

## May 13, 2025 PTSA meeting minutes

Matt Hunt, Marika VanderSmith, Kerry Billingham, Michael Polin, Tiffany Courtmage, Emily West-Foye, David McKnight, Katie Salisbury, Leah Rutman, Anna Bonnett, Kelly King French, Nina Mettler

- **Meeting Minutes.** Adoption of the minutes of the April PTSA meeting (available on the PTSA website) were unanimously approved.
- **Upcoming Events.** Marika went over several events coming up. See slide deck.
  - It has been hard to get information to parents who have opted out of kid mail, PTSA weekly, and ESL parents. Unclear if people are reading the Weekly. Parents seem to read the Room Parent emails. Ideas for beginning of the year strategy: PTSA table at an event to encourage people to opt into the Weekly and read the Weekly; Survey for how parents/caregivers are getting information; start early. Talking Points app translates to other languages. We need a new Communications Chairperson to help with this.
- **Partner Updates.**
  - **Principal Update:** Matt and Marika were not able to connect with Ms. Marshall this month. But here are some ongoing issue updates:
    - Ms. Elaine – initial plan for the art teacher to be available 5 extra hours per month on the days that Diego is not, so kids can go see her if they need help with regulation. She would have to be in the hallway. She's contracted so she can't be alone with the kids? How do we change that? Ms. Marshall is supposed to help figure that out. It may be budget dependent.
    - Highly Capable Cohort kids – 25 first graders are going to Decatu, many from other grades too. We will find out this week or next how many kids we are losing to Decatur. Probably a bunch, so that will affect our teacher ratios, etc
  - **Teacher Update:** Katie Salisbury reported SBA testing is finished. Lots going on with field trips and events. Writer's celebration is earlier this year which is nice. It's a contract year. Katie reminded everyone that progress reports are available on The Source. SBA testing for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders is coming up for 3 weeks at the end of April.
  - **LASER:** Marika and Matt had a zoom call with the LASER board. They said they were committed to be in good communication with Bryant. Reviewed the playground situation. Trying to partner better with access to spaces to set up for Art Night, for example. Marissa and Kevin are still the Directors
- **President's Update.**
  - **Yearbook** - completed. Matt and Marika have worked hard on this. Next year, there will be a committee. Lessons learned from this year, how to solicit photos very early on, etc. We ordered 15 extra on top of everything else.

- **Chess Club (Marika)** – Mat Chess unable to provide a staff, but they said maybe they could absorb those kids in their upstairs rooms? Christine Stawitz who is leaving has tried to find a new coordinator, but not a lot of interest. But it could go through ASE if there is an independently contracted staff person (Orangutan is a local chess education group). 45 kids attend, and there's always a waitlist. Never enough volunteer parents to help out. It's a lot of work, especially for the tournaments that happen several times a year. Parents should volunteer if they sign their kids up for chess club.
- **Awards that honor volunteers:** nominations opening for Golden Acorn, unsung hero, others like committees? Room parent? The June PTSA general meeting is when we have the awards ceremony.
- **Board retreat:** discussed possibilities to get this to happen when the new members are identified.
- **Treasurer's report.** See slide deck for detail.
  - Bryant Blast - we should net about \$3000 which is better than last year.
  - Budget – excluding collapsed accounts, we are down \$10k from last year. Adding cost of covering some salaries next year. Reserve balance is in the \$40-50k range. \$7k less from annual campaign.
  - Michael Polin – we can increase our ask for the annual campaign in the fall from \$550 to \$570.
- **Advocacy Update** – Leah reported the Governor has not signed the budget yet, but he did say it “addressed the K-12 education” We ended up with a mixed bag of getting more money, but not enough money. Bryant was supporting special education. The cap is now gone. Materials fee increased per student.
  - Rep Paulette – he's doing another event on our night in June, so he can't come to the next meeting, but he would like to come another time, so we will try to get him in the fall.
  - Evan Briggs – she said she can't take any more meetings for the rest of the year. There are engagement opportunities with the SPS board in the fall. Unclear if the idea of school closures will get resurrected in the fall after the budget gets settled. New superintendent starts in the fall. Four seats on the school board are up for re-election. June meeting: “Pay attention, be aware.”
- **Volunteer committee** – executive board slate that will get voted on in June. Then the executive board appoints the rest of the positions. School play and chess club are at risk next year due to low volunteer rates. Science night coordinator leaving.
- Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved.