Meany PTSA Board Meeting - 4/22/2020
“Virtual” meeting via Zoom
6:30-8:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Welcome – Roll Call (Lara Kreyenhagen)

Present: Jen Emrich (Co-President), Lara Kreyenhagen (Co-President), Karen Axtell (Co-Treasurer), Joy Rothrock (Co-Treasurer), Joe Wyman (Co-Secretary), Dan Washburn (Communications Chair), Linda Moy (Community Building Chair), Gilia Angell (Special Ed Parent Liaison), Vivian van Gelder (Equity & Outreach Co-Chair and 6th Grade BLT Rep), Meher Antia (Equity & Outreach Co-Chair), Andy Jensen (Legislative Chair), Elizabeth Geri (Elementary School Liaison), Anna Davidson (Courtyard Garden Project Liaison), Angie Jenkins, Chanda Oatis (Principal), Jershon Foyston (Assistant Principal), Adrian Manriquez (Teacher, ASB Leader)

Not Present: Eric Pedersen (Vice-President), Meghan Dort Lackey (Events Chair), Linda Mullen (7th Grade BLT Rep), Anna Finkenzeller (8th Grade BLT Rep)

School Updates (Principal Oatis)

Laptops
Ms. Oatis is looking forward to getting laptops to students who need them. A robocall went out to announce laptop distribution. Distribution was supposed to happen this week at Meany, but the district has now postponed this due to a set-up issue on some of the laptops. Once the technology department at the district approves the distribution, Ms. Oatis will communicate details with families. Even though they need a parent signature to check out a laptop, students are able to pick up laptops on their own if parents cannot take time off from work, etc.

The goal is to give a laptop to anybody who needs it. The school is working hard to identify families who need laptops. The counseling team is also doing special calls to families who teachers haven’t heard from (students haven’t checked in online). Mr. Foyston is compiling a list. Students/families should send an email Mr. Foyston or Ms. Oatis if they are in need of a laptop.

For distribution, Ms. Oatis said the she and the distribution team are taking the COVID threat very seriously. Nutrition staff, security staff and custodians are in-school working and will help with distribution. Counselors have agreed to help with distribution when it starts up, as well as our librarian (will assist families in getting set up online).
8th Grade Promotion
Principal in the district have been meeting every Wed at 9:00 AM to make decisions and plan
for the remainder of the school year. Promotion for 8th grade students has had to be canceled
which is very sad for school staff and for the students. The Meany staff have been
brainstorming about alternative ways to celebrate. They are hoping to plan something (likely in
August) to come together, celebrate, sign yearbooks, say goodbyes *if* they are able to. Stay
tuned for more details.

Enrollment for 2020-2021
The projection in March when the Meany Building Leadership Team (BLT) planned the school
budget for next year was 488 students. Current enrollment numbers for next year indicate 89
more students than originally projected – 577 students. We will see a bigger 6th grade (230 - 6th
graders, 171 - 7th graders, 176 - 8th graders). The increased number of students could
potentially give Meany additional FTE – up to 3 more staff members. Waiting for word from the
district (update expected in June). Making projections for Meany is challenging because it’s only
three years old since reopening, so the district is hesitant to trust the numbers. The increase in
numbers could be due to the economy and also may be due to changes at Washington Middle
School (new TAF program).

Comment about the issue of 6th grade families not notifying the district when they are not
planning to attend if they have chosen a private school, etc. Suggestion to reach out to feeder
schools to remind parents to communicate with SPS if kids are not attending in the fall.

Question for Ms. Oatis: Can we be more conservative regarding FTE so that we don’t have to
take away classes after school starts? Ms. Oatis said that they are already very conservative
with projections – typically overfill electives when planning the master schedule. Suggestion to
be up front with families at the beginning of the year about the possibility that we may lose FTE
based on numbers so there is less disappointment if it is necessary to take away an elective.

Grading for the remainder of the school year
Question about how grading is going to be handled for middle school students. Ms. Oatis said
that students will get a P for “Passing” middle school classes; for classes that count for high
school credit (math or world language courses) students will get either an “A” or an
“Incomplete.”

How can the PTSA best support the school, staff, students and families right now?
Ms. Oatis said that she appreciates that the PTSA and families have been reaching out to ask
what can be done to help those families who may need extra support right now. The school has
been supporting families through the Right Now Needs fund. She said that the 11-1 lunchtime
during the week is when the counselors are getting Safeway or Target cards to families who
need them (counselors put cards in envelopes and leave them for pick-up) vs. in the mail; Mr. Harris (custodian) has been helping with distribution. If the PTSA would like to organize a gift card drive, the school can get the cards to families in need. The Wellness Team meets every Tuesday at 10:00 AM. If a parent wants to be the point person, he/she can attend that meeting and we should be able to figure out logistics with the counseling team.

**Teacher/Staff Appreciation**

Question for Ms. Oatis about what the PTSA can do during Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week in early May to celebrate. Does she have ideas on anything we can do, virtually? Suggestion to try to support local businesses in what we do. Ms. Oatis said that staff really appreciated the notes from students last year. Maybe the PTSA can coordinate students sending messages virtually?

Ms. Oatis said that there will be a date in May scheduled for staff to return to school (staggered to keep things socially distanced), so we may be able to plan something around that. Ms. Oatis will let the PTSA know when a date for that has been determined.

**Locker Cleanouts**

This will probably be planned for closer to the end of the school year (in shifts).

**ASB Updates** (Mr. Manriquez)

**Virtual Spirit Week – April 20-24**

The Meany ASB planned a “virtual” Spirit Week this week. Students and staff have been posting pictures and videos to the ASB Instagram account and Schoology – lots of fun, likes, comments, sharing, etc. Not every kid has been able to participate yet (the hope is that more will be able to, once we distribute laptops), but they’ve seen a lot of participation. They have received lots of positive comments/feedback about Spirit Week. Jen commented that she has loved seeing the teachers and staff post pictures and videos in addition to the students.

**ASB Budget**

The ASB has had to make some hard decisions with the school closure – end of school year events like the cruise and other grade celebrations have had to be canceled.

The ASB would like to be able to use left over PTSA money allocated for promotion, etc. towards some kind of celebration gathering in August to give students a proper goodbye; plans are TBD but would like to do something that involves signing yearbooks, etc.

**Leadership Classes**

Meany has one Leadership class period dedicated to students on the student council this
semester and there are two additional general leadership classes. The leadership classes have had lots of interactions during the school closure. The students loved participating in the parent/student panel in February. Mr. Manriquez would love to hear ideas from the PTSA about the types of events being planned for next year so that ASB can begin thinking about how they can get involved and support the events; doesn’t need specific dates – just a general idea about what month, etc.

**Summer School**
Meany is still planning to offer summer school remotely (Mr. Manriquez is one of the staff in charge of summer school). The school had originally asked for some funds from the PTSA to provide incentives to students who attend summer school at Meany like field trips, etc., but we will have to think of other ideas if it’s held remotely. Mr. Manriquez will let the PTSA know more once planning has begun.

**Meany Courtyard Garden Update** (Anna Davidson)
The courtyard garden project has been happening virtually through Zoom meetings. The committee is now a big team of people consisting of Meany teachers and Ms. Oatis, a rep from Seattle Public Schools, and also contacts from Islandwood and the Seattle Public Utilities Rainwise program. Anna and Jennifer Guthrie are the two parents who have been coordinating the project.

The process has been hard to work on virtually. This spring the team had planned to finish the small courtyard, which is now ready for new plantings, but that has now been delayed due to the building closure. Anna said that she is willing to help with plantings in the fall even though her kid is graduating this year. Jennifer Guthrie (Landscape Architect) will continue to help drive the project next year as her child will be an 8th grader.

The project team has begun turning its attention to the larger courtyard. Anna sent an email budget request to the PTSA for some funding. It’s a big project with a lot of space. Rainwise will help fund some of it, but we will need to raise significant funds as well. SPS is behind the project and school staff are very supportive of project. There is all kinds of exciting curriculum that can be tapped into for outdoor education via Islandwood.

The team hopes that we can break ground on the larger courtyard space next year, maybe tackling a third of project with the plan to fund the rest over time. The team is hoping that the PTSA can carry over the funds from this year that haven’t been used, and then add to it for next year’s budget. They also need funding for the small courtyard space to purchase tables and chairs for 30-40 students. Even without furniture, Mr. Richardson (art teacher) has already utilized the space with his classes. Jennifer Guthrie has some ideas on furniture that will work, but it’s not inexpensive.
Before the school closure the project team was able to get a student survey completed about the courtyard spaces. The Islandwood rep has taken on the task of organizing the student feedback and will compile everything so that Jennifer can incorporate those ideas in her design.

The team is continuing to meet on a regular basis via Zoom. If anyone would like to join their meetings, contact Anna (a_zone@hotmail.com) and she will send you the link.

Lara commented that there will be unused funds from this year due to the school closure, but also feels like the PTSA will need to be fiscally responsible/conservative about our ability to fundraise next year due to the economy, etc.

Ms. Oatis said that she loves seeing all of the plans and is excited about the work that is taking place. She agreed that being conservative right now is really important, especially since we will be losing a number of key PTSA board members at the end of this year which could also affect our ability to raise funds.

**Board Business**

**Approval of Minutes**
Motion to approve the minutes from PTSA board meeting on 3/10/20; motion seconded, approved.

**Budget Committee Update** (Karen, Joy, Jen, Lara, Linda)
The budget committee hasn’t had a formal meeting yet but have had some discussions over email. We will schedule a remote budget planning meeting soon. Jen went over some questions about the budget for Ms. Oatis:

- Do you anticipate needing more funds for Reading and Math intervention, especially due to the school closure? Ms. Oatis said that currently Meany has 4 reading empowerment classes during the day. Any support for math would probably be used after school. She thinks that the priority should be offering more support for math if possible. Mr. Foyston agreed that math support should be the highest priority. He said they will have to figure out if the support next year will occur during the day or after school. Mr. Manriquez suggested that maybe math support could be offered as after school tutoring.

- Should the PTSA add a Wellness Closet/Community Outreach line item in our budget? Ms. Oatis said that she thinks that would be a good idea, but given the need to be conservative, she’s not sure how much money we will have available. She said that it is good for the Wellness Team to be able to control/dictate the types of support. Meany always have families in need – the needs are ongoing all the time. She suggested that
we could even just do a line item for money for socks/underwear. Suggestion to have a line item, but also give families an opportunity to do direct donations of specific items.

- Do we need to rethink how the PTSA supports the ASB given the rules about collecting money, etc.? Mr. Manriquez said that we can keep things the same in the budget. The only change is that the PTSA can’t collect donations at student run events (for example, students collecting donations at the musical.) Students are putting on the show and collecting donations, thus the funds must be deposited into the ASB account. ASB money can only be used on cultural, athletic, recreational, and social purchases with student approval. Therefore, if PTSA wants to have a lined item for a program/club, that is fine. It does not have to be deposited into an ASB account first. For example, after school theater received $2,000 for 2019-2020, that doesn’t have to go into an ASB account since it was funded by a PTSA fundraiser. Same for music, student government, etc. So, the process we have been doing of filling out the PTSA form to get reimbursed would remain the same for those funds.

- Any interest in funding abWEB (We All Belong) program at Meany? It requires having a staff member attend a training. It was hard to find someone to commit to doing that this year, and then of course the shutdown happened. Would be interested in implementing the program next year if we can secure funds.

- Should we consider funding Restorative Justice training for Meany staff? The difficulty is that it’s not just training staff, you actually need to have a point person whose job it is to focus on this (where it is all they do). Mr. Foyston has some experience with this, but thinks unless we have a paid position devoted to this, we probably can’t feasibly do it. It’s very time consuming to run things properly. Would love any support that the PTSA can provide, but the reality is it would be a whole FTE. Suggestion from Mr. Manriquez that maybe schools could share a person trained in this (part time at various schools). Maybe someone could be at our school ½ day or every other day, etc. Linda suggested that maybe we could partner with Washington Middle School in this. Mr. Manriquez thinks that unless we actually have a trained person, we really wouldn’t be able to execute this.

The budget committee will plan to meet a couple of times over the next two weeks to work through the budget. Ms. Oatis said that she is hoping for similar funding support from the PTSA as has occurred this year.

**Nominating Committee Update** (Andy, Vivian, Gilia)
Andy has put general asks to elementary feeder schools about PTSA board positions but has not heard back. Suggestion that it will likely take individual asks from us to incoming and existing
Meany families. Andy said that he will email a spreadsheet to the board that we can enter possible names into. Gilia is going to reach out to a Madrona parent who has been active at that school. It is a challenge to reach out to people when folks are not at school.

The nominating committee has asked existing board members about taking executive positions. Many are planning to stay involved, but say they are probably too busy to take on executive roles. Jennie Rhoads contacted the PTSA and says that she is interested in heading up the Global Reading Challenge next year.

Question for Mr. Manriquez: Are there any ASB parents who we could recruit to get involved in the PTSA? Mr. Manriquez said he will think about that and ask around.

Timeline: we need to elect a new board next month at the May general meeting. Vivian says she will draft an email to send out the feeder school PTAs to try to recruit folks.

Question from Mr. Manriquez about how we recruit folks for the PTSA. Mr. Manriquez pointed out that often students don’t bring home the 1st week packet. Wondering if we can send something home via regular mail in the fall (like the Annual Fund mailings)? Ms. Marshall and Ms. Holmes help by sending that out since home addresses can’t be disclosed due to privacy rules. Suggested doing a PTSA table on the 1st day of school for 6th graders. The PTSA did do a table during the orientation in the cafeteria. That is another time to recruit folks.

Ms. Oatis suggested possibly inviting feeder school families to an upcoming Zoom PTSA meeting (Ms. Oatis and some staff could also attend). Suggestion to recruit incoming 6th grade parents to help out with the new family picnic in August. Linda asked Ms. Oatis if she would like us to reach out to the feeder school PTAs to see if Ms. Oatis could attend one of their meetings. Ms. Oatis said, sure, and to let her know about meeting dates. Gilia said she could check with McGilvra PTA. Vivian said she would check with Montlake and Lowell.

Question about how the counselors are planning to make connections with feeder schools to talk about things like math placement, etc. Ms. Oatis said she will check with the counselors to find out how they plan handle this during school closures.

Upcoming PTSA Meetings (online via Zoom, 6:30 – 8:00 PM)
- Tuesday, May 12 – PTSA board meeting
- Tuesday, May 26 – PTSA general meeting (vote on budget + elect new board)
- Tuesday, June 9 – PTSA board meeting (incoming + outgoing board)

Legislative Announcements (Andy Jensen)

Cuts in WA state budget affecting schools
Due to the effects of the coronavirus on Washington’s economy, Gov. Jay Inslee vetoed $445 million in spending from the state operating budget, including additional funds that would have been used for increasing the number of counselors and para-educators in schools. The good news is that there will be no cuts to existing functions.

**Other Topics – Questions/Comments**

Mr. Manriquez asked about deadlines for Department grants. Jen said that she will talk to Karen and have her send out a message to staff about deadlines.

**Meeting adjourned** at 8:00 PM