PTSA Zoom Meeting: 10/27/2020, 8:00 PM

(Meeting was called to order at 8:11 PM due to Zoom technical difficulties.)

Heather Fortner: Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda and meeting minutes are all on the PTSA website.

Dr. Kerman: Things are going along, there have been 6 cases of Covid. Other districts are admiring us for our preparation. So far, we've been doing great.

Mr. Bernhard: Sorry for the delay, we had a technical glitch. It is the end of October and we are the apple of everyone's eye. A lot of hard work and preparation, and a little luck, but we are still offering 5 days of instruction: in person and remote. We are doing full music program and PE classes and regular instruction on a daily basis. This is a tribute to the school board, staff, teachers, students, and families.

Students are doing well with wearing masks, but still need reminders for social distancing.

Social-emotional learning day: food trucks were a gigantic hit. Some students were congregating but all wore masks.

Teachers had a Professional Development day.

There were multiple venues for various presentations.

Seniors had first dibs today, which they appreciated, they have been missing out on things that previous classes have had.

Ann Tucker: Thank you for your leadership Mr. Bernhard, the board, and PTSA. Question about PVSA program: there is a lack of ability to do volunteer work outside of the home, will library programs qualify, like the Take and Make program?

Heather Fortner: Yes; the library has a web page that lists all available projects and specifies what will count and what won't count for PVSA. There is also information on the PVSA log and guidelines on the PTSA website.

Trish Marchese: We need a chair for PVSA this year, please reach out to Trish or Heather.

Ava Santamaria: Report: Community liaison for student government this year. Student Government is running 2 events: Spirit Week and the Pumpkin Drive at Emma Clark library. You can paint a pumpkin and put it outside library.

Thursday November 12th is the next Town Hall at the Student Government meeting. Students can attend in person if they are scheduled for that day or they can attend virtually. It will also be posted online, through Google classroom. There will be one for each grade. Ideas for fundraisers: meals on wheels is something they are looking into.

PTSA Budget Report: There is no budget report for this month, Angela could not join us today. She has filed the taxes for PTSA. There are still 3 outstanding checks for scholarships, will get addresses from guidance to mail them to recipients.

Trish Marchese: Update to minutes by Sue Rosenzweig.

Anti-racism/Justice taskforce: All in favor, no one opposed.

Sue Rosenzweig for Joint Council: Superintendent recommends that if you are traveling over the holiday you should go remote for 2 weeks. Do not rely on the state's website, contact administration for updated numbers. Per Dr. Dabrowski: The district needs substitutes, please go to the HR tab on the district website. Per Jeff Carlson: free lunch is through the rest of the year. The HS bell schedule change was a great idea and helped with bussing. The door lock replacement program is almost complete. Desk shields are optional at the secondary level. Request from Albany to monitor kids outside of school, be a parent, not a friend. Health report: on average, we are losing 5 adolescents to suicide every year. The PTA’s position is that we need to provide support. Social work needs a speaker or support materials, you can ask PTSA to help. The Reflections program will be completely virtual this year. Initial submissions will be scanned, at the next level the actual project will be reviewed. The theme is “I matter because…”

Membership: across the state/country, PTSA membership is down. Many families are under financial pressure. If you are not a member please join if you can. We can't do our work unless we are funded and we are primarily funded through membership.

Andrea Giantinoto: Membership report: 105 members, down from last year, 26 of that is faculty.

SEPTA dates: 11/23 at 7 (virtual); 12/16 parent network is virtual.

Ann Tucker: Building and facilities: how are plans changing as weather gets colder and students can't do as much outside?

Mr. Bernhard: If students are free: eg, study hall or lunch, they are released 5 minutes early and can walk to classroom and stand against the hall outside. Then when the bell rings, others leave. This relieves congestion in hallways. No outside eating in inclement weather so desks are added in gym corridor and desks in the fitness center corridor and overflow classrooms. This winter will be a continuation of this.

Parents can help with something: Period 1 roll call: they list up to several hundred students who have not completed the health survey, this becomes an obstacle and period 1 loses instruction time. Please put the word out to parents to please fill out the health survey as part of your routine in the morning.

Trish Marchese: If students don't have 1st period, and they don't fill out the survey until later, is that too late? Is there a cut-off time?

Mr. Bernhard: Students who do not come in until after period 1 do not get included in the roll call. Nurses print out the list at 7:04 for students who attend 1st period classes.

Trish Marchese: Can students go outside if it's warm enough during the winter?  
Mr. Bernhard: Yes, the courtyard can be kept open even if they can't be fully outside. The school will set up outside eating if students have jackets and want to sit outside, as long as there is no rain or snow.

Heather Fortner: How many kids use shields?

Mr. Bernhard: At the high school it is few and far between. I have heard it is the same at the junior high too. Only a minority of students use the shields, probably not more than 50 students.

Mr. Bernhard: At the Social-Emotional Learning Day we were able to line up a BBQ truck and lots of dessert trucks, but if you know more food trucks please let Mr. Bernhard know (for meals, not desserts). Outside vendor to do grab and go. 12/1 is the next Social-Emotional Learning Day. Everyone enjoyed the food trucks and the free cookie.

Heather Fortner: What about a pizza truck?

Mr. Bernhard: We can do a pizza truck next time, we had the cafeteria offer pizza today for students who could not afford the food truck or did not want to buy from the food truck.

Heather Fortner: Can O Sole Mio do a grab and go?

Mr. Bernhard: We can try for that on 12/1 and have the cafeteria serve something different.

Christine Meckley: Wanted to thank the administration and board for their continued efforts in keeping kids in school. Is there a place for students to put sports bags for winter months only? Only maybe a hundred kids who will need this option, not all students.

Mr. Kerman: We can bring it up to administration and talk it over.

Inger Germano: We can use cages for sports equipment instead of lockers.

Mr. Bernhard: We can also talk to Mr. Finnerty about it if it is sports-related.

Mr. Bernhard: For parents asking to be on the Anti-Racism Committee: we will not be starting a HS committee until Mrs. Pedisich has a district committee on 11/9. After that, Mr. Bernhard can invite parents to be a part of it. Mrs. Pedisich said we can hold the meetings at North Country instead of a Zoom meeting. We hope to put as many people on the committee as possible.

Heather Fortner: Thank you so much everyone and Mr. Bernhard, Mr. Kerman, and Ms. Germano.

Mr. Bernhard: Happy Halloween!

8:44 meeting adjourned.