Board and General Membership Meeting Minutes  
February 12, 2013  
7:00pm – 9:00pm  
Room 240 (Library)


Call to Order: PTSA President Celeste Fritzson called the meeting to order at 7:30pm in the TJ Library, Room 240.

President’s Report: Celeste Fritzson
- Celeste Fritzson presented the January minutes for approval. Celeste noted that copies of the Fairfax County Youth Survey (referenced at the January PTSA meeting) are available in the Main Office. The minutes were approved as written by Jim Rose and Natalie Goldring.
- Celeste noted that the PTSA Executive Committee will be holding three Roundtable meetings over the next two months to solicit feedback on communication, to encourage use of This Week at TJ, and to find replacements for next school year.
- Celeste encouraged everyone to volunteer for the Class of 2013’s ANGP on June 15. The party will take place at the Audrey Moore Rec center from 10:30pm Saturday to 5am Sunday. Stephen Sebastian noted the online link to sign up to volunteer.
- Celeste called attention to the fact that less than 1/6 of our TJ population has joined the PTSA this year and encouraged everyone to join.
- Celeste noted that both TJ I-Nite performances on Friday and Saturday are sold out. Dr. Glazer voiced that there are a limited number of tickets sold, and this year ticket sales procedures (no early sales, limit of 5 tickets per person and sales in two locations) were to make distribution more equitable; however, tickets sold out in less than ten minutes. Alternatives, such as opening the gym for viewing, performing at George Mason, and streaming the performances live are being considered in the future.
- Celeste said parents are asking how to handle student concerns over teachers. Celeste noted that the administration is working on a specific protocol to follow and this document will be available and accessible to all parents soon. However, Celeste reiterated that it is important for a student to approach a teacher and advocate for himself.
- Celeste informed parents that Greg Myers, School Psychologist, will be holding a meeting in March for parents to cover the depression screening information that was distributed to sophomores and juniors.
- In line with the PTSA’s Health and Wellness efforts, Celeste and Grace Becker discussed putting healthy vending machines in the school.
- Celeste shared information on locker availability at the school and that anyone who requests a locker will be given one. The renovation calls for unlockable cubbies, in addition to lockers. If there is a need, the cubbies can be converted into lockable lockers.

SGA’s Report: Williams Song on behalf of Allison Chou
Williams Song, the freshman representative to SGA, presented the following update:
- Sixth annual middle school leadership conference was a success with over 60 middle school students participating in five workshops.
- TJ Service week is March 11-15: Meaningful Monday (letter writing to St Jude’s patients and overseas military personnel), Toy Tuesday (bring in toys for donation), Welfare Wednesday (bring in canned goods and food items), Thrift Thursday (bring in clothes to donate) and Spirit Day (dress in a funky style), and Eco Friday (focus on recycling).
Faculty Report: Jim Rose

- In advance, Jim thanked the PTSA for the upcoming Hospitality Valentine’s Lunch.
- Jim noted that semester exams had gone smoothly, despite the weather and changes to the testing schedule.
- Jim called attention to the depression screenings that he administered to juniors in his physics class. He noted that initially he was skeptical of the initiative, but he felt the program’s main message (do not be afraid to talk about depression) had a positive impact.

Government Relations Committee: Cheryl Buford

Cheryl shared the following issues that the Government Relations Committee is currently dealing with:

- **Non-Fairfax Counties asked to share in cost of TJ renovations**: A recent Washington Post article (http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-01-29/local/36617175_1_board-members-school-systems-prince-william) noted that counties (Arlington, Falls Church, Prince William and Loudoun) that have students enrolled at TJ have been asked to contribute to the renovations of TJ.

- **Overview of TJ as a Governor’s school**: TJ is one of 19 Governor’s Schools in the Commonwealth of VA. TJ is the largest, accounting for one-third of the Governor’s School students. One of the benefits of being a Governor’s School is that we receive a governor’s supplement which amounts to approximately $4,400 per student. Cheryl noted, however, that only a percent (25%) of this money goes to FCPS to support TJ. Cheryl also noted that TJ is different from other Governor’s Schools because the school is not governed by a regional board, but instead is under the FCPS Board.

- **Dr. Glazer’s Comments on Governor’s School Funding**: Dr. Glazer noted that the state budget contributes approximately $1,100 more per student toward the TJ budget on average compared to other FCPS high schools, excluding special education funding. The state does not fund TJ for full enrollment. The state gave the school money based on 1,650 students for 2013, and has proposed to increase that cap to 1,700 students for 2014 and 1,725 students for 2015. It is up to FCPS’s discretion to determine how much of the Governor’s School money is given to TJ. Dr. Glazer acknowledged that he would say we are underfunded, but that geographically we are in a good area to develop partnerships and raise additional funds from companies.

- **Government Relations Committee**: Cheryl noted that she is the sole person on this Committee, and she welcomes volunteers. Next week a group of students from TJ will go to Richmond to thank delegates who have put in for increases for the number of students covered by this supplement and encourage continued support.

- **Celeste Fitzton Discussed Forming an Ad Hoc Committee**: Celeste noted that the PTSA would like to form an Ad Hoc committee to advocate for all counties in an equitable way. We are looking for parents from each of the participating jurisdictions to serve on this committee, Currently Natalie Goldring and John Moses are representing Arlington, Michele and John Gonzalez are representing Prince William, Jenny Lay is representing Falls Church, and Felix Nathan is representing Loudoun.

Principal’s Report: Dr. Evan Glazer

Dr. Glazer discussed the following topics:

- **Renovation and counties contributing**: Dr. Glazer made it clear that we only know that the FCPS Superintendent has made a request to the other participating communities to contribute to TJ renovations. When TJ was established in 1984, there were not many Virginia Department of Education regulations on governance and participation, but from 1998 on, regulations have been tightened. No ultimatum or conditional statements have resulted yet from FCPS Board’s request to other counties.

- **Fully supports broad participation as a regional school**: Dr. Glazer stated that having 1,850 students coming from different areas and contributing to diversity and feeder and extension programs (STEMbassadors and summer programs) enhance the quality of a TJ education.

- **Background**: Dr. Glazer shares with the Regional Superintendents Advisory board the following: stories in the media, changes in policy, renovation plans, and information about the direction and vision of the school. The FCPS School Board did decide, in line with other Governor’s Schools existing practices, to ask other counties to share in the renovation costs proportionally. Issues to be considered: request came after approval to renovate was decided by Fairfax County and the renovation plans had been made; there was no vote by the Superintendent’s Advisory Board because the governing structure is Fairfax County School Board; and funds for renovations were approved by taxpayers through Fairfax County bond(s). At this point, Dr. Glazer said we do not know what happens to our status as a Governor’s School if we do not have participating school divisions (in addition to Fairfax County).

- **Important value of education of our school**: Dr. Glazer noted it is important to reiterate the important value of the education of our school as a regional Governor’s School. PTSA is forming a committee to help articulate this message. Natalie Goldring stressed that bringing school board members and senior staff from outside jurisdictions for tours of the school increases awareness of our school and its special role.

- **Summer school**: TJ will offer summer school at Woodson HS from July 8- August 8. Registration opens March 11. We cannot offer the summer research institute because this building will be inaccessible to the public as a result of renovation. It is expected that economics personal finance will be online, but due to the high demand, there is still investigation underway to provide economics and personal finance face-to-face in many locations system wide.

- **Renovation**: Within the next month, Dr. Glazer said there should be a contract, so that the wrecking ball could come as early as spring break and as late as the summer. Next year will bring different traffic patterns and add more learning cottages. It is anticipated that the cafeteria will shut down by the end of year and a makeshift cafeteria space will be created upstairs. Hot food will still be served downstairs, and the students would eat throughout the building.

- **Theft update**: Dr. Glazer stated that a year ago we faced significant concern about theft. Although the numbers are much lower, the administration is still educating students - let us know when things are missing, keep valuables in lockers, keep track of serial numbers on technology.
• **Academic interventions**: Dr. Glazer reminded everyone that 9 months ago TJ was in the media about students having difficulties in honors level math. With the second quarter over, Dr. Glazer provided the following statistics on academic interventions: from class 2016, 15% are on intervention list; class of 2015, 10% on intervention list; class of 2014 has less than 10% on intervention list; and seniors are on the interventions list if their diplomas are at risk. Dr. Glazer says gains have been made, and noted that there is an intervention specialist, Mark Forgash, at the school who is ensuring that students get the support they need.

• **Addressed question on last year’s media problem with math**: Dr. Glazer noted that he is teaching math this year, and there are many variables in the mix: students adjusting to meet expectations, wider variability of student readiness, interventions are still continuing. One parent asked if there is any relationship between students’ geographical location and need for help, and Dr. Glazer concluded that there did not seem to be a relationship.

• **Admissions process addressed**: In response to a question posed by a parent, Grace Becker, first vice-president, responded that the only change the School Board made for this year’s admissions cycle is that application essays (student information sheets) would not be written at home, but instead all semifinalists were brought back to the middle school where students wrote three additional essays for 1.5 hours. Teacher recommendations and weighting of the tests remained the same. Grace also noted that last summer the NAACP and Coalition of the Silent filed a federal complaint against FCPS within the US Department of Education alleging that the TJ admissions process discriminates against Latinos and African Americans. Recently the NAACP withdrew from this complaint.

**Treasurer’s Report: John Moses**

- John noted that copies of the financial report are on tables. John stated that there are still directories for sale, encouraged parents to join the PTSA.
- On the expense side, we have built up resources. In next few months, we will be spending money on the Shakespeare Festival, ANGP, equipment and technology, and the Principal’s Fund.

**PTSA Committee Representatives**

- Partnership Fund: Hilde Kahn noted that the yearend fundraising drive ended well and thanked parents for supporting the Partnership Fund’s recent phonathon. She also noted that junior parents are needed to be lab captains to help raise money for that the senior labs for next year.
- Academic Boosters: Natalie Goldring thanked parents for their support of the recent phonathon to support TJ’s more than 20 academic teams.
- Hospitality: Celeste thanked Ginger and Lakshmi for refreshments.

**Announcements and Upcoming Events**

- Grace Becker noted that Professor Art Benjamin from Harvey Mudd College, the Mathemagician, will be at Longfellow MS on February 24, at 7pm. FCAG is sponsoring the free event which is open to the public.
- Yuyan Zhou noted that Chinese chess team, sponsored by Academic Boosters, will be at our school on Friday. Students and parents are needed to play host to these visiting students.
- Yuyan Zhou, an architect, also voiced that she finds it disheartening that traditional methods of engineering, such as civil and mechanical engineering, are being overlooked at the school in the renovation process. She noted that this renovation would provide a chance for TJ students to get involved in planning and budgeting a project from start to finish.
- Diversity Committee meeting on February 13, from 7:30-8:30pm.

**Adjournment**: Celeste adjourned the meeting at 9:00pm.