

Sycamore Junior High PTO General Meeting
April 10, 2024 7:00 PM

Attendance:

Brian Laughlin, Jamie Mack

Board: Victoria Margroum, Debbie Kirby, Jeff Stechsulte, Amanda Middleton

Staff: Janelle Schunk

Board of Education members: Dr. Adrienne James, Paul Balent

Called to order at 7:00

Board of Education “Presentation”

Dr. Adrienne James

New board member. Previous Superintendent of Sycamore Schools.
She’s excited to be on the board and back working with the district.

Paul Balent

Two students in the district (Junior and 8th grader).
9 years on the board.

- Board of Education is made up of 5 people:
 - Sara Bitter – President
 - Paul Balent
 - Lynne Stieger
 - Victor Harris – new member
 - Dr. Adrienne James – new member
- Role of the Board
 - Adopt policy for school district
 - Hire Superintendent and Treasurer
 - Set goals for district
 - Collaborate with Administrators
 - Establish communication between district and community
 - Responsible for the finance of the district
 - Don’t run the day to day
- Board Meetings
 - 1st and 3rd Wednesday at the District Office and live streamed.
 - 6:00 is Executive Session (only 7 topics can be covered in these session since not open to the public)
 - 7:00 Public Session begins.
- Some of the current projects
 - Currently doing surveys of both high school and junior high faculty and students
 - Master Facility planning – nearing the end

- Pool is almost done (add water in June)
- Theater at the JH – identify there was a design error, insurance and architect companies are covering the cost of the correction, should be open the start of next school year
- o Strategic Plan survey– collected ~100 data points, data is currently being analyzed by an outside company and will be given to the district office at the end of April. Fundamentals of the strategic plan are not changing. How we get to the goals could change with this recent work.
- o Working next year’s staffing based on enrollment.
Note: Forecasting enrollment to go up for 5 or 6 years and then expected it will start to go down.
- o Finances
 - Delivered against the financial commitments of the Master Facility Plan
 - Operating Levy – last one was 2016 and the commitment was it would last 5 years which has been exceeded. 2025 or 2026 likely looking at a new operating levy.
 - Staff Contracts
 - Classified Staff (custodial, nutritional, etc.) - completed contract in 2023
 - Certified Staff (teachers) - Currently contract expired June '24. Generally they're a 3 year contract. In discussion for a new contract. Negotiations are very collaborative.

Principal’s Report – Janelle Schunk

- AIR testing – 4/11 and 4/12
- This monthly coffee talk was canceled. There will be another one in May
- Donuts with a Difference Maker - 7th graders can invite someone to attend on 4/30 and 8th graders on May 1.
- Teacher Appreciation Week is the first full week of May –The administration is planning to manage the activities and will be using PTO funds. They plan to do a fun activity each day, raffles, provide food, etc.
- A Fasting Room started this Ramadan – roughly 20 kids utilized the room. This led to a request for a Prayer Room. The school created a space which was open for 15 min during prayer time.
- Greg Cole was announced as the new Principal of EH Greene starting next school year. Janelle is very sad to see him leave the JH, but is also very excited about the collaboration and things they can jointly create for the 5-8th grades. They met with the Association for Middle Age Educators. They plan to leverage the strengths of the 2 buildings and jointly work on this 4 grade band.
- Hiring needs for next year: 2 English Teachers, Reading Intervention teachers, Science Teacher, Media Center person. Last stage of the hiring process is the candidate teaches 45 minutes in one of our JH classes.
- Janelle will likely be the PTO Liaison for next year replacing Greg Cole in this role.

President’s Report - Victoria Margroum

- 2024-2025 JH PTO Executive Board Updates.

- o Co-Presidents: Kristofer Johnston and Victoria Margroum
- o Treasurer: Lesley Davis
- o VP of Programs: Amanda Middleton and Kristy Felss
- o VP of Ways and Means: Manika Maheshwari & Gina Cutshall
- o Corresponding Secretary: Jamie Mack and Deanna Boyd
- o Recording Secretary: Debbie Biggs
- No additional nominations from the floor.
- Fundraiser Updates – mid-September, committee is filled, working on a theme, Janelle will be the contact for next year
- A majority of the committee chair positions have already been filled.
- 8th Grade Day budget was increased to \$3750. Based on increased costs and having to cover the Blue Ash Rec Center rental, the Executive Board approved a \$750 budget increase during their 2/27 meeting.

Treasurer's Report - Belinda Busemeyer

- Belinda wasn't able to make the meeting
- No report

VP of Ways and Means - John Bromels

- John was unable to make the meeting
- No report

VP of Programs - Kristy Felss/Amanda Middleton

- Planning is underway for 7th Grade Day which will include movies and snacks
- 8th Grade Day Committee is busy planning for a fun day.

Ambassadors - Harshana Patel

- No report

Corresponding Secretary - Debbie Flinchpaugh-Kirby

- Proposed 24/25 PTO Board slate was presented by Victoria earlier in the meeting.

Recording Secretary – Jeff Stechschulte

- Approval of the 3/13/24 General Meeting Minutes – there was not a quorum at tonight's meeting, so approval of these minutes will occur at the next meeting.
- Jeff pointed out the list of proposed changes to the JH PTO By-Laws (page 2 of the 3/13/24 Minutes). The proposed updated By-Laws and the list of changes will be posted on the PTO webpage. The revised By-Laws will be voted on at the next general PTO meeting.

Adjourned at 8:30

Respectfully submitted by Jeff Stechschulte

JH PTO Bylaws – February 24 Proposed Changes

Beyond format and wordsmiths, the changes were:

- Replaced Association of Sycamore Schools Parent Organizations (ASSPO) with Sycamore PTO Presidents' Council.
- Removed 501C status is established through ASSPO.
- Increased minimum number of general meetings to 4 meetings (1 fall and 3 in spring) based on current election procedures.
- Changed definition of quorum for general meeting. Removing requirement of at least 10 people.
"A quorum for the transaction of business at general PTO meetings exist when the number of PTO members who are not members of the Executive Board exceed the number of Executive Board members present."
- Removed reference to a single President and President Emeritus.
- Added reference to voting on Officers if meeting has to be virtual
"(*if meeting participation is virtual, a Google form or equivalent will be created to handle the voting for those that are virtual)"
- Switched Budget is approved by general PTO from May to first meeting of the school year.
- Switched to Board approves contract vs. getting Board approval before signing contract.
- Added Executive Board responsibility section
- Added 'representative from the school administration' to member of Executive Board.
- VP of Parent and Staff removed
- Did not add VP Ambassador Rep to the list of Board positions.
- Increased annual amount the Executive Board can approve from \$1500 to \$3000 maintaining the \$750 maximum for any one event.
- Eliminated mention of a Budget Committee. Executive Board defines annual budget and present to general membership for approval.
- Replaced School Grant Committee with Executive Board. Executive Board manages the process and reviews the request before presenting to general membership for approval.
- Removed timeline from School Grants and just specified process. Only exception is "By the end of April all money should be spent with appropriate reimbursements made."