



**Mark Twain Middle School PTA General Membership Meeting
September 29, 2020
Virtual Platform: Zoom**

President, Cori Bitterman, called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. A quorum was established (16 PTA members in attendance).

Attendees: Cori Bitterman, Nicol Lee, Chris Reese, Tali Burress, Samantha Mulvaney, Christy Rose, Kathryn Perszyk, Lisa Staresina, Tysen Perszyk, Lisa Huerth, Meghan Scott, Alfred and Abena Hewton, Julie Kim, Marguerita Rollins, Melissa Montgomery, Betsy Jean Yakes, Ellen Mayer-Splain, Olivia Torrico, Corea Smith, Jacqueline Mckinney, Jim Dahl
(Sign in sheet via SurveyMonkey was completed by the above 22 respondents; however, Zoom participation numbers showed 27 attendees).

PRESIDENT, Cori Bitterman:

PTA short video produced by Chloe Lee and originally played at Back to School Night was played to introduce the PTA board and the mission/vision.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT, Ms. Montgomery:

Ms. Montgomery is the 8th grade assistant principal. Schoology is the learning management system. Trying to make it more user friendly for parents and students. Biggest issue is that items are not cohesively posted and aligned across courses. New You Choose was sent out today. Phase In plan for FCPSis underway. At Twain, we are starting off with a small cohort of students- intellectually disabled students and Level 1 newcomers will come in around October 19, for a total of 12 students. No plan to bring in larger groups than that at this time.

PTA at Twain supports the staff and the teachers. Please become a member as this is how the PTA is funded, there are no fundraisers (selling candy or wrapping paper).

TREASURER:

The Treasurer's audit was placed in the chat. Annual audit was conducted and another audit will be conducted next summer. This is an unusual year since much that would normally be done is not being executed. Audit is managed independently. Only current PTA members are able to vote. The audit was voted on and approved.

The proposed budget was presented and available to view in the chat. The software used enables the PTA to have real time accounting. The budget mirrors the previous year's budget and reflects the intentions of what the PTA had originally intended to execute. There are unknowns such as membership count. Membership enables the PTA to avoid fundraisers.

Value in having members for sense of community, having a voice, and this year membership is key. We may not have many fundraising events such as Tiger Night. Normally, these events generate revenue through sales of concessions and spiritwear. Some of the events may not be able to take place due to COVID but the Board is trying to pivot with other activities, such as morale boosting activities. Instead of Back to School Breakfast, each staff member received a postcard and a banner was placed at the front of the school. There is approximately \$10,000 carried over from last year. Typically there is a carry over and National PTA wants a carry over (line item 7). Some of the funds in the bank account are for events which were cancelled as well as lower than anticipated expenses in 2019-20. The budget for 2020-21 was voted on and approved (14 yeah and 0 nays).

PRESIDENT, Cori Bitterman:

Staff Member of the Month (September) is Megan Verrechio who is a special education teacher. Typically give small token of appreciation. She is the first one for this year and each month a different faculty member will be chosen.

MemberHub platform is new for this year and is coming from the state PTA. That is how people pay and sign up for membership. It offers a better tracking system and should be easier for all. Within the website, there is an option to join 7th grade, 8th grade, or teacher hub and offers internal communication opportunity. Those who have paid using the old Square platform, are good to go and Shelby Grant-Workman is transferring everyone to the new platform.

State PTA offers discounted rates for different classes and members have access to the classes that we add to the list. MemberHub link: <https://twainms.fcps.edu/get-involved/parent-teacher-association-pta>

Reflections program due date is October 9 for online submissions. The link was provided in News You Choose. The theme is "I Matter Because..." There are different links depending on the category. The students need to describe their project and how it relates to the theme. All are encouraged to participate. Parents will need to fill out a parent portion as well

Spiritwear. Since this year is unprecedented, we have partnered with First Place Spiritwear. They have designed about 100 different designs and are offering free shipping for orders over \$30 using the promo code SPOOKY2020-FS, good through October 11. Your order will be delivered directly to your house. In addition to sweatshirts and t-shirts, there are masks for sale. Specials will be announced throughout the year. Spiritwear link:

<https://1stplacespiritwear.com/schools/VA/Alexandria/Mark+Twain+Middle+School>

Join Facebook page. Search Mark Twain MS PTA.

<https://www.facebook.com/marktwainmspta>

Calendar item:

October 13 Dining Out at Chipotle Kingsdowne. Bring flyer or use the special code for online orders. **QZAQLJ4**. This will be posted on the Facebook page. Does not apply if you use Food Delivery Services (GrubHub, DoorDash, etc.). Goal is to do a dining out every month. For

November, we are looking at Panera Bread and in December, we will celebrate Mark Twain's birthday.

No Place for Hate, Ms. Montgomery:

No Place for Hate is an organizing framework. The projects and activities are organized by the committee. Powerful message that leads to change and students participate appropriately in the chat. Unique opportunities to empower students. Need to create a new advisory committee. Made up of students, staff, and parents. Sign a resolution of respect. Students created an excellent video last year. This year, need to choose and complete 2 activities. Earned designation last year. We get activity guidelines but can select our own activities (multicultural fair, talent show, guest speakers, etc.) and this year's 1st activity will have to virtual. Should receive banner in November and it'll be posted in main lobby. In 2019-20, students created script, recorded the video and they got other students excited and signed the pledge. Imagine the world without hate lesson. Moving from kindness to respect. Lesson on using slurs and offensive jokes with emojis that represented the children and social identity groups (done in April even though it had to be done online, due to pandemic and students were very creative). Tree of respect with over 1,000 hands (4 trees with 2 in each gym, where kids go each morning). They included actions they themselves would take and those they've seen others do. Next steps: get committee together, determine meeting dates and times. Parents who are interested have to complete the FCPS volunteer process. Get together and will plan the launch event.

Anyone interested in No Place for Hate please email Ms. Montgomery
MLMontgomery@fcps.edu

PTA General meeting minutes will be posted on the website and the links will be posted on Facebook. The PTA is open to ideas, especially on keeping teachers, staff, and students motivated. Suggestions can be provided to the PTA.

Online environment so everyone can participate and PTA is looking at activities and events. The children are enjoying the classes as they can see their friends and teachers. Suggestions include Family BINGO night, virtual 5K, and other ideas. The PTA will put together a survey for the parents to complete in order to gather ideas and allow parents to provide input. The board email addresses are available on the Twain website and parents can email the President, Cori Bitterman.

After-school clubs and programs. Students can sign up on the Twain website. The activities start on Monday, October 5, to include D&D club.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, October 20 at 7 PM.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:06 PM.