Board and General Membership Meeting
January 15, 2014
7-9PM Trailers 1&2


Call to Order: PTSA President Grace Becker called the meeting to order at 7:33PM.

President’s Report: Grace Becker
- Taping the meeting approved by unanimous consent.
- Approval of December 2013 minutes: Grace presented the December 2013 minutes for approval. The minutes were approved as written.

She briefed the PTSA on recent developments in FCPS, including the proposed budget for FY 2015. The proposed budget would impose fees for AP tests, and would also increase class size by one at the high school level.

Grace Becker also briefed the PTSA on a proposal pending in the state legislature to increase funding for the full-time Governor’s Schools (TJ, Maggie Walker, and Appomattox). Another proposal would move toward fully funding our students – TJ is currently funded at 1725 students, but has over 1800.

SGA Report: Joey Valery, SGA President, reported that the freshman class is planning their first dance, which will be February 14th. February 28th is I-Nite. Tickets will be sold online this year.

SGA is hoping that the new student-led Honor Council will pick up steam in the second semester. They are trying to initiate a cultural change and help students understand that cheating is unacceptable. The focus will be on restorative justice; the council will not have any punitive capacity. Council members have been trained by county officials.

Fairfax County Youth Survey presentation: Dr. DeDe Bailer
This is the third year that youth survey data have been diaggeregated by pyramid. The presentation uses 2012-2013 data, so the seniors referred to in the survey are the students who graduated in June 2013.
The survey has methods of “bumping out” inconsistent surveys, incomplete reports, or other problems. Over 46,000 students participated; about 3,000 surveys were deleted.


As students demonstrate more protective factors, they are markedly less likely to engage in risk behaviors. TJ students have fewer risk behaviors than the FCPS averages in virtually all cases. However, TJ students are far below the county averages in the percentage of students getting eight or more hours of sleep.

The discussion of the presentation included concern about the number of students who said they had been the victim or aggressor in bullying incidents. One question was whether these bullying incidents were predominantly during the school day or during extra-curricular activities. There was also concern about the phrasing of some of the questions on the survey, however. For example, the question that’s referred to as dealing with “bullying” is actually phrased more broadly: “How many times in the past year has anyone bullied, taunted, ridiculed, or teased you?”

Greg Meyers, School Psychologist, pointed out that TJ faculty and staff are working to increase protective factors at TJ, and that the first week of February is the student-run mental wellness week, focusing on awareness of mental health issues.

TJ staff are working to build capacity among students to be peer helpers. One way is through youth mental health first aid, so that students are better able to discern when a student needs the help of a professional.

He pointed out that parents, teachers and students would be meeting that week to talk about academic integrity and homework. Questions to be addressed include: Is homework a problem? If so, what kind of a problem is it? If homework is the reason students are not sleeping, what can we do to change that? If homework is not the reason, what is the reason?

Question: Is there any prospect of doing surveys of parents or students to get a broader perspective?

Greg Meyers: I would like us to study that a bit more so that we’re not just working off assumptions.

Laura McConnaughey, Teacher Liaison to the PTSA, thanked parents for the Valentine’s lunch, which was held in January this year. There are some growing pains associated with the renovations; access to restrooms, etc., and the students share some of these frustrations as well.
**Principal's Report:** Dr. Evan Glazer introduced staff members who attended the meeting.

Academic advising is coming up; students will be selecting their new courses in February. There will be two new math courses: Probability Theory and Concrete Math – both have Multivariable Calculus as a pre-requisite. The CAD lab is being transformed into Engineering and Design Research. There will be a new Mobile and Web Application Development Senior Research lab. The prerequisites will be waived for rising seniors, since it’s a new lab. The Humanities Division is adding AP Art History.

Because of budget pressures, average class size may increase, which translates into fewer teachers in the building. Factors that could minimize reductions will include whether the Board of Supervisors increases funding for FCPS and/or possible funding increases from the state legislature.

The school division has not yet approved the proposal for post-AP, semester-long courses in foreign languages. In past years, some post-AP language classes haven’t had enough students sign up; we have to have particular enrollment levels in classes in order to offer them. We’re trying to maintain reasonable core class sizes while also being able to offer our special electives.

The new Honor Council will have the opportunity to work with a student who has committed an infraction. It will help influence the administrators’ decisions on consequences. Egregious offenses that can result in suspension will not be considered by the honor council.

Renovations: issues with mud, freeze/thaw cycles, and bumpy roads. We’re working with the school division to get the back of the school repaved. We just opened some trailers/learning cottages at Weyanoke.

Good news – our former liaison Bruce Butler is back with us full-time. He’s on the ground, talking with design and construction.

**PTSA Committee and Booster Group Reports**

All Night Grad Party (ANGP) report – ANGP volunteers are getting a late start and are asking for help. We tentatively have Audrey Moore as the site. Kickoff meeting is at the end of January; ANGP needs volunteers from all of the TJ classes.

Theater Boosters: A Taste of Honey is February 7-8th, and will be done as a theatre in the round.

Volunteer coordinators: Robin Hatanpää reported that the volunteer coordinators did not receive any responses to the request for help with JLC, and that they still need 4-5 volunteers. They also need Science Fair volunteer judges and volunteers for I-Nite.
Campaign for TJ: Hilde Kahn reported that the Campaign for TJ is doing really well, especially with the freshman class. The Campaign is doing lots of events, including a Lunar New Year gathering.

**Treasurer’s Report** Enit Lulushi encouraged everyone to continue making purchases through the TJ Amazon portal.

Motion to adjourn by Celina Walton, seconded by Ginger Bugaighis. Meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.

*Next meeting is Wednesday February 12th from 7:30-9PM.*