to have a Spring (March/April) event that will be a catch-all for all the remaining college-related questions.

- **Diversity Committee – Laura Marschoun for Michele Hyde**

- 5 events organized between October and February were very well attended. Thanked all the parents who donated and volunteered. Praised the students who performed.
- Call for volunteers for Holi and Eid celebrations
- Diversity t-shirts available at cost from the A2Z store

- **Health & Wellness Committee - Liz Das**

HWC has targeted programs to support the Health and Well-being of:

- Students – via "Mind Matters" club with 'Laugh More-Stress Less' week with , chocolate and other comfort items in the Wellness Room to help de-stress, and other active programs under the Mental Health Coalition
- Parents – via Book Clubs and Parent Workshops like 'Body Doubling' on 3/15 to improve executive functioning, and 'It's different now" on 4/15. These workshops were designed' to highlight the survey results and empower parents help their students
- Staff – Fun team building events. This year was 'make your own guitar' event that had 9 staff participating
- Liz commended Ann Payne's initiative on the bulletin board with monthly theme, Students have been actively contributing messages to this month's theme of 'cup of kindness'

- **Hospitality Committee – Priya Dodla**

- She showed a very nice slide show presentation highlighting the year's event so far: Thanksgiving Luncheon, Holiday Gift Card, and the recent Valentine's Day Treat.
- Next event will be a Spring Luncheon scheduled for May 2nd

- **Second VP of Fundraising - Julia Li**

- No updates

- **Third VP of Communications - Maggy Li**

- No updates

## **Unfinished Business**

## **New Business and Announcements**

- Mr Semonsen is the creative parent-led in decorating the 'Rock' near the TJ front entrance. Any interested parents should reach out to him to help on upcoming events including 'Holi'

## **Adjournment**

- Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Minutes Prepared by Sanjay Parthasarathy, TJHSST PTSA Secretary.  
Minutes Approved as  Presented or  Amended on 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2024