TJHSST Principal’s Coffee & Board/General Membership Minutes
November 8, 2012
9:15am – 11:00am
TJHSST Cafeteria

Attendees: Evan Glazer, Celeste Fritzson, Grace Becker, Lakshmi Bala, John Moses, Robin Hatanpää, Natalie Goldring, Vicki Ruiter, Yvonne Shincovich, Pam Swift, Ellen Jung, Laura Naide, Sherrie Burson, Jaheda Guliwala, Hong Yan, Kala Desai, Ginger Bugaighes, Michele Lezama, Joyce Kasparian, Grace Andringa, Mary Bullen, Caroline Chow, Fayé Henris, Julie Klosky, Jo Koeniger, Gregory McKinney, Elaine Yu, Rita Foss, Shawn Lukas, Lisa Savage, Nancy Roodberg, Laura Fifer, Marilu Ching, Johanna Mace, Jack Laveson, Catherine Anderson, Anna Ryjik, Alice Tang, Jinny Ley, Diane White, Joanna Wang, Sara Schneider, Ann Burroughs Sun, Luhong Bo, Cathy Ganley, Janet Minkler, Amanda Nelson, William Lucht, Cheryl Burbford

Principal’s Coffee Chat: TJHSST Principal Dr. Glazer

Dr. Glazer started the session with an informal question and answer session, where parents are encouraged to ask questions. The topics below were discussed:

- **Lack of sleep.** Dr. Glazer acknowledged that sleep deprivation needs to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, since the following all affect productivity – rate at which a student works, difficulty of the course, outside interests, and interest in social media. Parents are advised that if they observe their child is not getting sufficient sleep because the demands of school are too high: 1) then first talk with your student and consider cutting something out 2) meet with your counselor, who is tuned in to the amount of time and the course requires, to get a good sense of any unrealistic expectations. Dr. Glazer stressed that some students have perfectionist tendencies and may spend twice as long as another students on schoolwork, and the counselor is a good resource to help put this into perspective.

- **Teacher quality and evaluation.** Dr. Glazer discussed the new state-wide teacher evaluation process implemented this year, where 40% of teacher evaluation is based on student performance. At TJ, the question is how to set up metrics to determine student performance since standardized scores are not a good measure. Dr. Glazer referenced collaborative efforts of the faculty to create Learning Goals posted in the School Improvement Plan (see bullet point below). When asked if this evaluation includes student feedback, Dr. Glazer responded that student feedback is not part of the evaluation process, but it is an important factor. Student feedback is collected in the classrooms, and teachers are asked by administration what they learned from their class feedback. Dr. Glazer cautioned against using websites that rate teachers. Feedback from counselors is also valuable in evaluating teacher performance, and students are encouraged to talk with counselors and share feedback.

- **Schools Learning Goals.** Dr. Glazer referenced the School Improvement Plan, which contains student achievement goals for each class. For more information, please see [http://www.tjhsst.edu/news/docs/SIPET20112012final.pdf](http://www.tjhsst.edu/news/docs/SIPET20112012final.pdf)

- **Blackboard Homework Postings:** Dr. Glazer reiterated the policy - homework should be communicated to students before they leave the class - and then posted to Blackboard by the end of that day. If a teacher is not relaying assignments and posting assignments to Blackboard late, then 1) students should approach the teacher as a group and note the posted assignment time and 2) if the problem continues, then bring it to the attention of the counselor and the administrators. With regard to Telelearn Day and holidays, Dr. Glazer acknowledged it is not fair to students to have additional assignments. A parent inquired if new instructors at the school have gone through orientation programs and mentors are utilized to communicate with new staff. Dr. Glazer stated that a syllabus should be held to standards whether or not there are power outages/storms.

- **TJ HELP Desk:** Dr. Glazer highlighted the new TJ Help Desk Feature which can be accessed from a link on the left column of the TJ website [www.tjhsst.edu](http://www.tjhsst.edu). The Help Desk is accessed through a form that parents and students can use to ask questions or address particular concerns; it requires an email and student ID, for authentication purposes to avoid spams.

- **Email Acknowledgement from Teachers/Staff:** Dr. Glazer addressed expectations regarding email response times. An email to an administrator should receive a response by the next business day, whereas an email to a teacher, should be given several days response time. Dr. Glazer reminded parents to let their students be the advocates. One parent voiced dissatisfaction with this process saying two emails to a teacher had gone unanswered. Dr. Glazer said acknowledging an email is a fair request and noted that this parent should approach administration with the teacher’s name. Another parent commented the TJ faculty on the great email responses from teachers and administration.

- **TJ Admissions Discussion:** Dr. Glazer shared the three concerns that he addressed in a letter to the School Board: 1) TJ teachers should be involved in the math portion of the admission test instead of outsourcing 2) TJ Administration should have access to admissions data so conclusions can be formed as to what to expect from incoming class 3) Allow non-TJ students to have limited access to TJ’s extension program, for instance summer school and online classes. Because TJ summer school will be held off campus this summer, Dr. Glazer sees it as an ideal time to let other students take advantage of TJ classes, while at the same time not denying any TJ students. A parent asked whether this would also apply to special courses offered during the school year, and Dr. Glazer said if the class had space, he would not be
opposed to opening to other students but that he does not anticipate this happening. Grace Becker, PTSA First Vice President, added that the School Board had voted not to make changes to the weighting of five factors for TJ Admissions for the 2013-2014 school year, but that the Student Information Sheet would be administered in a controlled setting. A parent asked if Dr. Glazer’s letter could be made public, and there was some discussion over how to password protect it and put it on the web site.

- **Summer school:** One parent asked if summer school is a necessity, and Dr. Glazer stated that each year approximately 1/3 of TJ students take a summer school course. This gives students more diverse options during the school year and allows for acceleration in certain subjects. Dr. Glazer encouraged parents to discuss with students now why they want to accelerate.

**Call to Order: PTSA President Celeste Fritzson called the meeting to order at 9:59am in the TJ Cafeteria.**

**President’s Report:**
- **October Minutes.** Celeste Fritzson presented the October minutes for approval. The minutes were approved as written by Joanna Mace and Kala Desai.
- **Addendum to School Directory.** Celeste encouraged parents to sign up for the supplementary addendum of the 2012-2013 School Directory on circulating ipads. She acknowledged that it would be nice to make the addendum available as a link on the website, but privacy issues prevent this. Prepaid directories can be picked up in the front office.
- **FCPS TJ Admissions Work Session.** Celeste encouraged interested parents to attend the Monday, November 12, School Board worksession where TJ Admissions practices will be further discussed. Celeste also thanked everyone for signing the petition for summer weighting.
- **December 6, PTSA Meeting.** Celeste invited all parents to attend the December PTSA meeting with a special presentation by TJ school psychologist Greg Myers who will speak about the signs and symptoms of depression and promote Mental Wellness week. Also a special guest speaker, Wendi Eldh will share her story about her son, Zach Brunt, a TJ graduate from the class of 2011, who tragically took his own life last spring.
- **Theft at Homecoming Football Game.** Celeste encouraged parents to remind students to protect their valuables, especially with the upcoming holidays. Backpacks left outside and unattended were reported stolen during the Homecoming football game. One parent enquired how the renovation plan affects lockers, and Dr. Glazer reported that there will be lockable cubbies and there will be sufficient lockers to meet demand. Another parent asked if the theft problem might get worse when construction begins. Dr. Glazer countered that he does not anticipate this – construction zones are blocked off and workers will not be in the same spaces as students. Dr. Glazer again stressed the importance of the lobby guard machine in front, which also helps with the safety of students. Celeste noted that PTSA has spent money on online resources for the library, and the librarian Anne Applin had sent a kind note of thanks to the PTSA.
- **Celeste congratulated our TJ students who have won Intel, Siemens, National Merit Scholar and Marching Band accolades.**

**SGA President’s Report: William Lucht (Vice-President)**
- William gave an update on the successful October 15-20 Homecoming week, which required a lot of planning for the pep rally, competition and half time show.
- The SGA has started working on freshman class elections, since currently an interim government is in place.
- William stated that weekly meetings with Dr. Glazer on Thursdays have been productive. Topics such as the impact of homework assigned on Telelearn Days have been discussed.

**Special Presentation by Amanda Nelson - High School Diplomats Program**

Amanda Nelson, a senior student, presented the High School Diplomats program which is a cultural exchange program with Japanese students. Amanda noted the program involves hosting one or two Japanese students, then spending time over the summer at Princeton, where groups of students come together to learn about languages and cultures. Furthermore participants can apply to go to Japan the following summer.

**Treasurer’s Report: John Moses**
- John noted that copies of latest budget summary are distributed on tables and that the PTSA has not exceeded expenses. John pointed out that the PTSA is conservative in terms of both revenues and expenses.
- John noted that some committees are self-funded so the only committees listed are the ones with budgets.

**PTSA Committee Reports:**
- **Government Relations Committee: Cheryl Buford** – Cheryl noted that as a Governor’s School, TJ receives additional funding, and every year, a group of TJ students goes to Richmond for the day to lobby legislators to support the Governors’ School. Cheryl noted that anyone who knows their delegate or state senator is welcome to assist with setting up a meet and greet opportunity for our students. She also welcome parents to the committee to help us better communicate with our delegates.
- **Membership: Pam Swift** - Currently the PTSA has 808 members, which is slightly behind our numbers from this time a year ago. Pam noted that national PTA dues need to be paid by the end of this month and encouraged parents to join.
- **Diversity committee: Michele Lezama** – Michele noted that the ten class TJ Admission preparation course is currently underway with over 60 participating middle schoolers. Michele encouraged interested parents to attend the Diversity
Committee meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of every month. For more information contact tjdiversity@gmail.com.

- **DSS Parent Liaison: Leslie Dupree-Culman** – Leslie is setting up monthly roundtable coffees, one for each class, with the Department of Student Services. The first one is in November, and sign-up sheets are circulated if you are interested in joining.

**Booster Group Reports:**
- **Band Boosters: Laura Naide** Laura noted that TJ Band continues to receive accolades and has been invited to Indiana to participate in a competition, so fundraising is important. Please see www.tjbands.org for more information.
- **Academic Boosters: Natalie Goldring.** Natalie encouraged parents to join Academic Boosters to fund expenses for over 20 academic teams, including sponsor travel expenses.

**Partnership Fund: Greg McKinney**
Greg stated that the PF raises additional money from the corporate world to fund lab equipment and wish lists, and he invited everyone to the next parent advisory meeting on Thursday, November 15. For questions regarding the PF, please send an email to tjpfvolunteerchair@gmail.com.

**New Business**
- Sara Schneider voiced concern regarding the lack of a crossing guard in the afternoons for juniors who park down the street in the church parking. Distributing reflectors was discussed. Dr. Glazer reminded parents that students who park at Home Depot risk being towed.
- Nancy Roodberg spoke about the nonprofit company Rebootreuserebuild that her family started to refurbish computers less than five years old by wiping the hard drives clean and loading windows software on them so that school programs in need can take advantage of these computers. For more information, see http://www.rebootreuserebuild.org.

**Adjournment:** Celeste adjourned the meeting at 11:08am.