

**Oliver Wendell Holmes Junior High PTA General Meeting Minutes  
October 1, 2020**

**In attendance:** Ellen Shields, Michelle Agnew, Heema Govindjee-Merchant, Beth McMullen, Abby Koenig, Maggie Levin, Gretchen Shroeder, Noel Bruening, Deepali Bhargava, Jean Kennedy, Donny Nush, Gloria Purnell, Michelle Buzbee, Simona Ghetti, Gayatri Sarkar, Dianna Henrickson, Barbara Rauschen, Jim Resiman, Katie Sluis, Kimiko Yamamoto, Sharmila Shinde

**1. Call to order, welcome and introductions (Heema Govindjee-Merchant)**

**2. Approval of April Minutes (Abby Koenig)**

- April minutes were approved.

**2. Volunteer Hours (Simona Ghetti)**

- Please send Simona your volunteer hours via the chat or email ([sgchetti@ucdavis.edu](mailto:sgchetti@ucdavis.edu)).

**3. ASB Student Leadership Report (Kimiko Yamamoto and Donny Nush)**

- ASB's first event is Spirit Week, which is the last week October.
- ASB is working on planning a virtual get-together/party for students.
- Students are working on forming clubs, which hopefully will start meeting by the end of October. Clubs will meet the fourth Wednesday of the month.

**4. Parliamentary Report (Gretchen Schroeder)**

- By-laws were updated last year with two changes: the Executive VP was added as a check signer, and Hospitality was deleted as a standing committee (the latter change decreased the number of members needed to achieve quorum at meetings; Hospitality will still be supported by the PTA).
- By-law changes were approved unanimously.

**5. Discussion and Vote on 2020-21 Budget (Heema Govindjee-Merchant)**

- Heema went through the budget line by line. Income is projected to be down significantly this year due to the economic impact of COVID-19. Expenses have been reduced accordingly.
  - Total revenue is projected to be \$14,600.
  - Total expenditures are projected to be \$21,325.
  - \$6,575 is slated to be transferred from the reserve to balance the budget. The PTA had a balance of \$20,596 end of last year, due in part to reduced expenses from school closure last March. The PTA would like spend down the reserve some this year while also keeping an appropriate amount of stored funds for the future.
- There was discussion about the amount allocated for Parent Education/Davis Parent University (DPU), as it was not reduced this year by 50% like most other expenses.

- Heema explained that she has gotten the feedback that right now in particular, parents really value events like DPU's which are opportunities to connect virtually and receive parenting support.
- Abby, Co-chair of DPU, explained that DPU fully understands that PTAs will need to economize this year and that DPU greatly appreciates whatever PTAs can contribute (historically all DJUSD PTAs have contributed their Parent Education funds to DPU, since DPU pools PTA donations to attract and hire nationally renowned speakers which individual PTAs could not fund on their own).
- When asked about reducing the funding for DPU by 50% like most other line items, Heema explained that Holmes has a healthy reserve right now and would like to keep its contribution at the full amount since other PTAs may not be able to contribute to DPU this year.
- Barbara Rauschen pointed out that the April minutes indicated that Ms. Mowry requested an increase in funding from \$500 to \$650 for this year's tile project (assuming the tile project can be completed on site at some point this year).
  - An additional \$150 will be transferred from the reserve to cover the additional cost of the tile project, making the total transfer from reserve \$6,725.
- The proposed 2020-21 budget with the above additional reserve transfer was approved unanimously.

#### **6. Auditor Report (Michelle Buzbee)**

- Michelle completed the Auditor Report for January 1 – June 30, 2020 on September 16.
- Michelle read the following statement: "I have examined the financial records of Holmes Junior High PTA and find them correct."

#### **7. Membership Report (Deepali Bhargava)**

- There are currently about 70 members (down from last year's membership of about 200).
- If you're not a member and would like to join, you may join by returning the membership form mailed to families before the start of school or online via this link:  
[https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=\\_s-xclick&hosted\\_button\\_id=DRZQP69LQGLLJ&source=url](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=DRZQP69LQGLLJ&source=url)
- In November, Deepali will email digital receipts for any donation > \$50.
  - If you would like a receipt for a donation < \$50, please contact Deepali using the "Contact Us" tab on the PTA website: [www.hjhpta.org](http://www.hjhpta.org).

#### **8. Fundraising Report (Gloria Purnell)**

- Historically, the Unfundraiser has funded special grade level events like the 9<sup>th</sup> grade hike.
- It is unclear what kind of grade-level events will be possible this year, so plans for an Unfundraiser are currently on hold. Please stay tuned for updates.

#### **9. Treasurer Report (Maggie Levin)**

- Direct donations currently total \$9,528.88
- Membership dues currently total \$1,047.35. The estimated revenue from membership dues this year is \$1500 (150 members).
- Checks #1808-18011 were approved.

#### **10. Hospitality (Sharmila Shinde)**

- Even though students and teachers are not on campus, Sharmila is working with Ms. Kennedy to devise creative COVID-safe ways for Hospitality to express appreciation to teachers this year. Ideas so far include box lunches or gift bags. Please stay tuned for ways to help!

#### **11. Science Department Report (Dianna Henrickson)**

- A huge thank you from the science department for all the support from parents and students so far this year! Teachers have been working around the clock, and the support makes all their hard work worth it.
- One positive aspect of Distance Learning has been the widespread collaboration within the department and across the district.
- A new curriculum, Lab-Aids, was adopted this year. The new curriculum has translated pretty well to online learning.
- Lab-Aids has an online lab component called LABsent.
- The Lab-Aids textbook is available online.
- The current Earth Science and Biology textbooks are very old, so any parent feedback to the district about the need for new Earth Science and Biology textbooks would be greatly appreciated.
- Given the challenges with teaching science remotely, the department's number one goal for students this year is to encourage a love for science that will hopefully inspire students to continue to take science for years to come.

#### **12. Administrative Report (Jean Kennedy)**

- Thank you to the PTA for its support this year.
- Ms. Kennedy is working hard to communicate regularly with parents. She has been sending an update about every other week. Please email Ms. Kennedy ([jkennedy@djusd.net](mailto:jkennedy@djusd.net)) with any questions or concerns.
- IEP and EL testing, which are required to be conducted in person, will begin at Holmes on October 12.
- Staff is also working on how/when small groups of students who are not participating at all in Distance Learning can be brought back to campus safely for small group instruction.
  - The timeline for bringing the above students back to campus will be determined largely by what COVID tier Yolo County is in.
- Picture Day went pretty well. Ms. Kennedy is working on a way for students who missed Picture Day to be able to email their pictures to the yearbook team.

- The first Progress Report period ended last Friday, September 25. There is one month remaining in the quarter.
- Starting in November, students will have four periods instead of three (periods 1, 3, 5 and 7).
- Ms. Kennedy introduced Holmes' new Vice Principal, Katie Sluis. Ms. Sluis is happy to be at Holmes and welcome emails/questions: [ksluis@djUSD.net](mailto:ksluis@djUSD.net).

### **13. Counselor Report (Ellen Shields)**

- Ellen Shields is the counselor for all 7<sup>th</sup> graders and for 8<sup>th</sup> graders with last names S – Z.
- Marci Sarette is the counselor for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders and for 8<sup>th</sup> graders with last names Mc – R.
- Macara Nicoll is the counselor for 8<sup>th</sup> graders with last names A – Ma.
- Ms. Carlson, who was a counselling intern last year, is also working six hours a week.
- Counselors really miss interacting with students and are working hard to find ways to connect with students via Zoom without overwhelming them with yet another Zoom meeting.
- Ms. Shields has been able to connect with 7<sup>th</sup> graders, which she has really enjoyed.
- Ms. Sarette started a board game Zoom group on Friday afternoons for new students (Pictionary, charades, etc). She will be opening up the group to all students soon.
- Counselors are working particularly hard on ways to connect with students who are not participating regularly or at all in Distance Learning.
- Kaleb Boas, the Holmes drug counselor, is available one hour a week for any student with concerns. He also gives presentations about substance abuse to 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade Health classes.
- Ms. Shields welcomes input from the PTA about interest in a free parent presentation from Amy Rose, Director of Recovery Happens, a substance abuse treatment program in Davis. Amy has done parent presentations at Holmes and for the district in the past.
- Holmes Student Advocates (HSA), an anti-bullying program, had their first meeting recently. HSA will not be adding new 7<sup>th</sup> graders to their team this year, though it will continue to educate all students about mistreatments.
- Counselors strongly encourage parents and students to reach out if they are struggling.
  - Ms. Shields has the sense that overall things are better than they were in the spring now that there is more structure to school with more ways to connect.
  - That said, counselors understand stress and anxiety are heightened now and are here to offer whatever support they can.
- Counselors are working on figuring out how to have the annual suicide prevention presentation that typically is offered to 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders.
  - One challenge is sorting out how to offer the presentation in a safe way with confidential follow-up.

### **14. New Business and Announcements**

- Michelle Agnew asked about the status of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Unfundraiser special event from last year, an assembly with motivational speaker Scott Bakovich. Ms. Kennedy will reach out to Scott about rescheduling the assembly for current 9<sup>th</sup> graders.

- DPU is hosting a parenting webinar on Monday, October 19<sup>th</sup> from 5-6pm with Dr. Lisa Damour. Dr. Damour will be discussing her work from her latest NYT bestseller, *Under Pressure: Confronting the Epidemic of Stress and Anxiety in Girls*. DPU's second webinar is on February 10<sup>th</sup> with Peggy Orenstein, NYT bestselling author of *Boys and Sex: Young Men on Hookups, Love, Porn, Consent and Navigating the New Masculinity*.
- The next PTA meeting is on Thursday, October 29 at 7pm via Zoom.

## **15. Adjourn**