

## **PTA Meeting Notes**

April 13, 2020 – Meeting via conference call

### **Attendees:**

- Jessica Coe
- Joe Wall
- Robert Peluso
- Ildiko Peluso
- Nicole Brower
- Carol Kowalski
- Ms. Schneider
- Ms. Thomas
- Abbie LaShomb
- Lilia Gavlin
- Mr. Cortright
- Anne Smith
- Patrick Campbell
- Jessica Perez
- Shipra Saxena

PTA President Jessica Coe opened the meeting. She prefaced the agenda by reminding all RMS parents to direct all questions about distance learning to teachers directly and added that updates regarding the school year will be coming from the district Superintendent likely later this week.

No meeting minutes available from previous meeting to approve.

Abbie gave treasurer's report - \$17,055.69 available balance across all accounts.

### **Recent Events**

- Shoe Drive – Anne Smith
  - Half of shoes were picked up before stay-at-home order, Anne still storing half. Did not collect enough shoes to meet the requirement for fundraising.
- Pretzel Day – Jen Lennox
  - Cancelled
- Gertrude Hawk – Abbie LaShomb
  - Made \$1,042.60
    - Made \$855.71 last year
    - Budgeted \$250.00
  - There were some stock issues on Gertrude Hawk end due to COVID-19, most families understanding about situation
    - Abbie called/emailed Gertrude Hawk, but has received no reply
- Karaoke Night – Abbie LaShomb/Jess Coe
  - Cancelled
- NJ PTA Zoom Meeting: "A Chat with NJPTA Leadership" – held last Thursday, April 9 @ 7:00pm
  - Jessica Coe and Patrick Campbell attended – topics discussed included:

- Field trip money
  - Happiness is Camping deposit (\$500.00) has been made. Mr. Cortright believed there was a communication about cancellation of all activities for the spring. Mr. Cortright to reach out to Mrs. Bledsoe to confirm/discuss return of deposit [done – money will be reimbursed once Camp Happiness employees return to worksite]
  - Mr. Cortright also confirmed only 1<sup>st</sup> grade field trip money has been collected and the trip paid for. He will reach out to Ms. Snell about next steps with Crayola Factory for returning money [Ms. Snell has reached out to Crayola – awaiting response]
- Children in need
  - If we know of children who have technology issues and need a chrome book(s) or have food inadequacies, we can let NJ PTA know we have a family in need they can help
  - Mr. Cortright added that the district has also been really good about helping families that reach out for help. He noted they have been able to get Chrome books to families and have set up WiFi hot spots for families who need Internet access. However, if anyone knows anyone who's struggling, they can reach out to Mr. Cortright or their teacher to get set up with what they need
- Teacher Appreciation Week (May 4-8, 2020)
  - One idea presented was a virtual card for teachers, where pictures or videos are collected from students via email and put together
    - This was regarded as a good idea by those in attendance
    - Theme this year is I ❤️ my teacher (emojis)
      - <https://www.pta.org/home/events/PTA-Teacher-Appreciation-Week>
    - Emily Sussino had already reached out to Mr. Cortright and Abbie with this idea and seemed willing to spearhead this project fully or partially. Abbie to follow up with Emily following this meeting for next steps [done – Messenger info sent]
- PTAs donating to front line helpers, etc.
  - PTA cannot donate because we don't share the same mission. If we wanted to start fundraiser specifically for this purpose and everyone is fully aware what the money will be used for, we can do that, but we cannot donate money we currently have right now
- Virtual Spirit Week
  - Patrick Campbell shared the information on a virtual spirit week from the NJ PTA meeting
  - Mr. Cortright noted that the teachers had been talking about this idea, but didn't want to overwhelm families. He asked if the PTA was interested in leading this initiative (spirit week)

- It was decided to do a simple spirit day (wear white/blue or something with the RMS logo) next week to start off. Mr. Cortright will send the information with his next School Messenger
- Other ideas suggested:
  - “Silly Filter” day
  - Pajama day
  - Reading a book
- Ms. Schneider shared that parents can share photos directly to Google Classroom via the Google Drive App, which might be helpful for parents submitting photos of their kids during spirit events
- Patrick Campbell to ask for volunteers for coordinating future Spirit Days
- Jessica Coe shared a resource from the NJ Department of Education for parents who are looking to supplement their children’s learning. Every weekday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on NJTV, different educators share their lessons on NJTV Learning Live!
  - <https://www.njtvonline.org/programs/njtv-learning-live/>
  - Content is geared toward grades 3-6:
    - 9:00 am – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
    - 10:00 am – 4<sup>th</sup> grade
    - 11:00 am – 5<sup>th</sup> grade
    - 12:00 pm – 6<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Mrs. Thomas also shared that the author **Dan Gutman** has been doing read alouds of his book every day at 2:00. She said parents could find him on FaceBook, where he does live streams, or can find links directly to his videos online
    - <https://www.harpercollins.com/childrens/dan-gutman/>

### Upcoming Events

- Virtual Book Fair end of April - Marjorie Pereira
  - Scholastic is doing a virtual book fair until April 30<sup>th</sup>. Marjorie was reaching out to scholastic to set something up for RMS. Neither Jess or Mr. Cortright had heard updates. Jess was to follow up with Marjorie on status. [Done – Marjorie getting approval from Mr. Cortright on April 27<sup>th</sup> for 14 days online]
- Science fair postponed
- End of year celebration – TBD
- CPR – TBD
- Elections
  - Ildiko Peluso and Lilia Gavlin of the Nominating Committee were in attendance
    - Robert Peluso has been nominated for Treasurer
    - Marjorie Pereira nominated for VP
  - Decided to extend nominations to May PTA meeting (May 11)
  - Committee to update flyer to extend nominations to May 1<sup>st</sup> for Mr. Cortright to include in his next School Messenger
  - Elections will be held via conference call on May 11
- PTA council meeting from 3/11 – Robert Peluso attended and reported back

- Update on district plans for online learning and home instruction to fulfill 180 days required
- District moving away from ESS (Effective School Solutions) program – replacing professionals with district employees
- State aid numbers for special education steadily increasing – estimated summary indicates 19.5% increase in funding for 2020/2021
- Discussed April 30<sup>th</sup> budget hearing – probably virtual meeting
- Discussed State of NJ website for school finance – find under state aid summaries
- Still need County PTA Dues from all schools (RMS has sent)
- Next Council Meeting April 15 – no information on how this will be conducted yet – Jess to reach out to Liz Kadian (Anne Smith attending)

### Committees/Fundraisers

- Membership – 121 members
- Dining to Donate – Robert Peluso
  - A lot of restaurants not doing well, asking them to donate could cause additional strain on them
  - Consensus of the group to not conduct Dining to Donate events during this time
- Virtual Talent Show – Abigail LaShomb
  - Students submit videos of their performances
  - Compiled and sent back out to RMS community
  - Free, just something fun for students to do/enjoy
  - In the interest of not overwhelming families, target late May for this event
- Plant Sale – Jessica Coe
  - Jess reaching out to see if we can set something up, but this event likely cancelled
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - On hold until we have further information from the district/state
  - Will schedule a call to see what we can do for kids in either scenario (school closed/back open) once we have more information

### Principal's Update

- Dr. Sargent sending updates for the district and more information coming from the state. We will probably find out more information toward the end of this week as to what we're looking at for the end of the year.
- If you know anyone struggling with distance learning – just reach out to teachers. Teachers have been great with students and being understanding of family dynamics.

### Teacher's Update

- Ms. Schneider: Tell your kids we miss them a ton, we're super proud of them, they are working super hard and doing their best in the new normal.
- Ms. Thomas: They've been amazing, and just remind the kids that it's been new for everyone