**Mark Twain Middle School PTA General Membership Meeting**

**November 17, 2020**

**Virtual Platform: Zoom**

President, Cori Bitterman, called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

A quorum was established (15 PTA members in attendance).

**Attendees:** Cori Bitterman, Nicol Lee, Chris Reese, Tali Burress, Samantha Mulvaney, Shelby Workman, Melissa Montgomery, Jacqui, Tysen & Kathryn Perszyk, Karl tamAi, Michael Montante, Jim Dahl, Andrew Lempp, Ellen Mayer-Splain, Heather Viehl-Yee, Betsy Jean Yakes, Kacy Verdi, Corea Smith

*(Sign in sheet via SurveyMonkey was completed by the above 19 respondents; however, Zoom participation numbers showed 20 attendees/devices).*

PRESIDENT, Cori Bitterman:

Called meeting to order and introduced Ms. Montgomery

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT, Ms. Montgomery:

Mr. Miller wanted Ms. Montgomery to share information about the cohorts and returning to school. Following guidance from the CDC, the Fairfax County Health Department and School Board agreed to the metrics for return to school. To start a cohort (cohort 5 was supposed to start today), the number of new cases per 100,000 within the last 14 days has to be less than 200 for 7 consecutive days. That number went over 200 yesterday and today it was at 220 at the start of the day. We have not been less than 200 so could affect starting a new cohort. The current cohorts remain but we’ll be halted if the number of cases stays above 200 through next Monday, those currently in the building might go back to virtual. There are 12 students in the building right now. We do not know yet if the current pause on the corhots will affect the group 8 (January 26th) start date. So far, the pause has not affected group 8’s start date.

The second primary metric is the percent positivity rate. It can’t be above 10% and right now we are at 7.4%. CDC changed that recently from 5% to 10% and the 7 consecutive day rule applies.

The ability of a school to implement mitigation strategies is considered. Teams are visiting school to rate the current strategies: hand washing, cleaning, contact tracing, mask wearing.

10 students go to Twain on Mondays from Level 1 English learnings and Tuesday through Friday, the school has two intellectually disabled students.

A staff member tested positive with COVID this week but had no contact with students and was not in a public facing position. Several families have reported positive tests but they are not in the current cohorts and have not been in the building. Several staff members have reported contact with someone who were tested positive and have taken necessary quarantine steps.

Mr. Miller will continue to contact families regarding positive testing among staff and students. School is being very careful to adhere to confidentiality rules as well as health department guidance.

TREASURER REPORT, Chris Reese:

Shelby placed links in the chat so attendees could view the files in the dropbox. The membership and spirit events are the PTA’s income for this year. Budget for this looks like last year, as cannot make too many assumptions about this year. No events taking place where the PTA is selling t-shirts or concessions. No major revenue coming in as we are not selling concessions.

* Panera Spirit Night revenue has not yet been reported but will try to include in next month’s meeting update.
* Spiritwear sales came to $133 as of today. The store offers seasonal-wear such as long sleeves, short sleeves, masks, etc.
  + Spiritwear is entirely online. Lots of options and nice designs available.
  + Spiritwear link:
  + [*https://1stplacespiritwear.com/schools/VA/Alexandria/Mark+Twain+Middle+School*](https://1stplacespiritwear.com/schools/VA/Alexandria/Mark+Twain+Middle+School)
  + For November, offering $5 discount expires on Sunday at midnight. Expect another code in about two weeks.
  + Spiritwear is good quality. The sizes run a little small so take account of that when ordering.
* $44 for Amazon Smile this quarter. If you go to smile.amazon.com, you can set up your Amazon account to put a small fraction towards a charitable cause. Please select Mark Twain Middle PTA.
* Received 501c -3 IRS determination letter that we are a nonprofit organization.
* Paid for liability insurance and that is a major annual expense.

PRESIDENT, Cori Bitterman:

Motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting was made by Shelby and seconded by Ellen. The minutes were approved. Passed with 13 votes. Need to figure how best to take a vote. Currently, Zoom attendees do a thumbs up reaction and the board counts the number of thumbs up.

**New Business:**

Teacher of the month is Kristen Rumph, department chair of special education. Will receive a gift from the PTA.

Working on continued virtual events to keep people connected. This month is “I am thankful for” campaign. Got 29 submissions from staff and students. These will show up on the morning announcements tomorrow and Friday before everyone goes on break and on Facebook with security features for the student names to protect their privacy.

Facebook page: Search Mark Twain MS PTA. This is also a good way to see reminders and information.

[*https://www.facebook.com/marktwainmspta*](https://www.facebook.com/marktwainmspta)

For December, Mark Twain’s birthday mustache selfie submission via Schoology. Looking at getting the information out before Thanksgiving break. Submit selfies first week in December and will share those on the announcements. Helps celebrate no shave November.

The PTA will host a virtual gingerbread house decorating contest. December is a quick month and there will be a quick turn around. Information will come out in the morning announcement. It will be similar to the pumpkin carving contest (18 people submitted for that). This will segway to the holidays.

In January, we are looking to do a virtual trivia contest and we’ll announce after the holidays.

**Survey Results**

The survey that we sent out was to generate ideas of what families would like to see in the virtual realm. We are still working out the logistics of the virtual trivia and what platform to use. Kahoot will not support very many people. General knowledge trivia was the most popular for the trivia theme. Physical events did not have as big of a result. Virtual fun walk/run is an option for the future. Kids would have to keep track of that. The PTA will work on getting the ideas come to fruition. For the talent show, the school is looking at doing one in the future so we may partner with the school in the springtime.

For spirit nights, we just finished Panera Bread this week. For December, we are looking at Krispy Kreme. McDonalds and Chick Fil A were popular with survey participants but unfortunately, they have both said they will not do any fundraising events until next school year due to COVID. We did try but they will not entertain this year. But, Ledo pizza is scheduled for January and Haute Dog is scheduled for February with dates to be determined.

Stay tuned for all the details. Other restaurant suggestions were Noodles and Company, Kumo, Firenze, Olympians, Silver Diner, Namaste, Baja Fresh, and Sweet Frog.

Sweet Frog would be good for the end of year when the weather is warm.

The PTA is thankful for everyone’s suggestions from the survey.

MemberHub link: *h*[*ttps://twainms.fcps.edu/get-involved/parent-teacher-association-pta*](https://twainms.fcps.edu/get-involved/parent-teacher-association-pta)

We would like for our membership to increase as the year goes on. Some people have had issues creating an account so we are looking into that and trying to help them.

If you do not know if you are a member of the PTA, you can email Shelby, the PTA membership/volunteer coordinator and she will check to see if you are already a member. Her email address is [mtms.volunteers@gmail.com](mailto:mtmsvolunteer@gmail.com)

**Reminders**

Please sign in using the registration SurveyMonkey link found in the chat so we can take attendance and know we have a quorum.

If you need files emailed, you can email the treasurer or the president and we’ll get those to you. We do not email the PTA files in advance but we will share if there is a request.

*There were an opportunity to ask questions. There were no other questions from the attendees.*

**Upcoming events:**

Thanksgiving break, Nov 25-27

Krispy Kreme event in December

Ledo pIzza in January

Haute Dog in February

**Next Meeting:**

Our meeting date and time match that of the Edison PTA so we will look at options and coordinate with Edison. We do not want anyone to miss information. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19 at 7 PM but the date might change if it coincides with the Edison PTA meeting.

**Meeting is adjourned at 7:31 PM.**

\* Could do a holiday lights contest, suggested by an attendee after the meeting was adjourned.

\* Edison PTA meeting will be held on January 12 so there will not be a conflict in dates for next month.