



DRAFT PTA Exec Meeting Minutes

August 27, 2020

6:30 pm via zoom

- I. Call-to-Order--Co-President Susan Mapen called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm
- II. President's Comments
 - a. PTA meeting pushed to September 16, 2020 due to back to school conflicts
 - i. Be thinking about what we want that meeting to look like. In past years it has been a preview of both fundraising and planned activities for the year.
 - ii. Required to pass a budget for the 2020-2021 school year at this first meeting
 - b. Cheers to Dolphin Tool Kits
 - i. A real team effort with special thanks to Carisa Quinn, Marla Johnson and Fabricio Moraes
 1. Carisa and Marla took the lead on ordering, storing, transporting and sorting
 2. Fabricio coordinated dolphin donor support and has already achieved a higher level of business support this year
 - ii. Online and parental feedback has been positive and the kits set a great tone for the beginning of the year
 - iii. New Asst Principal (Spruill) has reported that other schools--especially parents--are feeling disconnected. Getting kids and parents in the building, even briefly, helped reassure folks that tMES and the MES PTA are still here to support them
- III. Review and Approval of Minutes of 7.15.20 Exec Committee
 - a. Correction--roles for Marla Johnson (Community) and Carisa Quinn (Operations) are noted backwards and should be corrected
 - i. Joanna Kobylivker motions to approve minutes, as corrected
 - ii. Jana Kovacseconds
 - b. Unanimous approval
- IV. Meeting Times/days for Executive Committee Meeting Moving Forward
 - a. Hard for most of us to meet during the day with virtual school, so concentrating on evenings
 - b. conversation—maybe later than 6:30?
 - i. difficult to gets kids fed and headed toward bed by 6:30



- ii. 7:00 pm seems to be the consensus time
 - c. Exec will meet on the last thursday of each month at 7:00 pm
 - i. (Except November—thanksgiving--and December--New Year's Eve--so maybe first week of dec to cover both months)
 - ii. Try to keep it in an hour and a half
 - iii. Keep to zoom for now but smaller groups might meet in person

V. Administration Report--Principal Sofianos

- a. On behalf of the staff and administration, thanks for the Dolphin Tool Kits
- b. School is being built out of thin air and adjustments will be needed. 1st grade schedule has already been adjusted and the administration is looking at other potential adjustments based on parent and teacher feedback
- c. The teachers working tirelessly to perfect virtual learning
 - i. Please be patient as this is a learning curve for everyone
 - ii. Teachers have reported great interest and participation from students so far
- d. Some PTA purchased chrome books are going home with students who need a device at home for virtual learning. Some schools have no technology to give beyond the APS provided technology, so administration is very appreciative of these extra items
- e. Student survey is about to roll out regarding virtual schooling
 - i. Parents and teachers have already been surveyed and will be again
 - ii. The Administration wants to know what's working and what's not from the student perspective
- f. Proposed curbside pickup for the library in approval process
- g. Devices (presented by Brian Baron)
 - i. Many of the older chrome books—non touch screen—have broken cameras, but the devices are out of warranty and cannot be reasonably repaired
 - 1. Only giving the touch screens now--some of those have sound issues but the majority work
 - 2. a total of 150-200 chrome books are temporarily out of use
 - ii. MES has provided 316 chrome books to students this year and is aware of another 70 that are still being used from last year plus 31 hot spots
 - iii. All teachers have APS issued laptops
- h. Other tech needs
 - i. MES is buying webcams and wearable microphones for teachers who need them
 - ii. Teachers have their document cameras at home and have been utilizing them heavily



i. Enrollment

- i. As of Thursday, 8/27/2020, total MES enrollment across all 6 grades was 862
- ii. Original projection (on which our budget is based) was total MES enrollment of 951
- iii. Friday 8//28/2020 is a withdrawal point
 1. Kids who haven't shown at all for the first five days will be disenrolled
 2. Expect total enrollment numbers schoolwide will likely fall to around 850
- iv. A reduced enrollment vs projections makes for a lean year budgetarily
 1. Based on pure math, MES could owe as much as \$500,000 back to the district through leveling
 - a. But we aren't the only one
 - b. Brandon, Jackson, SPARK, Smith, Lin all down 9-10%
- v. Which grades are the most affected?
 1. Most of the attrition is k-4-5
 2. 2-3-4 are pretty close to original estimates
 3. 45 of the 100 are kindergarteners--lots of parents are delaying k to next year or continuing with private options
- vi. Where did the kids go?
 1. 1 family (2 kids) went to cyber academy
 2. Several are homeschooling, but say they will return when MES goes back to campus
 3. Some to private
 4. Some have moved (or admitted they didn't live in the district)
- vii. Question--will APS really ask for \$500,000 back?
 1. Unlikely as APS has publicly stated they don't want to make money off this unexpected and widespread event
 2. Principal Sofianos is trying to get attendance information system side
 - a. Seems like there might have been less of an impact on middle school and high school enrollments
 3. Administration is expecting substantial in and out throughout the year as students and parents adjust
 4. They've tried to prepare by working with a 3 person administrative staff and have saved some money from the budget in anticipation of budget leveling



VI. Marla Johnson--VP Community

- a. Class based roles will be filled soon, but will look different this year
 - i. Each class will have a room parent and a general social coordinator to handle the other class roles from the past
 - ii. Each grade will also have grade-wide social chairs
 1. Caroline Wainwright is running the selection
 2. Have 2 for each grade except 1st and 2nd
 3. Consider--do we need an assigned chair for this moving forward?
- b. 2 parents (Robin Edwards and Lisa Olmstead) want to start a social service project
 - i. First idea
 1. Highlight teachers from other schools who don't have what they need and are seeking classroom support items through donors choose
 2. This would be pushed to parents as a voluntary item
 - ii. Second idea
 1. MES PTS sponsored toolkits for other schools
 2. Finch Elem has been identified as potential beneficiary
 3. Consider--Do we have support in the membership to spend \$10,000-\$12,000 of MES PTA money for another school?
 - iii. Conversation--How do we focus MES PTA efforts and efforts of our parents and students to help others in this difficult time?
 1. Concerns regarding spending MES PTA money we already collected on another school when there is a general expectation that MES PTA money is spent at MES
 2. Idea--create an umbrella called something like Dolphins Do Good Deeds
 - a. Focus could shift monthly and opportunities to donate or volunteer could be pushed out monthly
 - b. Sometime MES based or needs identified by our teachers, sometimes supporting other schools or larger APS-wide initiatives
 - c. These opportunities would always be voluntary
 - d. This fall, a replacement for boosterthon--consider sending your money to address these other needs instead--and as a potential community builder while we cannot all be together



VII. Kat Collins--VP Enrichment

- a. Chairs
 - i. Lots of chairs have switched roles
 - ii. Chairs have been a bit overwhelmed with all their other responsibilities and questions of how some of our traditional events can move forward in the virtual world
- b. Book fair will be fully virtual this year
 - i. Follet or Little Shop?
 1. Used Follet last year
 - a. 40% back to us in cash/books
 - b. Wider selection of books at all price points
 - c. Only method of delivery available is in one shipment to the school
 - i. MES PTA volunteers would then have to sort and distribute
 - ii. Given limits of being in the school and everyone's time, this could prove difficult logistically
 2. Little Shop is locally owned
 - a. 20% back to us in cash/books
 - b. Smaller selection and generally more expensive
 - c. They will deliver to individual homes as the MES attendance zone appears to be fully within their delivery area. Working to confirm that there are no delivery fees
 - ii. Committee is only 2 people
 1. They likely prefer Little Shop, assuming no delivery fees, based on logistics alone
 2. Weeks of Sept 28, Oct 19 or Nov 9 are being considered
 - iii. Consensus on Executive Committee is that is that home delivery is key, so recommend going with Little Shop if free delivery can be confirmed
- c. Family science night
 - i. Surveys are out to parents regarding format, interest and options
 - ii. Last year's chair left MES. We have a strong committee, but no identified leader
 - iii. Concern about using the Family Science Night name for a radically different (or sponsored) program
 1. Don't want to alienate dedicated annual presenters by partnering with/ paying presenters from fernbank or similar
 2. Not all volunteers can go virtual but the committee is surveying the presenters for ideas on how to have this event virtually



- iv. No way to have live, in person family science night in February as the planning is too long and involved
- v. Assuming interest is there, can we send a science night toolkit?
- d. Cultural Arts
 - i. No artists are performing due to covid
 - ii. Committee is looking at shows with virtual audiences, but most option are larger, national shows with high cost
 - iii. Virtual visiting authors might be the best, most viable option
 - iv. Question--these programs have traditionally taken place during the school day. Can we still do that? Principal Sofianos says yes, generally, but--
 - 1. There are no real blocks of assembly time across the grades. We'd need to coordinate by grade level
 - 2. Program has to engage 170 kids
 - 3. Hard to plan because if we go back, we might not be able to gather
 - 4. Generally, the administration is ok if we cut some things out or to move daytime things to night and vice versa
- e. Variety show--As we have no chair, no contract for a venue, and no idea if we will be able to gather in the spring, this event is abled unless we get a chair who can conceive of and wants to organize this virtually
- f. Grants
 - i. Heidi Muller is chairing the committee again and is working on the application process and timing of awards
 - ii. The committee is asking for more info on where the money will come from (MES PTA, Foundation, APS) and has asked to keep the same \$10,000 budget
 - iii. Supporting innovation in teaching is the goal here
 - iv. Principal Sofianos--
 - 1. Teacher survey did not reveal a lot of hardware or software needs, but as we are out longer, we learn more about needs and how to make the virtual environment better for kids and teachers more we learn
 - 2. APS hopes to fund these direct student/teacher related needs
 - 3. Perhaps best to hold off on the grant process to give a little more time for the teachers to understand what they need and for APS to sort out what it can cover
- g. For future discussion
 - i. Will potential virtual field trips be planned/financed by PTA or MES?
 - ii. if PTA, which VP would handle?



- VIII. Joanna Kobylivker (VP SWAG) and Jana Kovac (VP Communications) table their presentations in the interest of time. Details are in their reports provided before the meeting
- IX. Jim Pursely--Treasurer—2020-2021 Budget Review
- a. Budget is in flux as any number of traditional expenses are not going to be incurred since events such as the halloween bash, in person book fair, and in person family science night are unlikely to occur
 - b. Discussion--how do we budget in uncertain times?
 - i. Do we set zero budgets or plan for half a year, assuming we will be back to in person learning by January?
 - ii. Rather than just zero out/remove items we aren't planning to fund this year, can we:
 1. Include minimal amounts on each line or
 2. Float a discretionary fund per VP in case we find a way to do one of these events, whether in person or virtually?
 3. The downside to removing items/historic costs is that we don't want to have to start over and build a new budget in 2021-2022
 - iii. Co-presidents, treasurer and affected VPs will continue this discussion before the General Meeting on September 16, 2020 so we can present a comprehensive, coherent and accurate budget based on what we know now
- X. Principal Sofianos reminds us that her coffee talks will be every week this year, starting the week of August 31, 2020
- a. Discussion--traditionally, coffee talks begin around 8, right after school starts, but it will be difficult for Principal Sofianos to hold these during school hours this year
 - i. Which is the better alternative--7:30 am or afternoons after the school day ends?
 - ii. As different times seem better for different people, Principal Sofianos will alternate between morning and afternoon sessions, rotating weekly when possible
- XI. Co-President Emily Fink Adjourns the meeting at 9:06 pm