



JAMES MORRIS SCHOOL
PTO MINUTES
September 9, 2015

Attendees: Jessy Barone, Laurie Bernardi, Margaret Coe, Denise Weik, Margie Groht, KC Chapman, Jamie Kingsley, Tracy Barger, Elizabeth Ebner, Alison Storm, Jody Lillis, Lisa Galinski, and Laura Crane.

Meeting called to order at 5:30 by Jessy Barone, President

A to Z Directory

The A to Z directory will be used again this year as JMS's online directory. JMS uses the A to Z Directory as our school's directory of parents, teachers and students. This is an online directory replacing the printable version. You can quickly access directory information through the web or your mobile app, saving you countless hours of frustration. It is a powerfully convenient way to search, sort, and filter by parents, teachers, classmates, or grade and allows users to connect with each other via text, email and phone number. A to Z is accurate and reliable. It lets users update their own information directly; avoiding typos misspellings, and delays. Jessy Barone will organize this year's directory.

JMS Notepads

JMS "A Note from Home" are pre-printed note pads allowing parents to quickly fill in the students name, date and information about his/her child being tardy, early dismissal/pick up change, bus change and after school activity participation. The PTO purchased 100 pre-printed note pads. Each note pad contains 50 pages each and cost \$2/pad. The PTO will sell them for \$5/pad to parents as a PTO fundraiser. They should arrive in early September. Open house will be great place to start selling. Principal Chapman purchased them, but the PTO reimbursed him for the cost of \$229.36 via check.

JMS Water Bottles

The water bottles are Red with a white JMS Logo on it. The PTO approved payment of \$350 at the June PTO meeting. Total cost was \$400 and the difference was paid with the

school budget. Water bottles are not dishwasher safe. For anyone who accidentally washed them in the dishwasher and were ruined, can exchange it for a new water bottle.

Teachers Gifts

As a tradition, The PTO gave teachers monetary gifts to purchase items for their classrooms/students. 19 teachers including specials teachers and special ED were each given \$50. The total cost of teacher's gifts was \$950. Principal Chapman and Jessy Barone presented teachers with their gift prior to the start of school. Many teachers were very grateful and expressed their appreciation. Thank you card written by teachers were passed around the room.

Open House/Ice Cream Social

Open house is Wednesday Sept. 16th. The "Welcome" starts at 6:30 pm. PTO is holding the Ice Cream Social in the Cafeteria starting at 6:45pm-7:30pm. 7:30-8pm Meet Teachers. Mrs. Maillet will organize 6th grader volunteers to greet parents and scoop and serve ice cream. Ice cream, chocolate syrup, caramel syrup and whipped cream will be supplied by the PTO. Sprinkles will be donated. Margaret Coe, Jody Lillis, and Alison Storm will be parent volunteers to help and supervise the Ice Cream Social. Jessy Barone and Laurie Bernardi will run the PTO table in the lobby.

Enrichments for the Year:

Principal Chapman presented ideas for in classroom and after school programs. Enrichment offerings to JMS students in multicultural, diversity, expanding awareness around the performing arts, math and science. Principal Chapman presented the possibility of 5-6 week classes meeting once per week. A minimum amount of students required. Principal Chapman will research actual cost, requirements and the level of interest. Discussion about PTO contributing funds for enrichments/assemblies during school for all JMS versus afterschool programs for only some students.

Margie Groht mentioned the Litchfield Cooperative Extension Services. Their mission is "Ensuring a sustainable global future through research, teaching and public engagement utilizing agricultural, health, and environmental sciences." Their vision: "The College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources will provide for a global sustainable future through scientific discovery, innovation, and community engagement. Our accomplishments will result in safe, sustainable and secure plant and animal production systems, healthier individuals and communities, greater protection and conservation of our environment and natural resources, balanced growth of the economy, and resilient local and global communities." Part of this program is the 4-H Youth Development program which exposes youth to science technology engineering and math (STEM) while learning new skills. Exposure to JMS would benefit students.

Box Tops for Education:

JMS students and families asked to continue collecting Box Tops for Education. The school earns money for each box top collected. Jordana Hood volunteered to organize collection of the box tops. Her children will decorate and place a collection box in the front

lobby of the school.

Square One Art:

Alison Storm will organize. JMS art teacher, Laurie Sweet will incorporate Square one art into each student's art class. Discussed is the concern for freedom to draw and be creative, but will also incorporate common core. "Austin's Butterfly" video demonstrates how Austin, a 1st grader, took a scientific illustration of a butterfly through multiple drafts toward a high-quality final product. The video demonstrates how "the power of critique and multiple drafts move students toward excellence." Art is due by October 10th and will be delivered by thanksgiving. JMS will receive 30% of the sales.

Scholastic Book Fair:

Teachers received \$100 in "Scholastic Bucks" to purchase books/items from the Scholastic website. The next Scholastic Book Fair will take place October 19th-22nd. Based upon the amount the book fair earns, JMS can take the either "Scholastic Bucks" or cash. The PTO has decided to take the "cash" option this fall. In the past, the PTO has used the scholastic bucks to purchase books, but there was a lack of selection and quality. It better serves the PTO to take the cash option. Jamie Kingsley suggested having an actual "wish box" instead of wish list for teachers. Teachers can place their desired books in a box where it will be easier for parents/students to pull a book out the box to purchase for his/her teacher. This saves time and avoids searching for books.

School Portraits

Heather Norris Photography will be the new photographer to take this year's schools portraits. Heather is a local photographer out of Bethlehem, CT producing high quality products with comparable prices and offers many packages and a-la-carte options. Portrait proofs offered for viewing before any package is purchased. She will bring her own staff to address student needs over two days, September 15th – 16th.

Carnival

This year's welcome back school carnival will take place on September 19th 1-4 pm at JMS School. Jessy Barone is organizing and needs help. She is in the process of obtaining volunteers, organizing games and prizes. Still needed are raffle ticket prizes, monetary donations, candy donations, tables, tents and volunteers.

Minutes submitted by,
Jessy Barone, PTO President