

MOUNT SI HIGH SCHOOL PTSA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

January 27th, 2021

- Begin Meeting: 7:00pm
- Approval of September 2020 General Membership Meeting minutes
 - Motions- Jennifer Fierling
 - 2nd – Wendy Talens
 - Approved
- Nominating Committee Elections:
 - Linda Grez nominated Kim Jones, all ayes, no nays, approved
 - Dawn Harper nominated Heidi Beth Billingsley, all ayes, no nays, approved
 - Karen Nieman nominated Jennifer Fierling, all ayes, no nays, approved
 - No other nominations from floor
 - 2021-2022 Nominating Committee: Kim Jones, Heidi Beth Billingsley, Jennifer Fierling
- Principal's Report: John Belcher
 - Sports- Mr. Belcher and Dr. Manahan held an athletic townhall on January 25th. There is a lot of misinformation circulating in the community stating that the district was not in favor of athletics and that is not true. The district really wants to get sports going and is looking to open up practices for more sports soon.
 - Students with poor or failing grades in Semester 1: Mr. Belcher proposed a plan to address this to the School Board that was recently approved. The plan will apply to all students and if a student receives a Semester 2 grade that is better than their Semester 1 grade, the Semester 2 grade will replace the Semester 1 grade. For example, if a student received an F in a class in Semester 1 and in Semester 2 receives a C-, the Semester 1 grade will be updated from an F to a C-.
 - Still working on a plan to address students who receive a failing grade in Semester 2.
 - Theater construction is almost complete and looking really good. Musical instruments and furniture are being moved in. Do not have occupancy yet but music teachers have toured it and are very excited. There will be practice rooms with adjustable sound quality like radio city, and Carnegie hall experiences. Live shows will be able to be shared immediately with new sound feed and recording. Working through the details of how to manage renting the facility out to generate future revenues.
 - Q&A:
 - Why aren't seniors allowed to do silly pictures this school year? Response: This started about 4 years ago so has not been a long standing tradition. The challenges in doing this are getting students in and out of the building quickly. With props, the photos take a lot of time and the security team said it is difficult to manage when they cannot see student faces. Yearbook is best place to submit silly photos since it is long standing and more long term solution.
 - What is the capacity of each classroom for in person learning? Response: MSHS was designed for a 34 student classroom capacity but with in person hybrid learning that will need to be reduced to 16 in order to meet social distance requirements. We feel this is doable and as some students have changed decision to remote vs. in person which also reduces number of in person

students to accommodate. We are planning for 7 periods a day with 2 co-horts. Since we know kids have zoom fatigue we want to try and shorten day and class periods and also in order to make the schedule work for transportation we have to shorten day. We will be sending out a video to students soon that will walk them thru the hybrid plan and how it will look in class, lunch, going to bathroom etc. We want to publicize to students to reassure them that we will have these things in place.

- How can you shorten AP classes to reduce load for these students? Response: feel free to email college board. Hopefully when in person learning is in place, the concepts will be grasped better and it will reduce online time. College board may also change dates to make it more fair for all students. If they do, MSHS will pick latest date in June to provide more breathing room.
 - Bringing kids back to high school: We are looking at ways we can have a soft start and bring back some freshman and seniors sooner since freshman have never set foot in the school and it is last year for seniors. We are looking at putting mitigation steps in place and hope to have a plan soon that can be approved by School Board.
 - How many students will be in person vs remote? Response: about 10% remote. This could change as we get closer and people change their minds. Also some students who are doing running start may return to MSHS. Running start has not scaled back at all and this has impacted some students. But we do not know the impacts of that change yet.
- Q&A Dr. Manahan:
 - How does the district consider going back to school with concerns of new strain in WA? Response: The district is focusing on the Dept. of Health recommendations and there are 2 pieces of information we are looking at to decide safe return to school by grade: if the school can implement the recommended Covid-19 health and safety measures and if we can monitor and respond to suspected and confirmed cases of Covid 19. We need to make sure we check off these boxes. We feel we can and have top of line ventilation in MSHS. So even if cases rise, if we are able to check off the boxes in these 2 areas, we feel we can bring kids back to school at high school level.
 - Why can't we open up high school now that elementary is opening? Response: We are following the Dept. of Health guidelines as described above, not CDC. Our district is in first place along with Mercer island in terms of phasing kids into in person learning for King County. We are moving forward and have to do it in a way that tests our system to ensure we have the physical personnel and capacity to manage isolation rooms and enough emergency subs. Right now, we have brought back Kindergarten and will be bringing back 1st grade but we do not have enough nurses to bring back everyone at the same time. If you have your CPR card and can sign up to be a medical assistant we could use more help in this area. We also need more bus drivers, and emergency subs in case a teacher is sick or do not feel comfortable returning for various reasons. We have teachers who don't feel safe, don't have child care, or are at risk of own health and are taking paid leave. We also had a lot of bus drivers retire and now are down 8 bus drivers. We have 39 routes and 31 drivers. We have had to cancel and combine routes.

At the January 14th School Board meeting, we presented where we are and how we will manage class sizes, isolation rooms, hallway flow, hand sanitizing and masks and are doing safety training in small groups. We also ordered 250 SWIVLS for teachers which we feel will help students and teachers in hybrid model. It will help free up teachers to move around the classroom.

- Why can't we re-open middle school and high school sooner? Response: I know it feels like we should just be able to flip a switch and bring back all students but we only have a certain number of staff that are qualified to teach certain classes in high school so we can't double up, we do not have enough personnel. We are targeting March to bring high school students back. There is a lot of pre-work that has to be done to test the system to make sure we can manage capacity. Vaccinations for staff will help. We are working closely with Snoqualmie Valley hospital to set aside a percentage of vaccinations for teachers when they get them. We are also working with another partner with a vaccination site and should know more in 2-3 weeks if this will pan out or not. We need emergency subs so we have back ups for teachers if sick. Parents who have an AA degree or higher can apply to help.
 - Why didn't you make elementary a full day to free up bus drivers? Response: That actually creates more issues with schedules and meeting health recommendations. We cannot have kids showing up to school early and hanging out. We have not way to manage this in a safe way.
 - What metrics are you looking at King County or local cities in our district? Response: We monitor King County and I keep track of local numbers in our district. I look at number of hospitalizations, transmission, ICU capacity. I don't think it is about the numbers. I believe it is how we respond to keep students and staff safe at school. We have 1000 employed staff and 7000 kids in our district. The bigger issue is what is happening in the community with the kids who are 10-18 years of age. Parents need to make sure they are having the conversation with their kids about safety and not getting together with groups larger than 5, wearing a mask and keeping the social distance. North Bend has had a huge increase due to kids getting together in large groups.
 - Did the SVEA vote to return to school for 6-12 or just elementary grades? Response: The memo of agreement with SVEA was for K-1st grade only. We are working on memo for 2-5th grade and then will move on to secondary. We don't have capacity to bring back all grades at this time(i.e. staff). We are not sitting around, no one is waiting for vaccines, the focus is on bringing back students and staff safely. In a normal school year we have between 57-75 teachers out a day and we only have 30 emergency subs right now so we need many more. Parents can help by applying to be an emergency sub with the school district. This will help us backfill when a teacher is unable to be in person.
 - Thank you for all the emails and the support!
- Treasurer's Budget Report: Jennifer Fierling
 - Everything is down from last year (donations, memberships).

- Big focus this year was Grad Night refunds for 2020. In October there were 14 refund checks that had not cleared. All of these families have been contacted. Some are lost checks that will be re-issued. But not bad out of 160 refund checks.
- Spending some money for staff appreciation but other than that just day to day operational expenses.
- YTD loss is mainly due to Grad Night 2020 refunds and fact that the last payment was not paid to Grad nights which was about 9k that showed up as net income for fiscal year ending June 2020.
- December 2020 ending bank balance: \$29,920.18 Being conservative since not bringing in much cash right now.

- Staff Appreciation: Dawn Harper
 - Snacks for teachers, 230 comments from families that were cut up and distributed on tables. This meant a lot to teachers and received numerous feedback that this was very appreciative. Low budget with high impact
 - Coffee truck-approved by John. Will be managed by Youth Trail and will do this in February either before or after mid winter break.
 - Kudo Board: Fran would like to do this for each teacher. Work with ASB to get comments from students for teachers.
 - Spring: would be nice to do something in person if we can, a spring event. Conserve some budget dollars for this.
 - Big thanks to John for helping to get things approved to do for staff.
- Membership/Website: Karen Nieman
 - 285 members, staying pretty steady due to not much going on, down from last year
 - Updating website for important parent and student events
 - Emergency subs email communication sent out to all members and posted on website. Need parents to continue to sign up to return kids to school.
 - Community events and seminars updated and added to website.
 - SAT and ACT practice tests for students with registration link and dates.
- Grad Night Update-Heidi Hendrickson
 - Hold on 3 venues, working with Grad Nights until we know what we can do in June
 - No contract signed and no money paid to Grad Nights
 - Will need to come up with something quickly when time comes
 - 35 volunteers reached out to help
 - Refund policy is in place now so you know what it is and amount you would be out before ever writing a check.
 - Grad nights has not been reimbursed by any venues
 - Come up with a plan B with Board. See how things look like in a few months.
 - Need other ideas to generate revenue. Leis were helpful these past few years.
 - Other concerns: can we get busing from school district, charter is too expensive and would increase costs of registration.
- Student Welfare- Sarah Marsh

- Cannot access the food closets in schools now but the community has really helped and counselors can access.
- Hopelink has been great and provided deliveries to families in need
- Back pack program still in place and food banks have been helpful to families in need.
- Friends of Youth social workers and counselors have been available for support. And Psychology Today has been great for referrals.
- Kim Stonebreaker is angel to valley. She has been very active and mobile during this time and checking on families.
- December 9th held another suicide prevention training and had 40 parents attend virtually. 5 staff members also attended to assist me and provide support to families.
- King County crisis line is also a great resource. They host 5 different help lines 24 hours a day.
- Federal homeless grant has been provided. Erica Healy is identifying families that meet criteria to get these funds.
- Go Fund me for a local student who lost parent. Support has been good even though schools closed.
- SAT/ACT: Wendy Talens
 - All information is on PTSA website
 - Mock practice tests for freshman and sophmores. Juniors are taking PSAT.
 - Registration on PTSA website. \$50 and \$35 goes back to PTSA
 - Partnering with Huntington Learning Center.
 - Is there a cap? Wendy will check on this.
- Reflections: Kim Jones
 - First time at High School
 - Was put together quickly for this year
 - 13 kids submitted artwork and 10 moved on to council level and 5 to state level(2 music, 1 photography and 2 Visual Arts)
 - Every grade was represented from 9-12
 - Hoping to build on this each year and get more submissions and increase participation.
 - Will make a video slide show of participations so we can post on website.
 - Fran suggested to pass to yearbook
 - Council is also doing a video slideshow of all 22 entries district wide that moved on to state.
- Legislative Chair Report- Linda Grez
 - Links are on PTSA website under About Us
 - Take advantage of WSPTA and NPTA discounts as a member
 - Advocate as much as you can
 - Top 5 Legislative Priorities for 2020-2021
 - Increase Access to Nursing, Mental Health, and Social Emotional Learning Staff
 - Support Students and Preserve Education Funding
 - Increasing Educational Equity by Closing the Digital Divide
 - Supports and Funding for Students with Disabilities and Their Families
 - Prevent and Reduce Gun Violence and Suicide

Upcoming Events:

- January 28th: School board meeting
- February 3 & 10: School photo & text book drop off/ pick up
- February 11th: PTSA Board Meeting 9:30am
- February 15-19: Mid winter break
- February 21, 28, March 3: ACT & SAT practice tests
- March 11th: PTSA Board Meeting 9:30am
- March 24th: PTSA General Membership Meeting

Adjourn: 8:33pm