**Julian PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Monday September 17, 2018**

**7-8:30 pm**

**Present:**

Students: Aurelia Brice, Annelise Dusterberg, Leela Chaloemtiarana, Seth Calhoun

Parents: Bobbi Eastman, Laura Reeb, Cynthia Brito, Monica Harper, Wendy Barrett, Karen Calhoun, Todd Fitzgerald, Alisha Mowbray, Hannah O’Conner, Lori McConnell, Elizabeth Chi, Meg Hudgins, Cara Carriveau Busch, Wynne Lacey, Michele Gurgas

**8th Grade Panel Q&A**

Q: What is the best year in middle school?

A: 7th Grade so far (overwhelming agreement among students).

Q: What do you think about the PSAT?

A: The students are not sure what they are or what they are for. As the discussion continued, they thought it had to do with high school.

Q: Have you changed how you organize yourself over the year?

A: Every year is different. Examples of different organizational approaches are: using color coordinate folders per subject; an accordion folder; a “Case It”; and a locker organizer. Using binders are not recommended, too confusing.

Q: What advice would you give to a new 6th grader?

A: They would recommend that the student see their teachers if they have problems. The teachers are super helpful. They would also recommend the 6th graders to check grades and Powerschool every day online.

Q: What social advice would you give to a 6th grader?

A: You will make many new friends and keep many of your elementary school friends. It is natural to add new people into your friend groups.

Q: Is it awkward to switch between 6th and 7th grade when your teams change?

A: Switching sections without your core group of friends in that new section is a bit difficult and confusing, but you branch out. Your old friends are still there but you meet new people and make new friends.

Q: What makes Julian a great school?

A: The extracurricular activities are great and really fun. These activities give you an extra layer of understanding and makes me like my classes more. You also meet new people from different grades. I like the Advisory Olympics.

Q: How do you feel about the IB program?

A: I am a little confused by it. They have IB learning traits and a grading system which is confusing. I don’t know what is different about the IB system since I am only exposure to it and since Julian is my only middle school. I don’t have anything to compare it to.

Q: What are the pros and cons of Second Step

A: Pros: Good to expose kids who need help with these matters. It is good to talk about your feelings. Cons: Many kids find it boring. The conflict examples are basic in nature and I can’t relate to the them. The examples are very scripted and aren’t applicable to us. The conflicts are re-teaching of what we learned in 4th and 5th grades.

Q: Did you feel that when you came into 6th grade you understood all of the clubs out there?

A: It would be good to provide the club information to the 5th graders so they can think about the clubs during the summer. You hear a lot about the popular sport clubs but it is difficult to hear about the smaller clubs, i.e. the service learning clubs. Sometimes you find out about the clubs after the try outs are finished.

Q: What would you like to know that would help you prepare for OPRF?

A: It is too early for us to think about it since we have just started 8th grade. We didn’t know about the PSAT/placement tests until just recently. It would be helpful to hear about the different levels of classes at OPRF.

**Remarks by Dr. Fitzgerald**

We need to improve communications regarding IB curriculum to the students. We have added in the 6th grade class a 12 week curriculum explaining more about the IB programs and the language used. We will also be providing more on organization information and executive functioning tips to help with the new 6th grader with their transition.

We started a town hall group which includes teachers and 25-30 students discussing student issues. They provided student feedback about Welcome Week i.e. pairing a 6th grader and 8th grader together to help the transitions. It has been a success so far.

We are piloting with the 6th graders a Google calendar to help students with their organizing.

The Back to School Picnic was a success which was coupled with the mosaic dedication.

The Best Buddies Program/Special Olympics Program was recognized by the Special Olympics with a National Champion United Recognition Award (only four awarded in the State of Illinois).

The 5 year re-authorization for the IB program is coming up next year. We are preparing for this process and re-evaluating the curriculum.

Q: For the 6th grade Google calendar, are you doing that for 7th and 8th grades also?

A: At this time, we are not planning to expand the calendar. We will re-evaluate next year.

Q: Julian seemed to have a lot of teacher turnover this summer? Any particular reasons?

A: The main reason for turnover was outside of our control, i.e. promotions to other school districts; moving to out of state schools. Our retention rate overall is very good for the past 10 years.

Q: Is the IB re-authorization happening for both Brooks and Julian?

A: They are both being re-evaluated at the same time. The curriculum is very tightly tied together between the two schools which means there is a very low chance that one school would be IB and the other school would lose their IB status.

**Transportation Safety Plan (TSP)** (Michele Gurgas)

Gurgas reviewed the process of updating a TSP. Dr. Fitzgerald has reached out to the Village to start the process. Education to the student body is an essential component. Hannah O’Conner would like to participate in the process.

**2018-2019 Budget** (Wynne Lacey and Lori McConnell)

The PTO is continuing to pay down an excess balance due to the extra cash held as a contingency prior to the waiver renewal process.  The lunch fundraiser requires a waiver from the State of Illinois in order to allow competing food sales in the school. The waiver was renewed in summer 2017 for 5 years.

The PTO lunch fundraiser is off to an amazing start.

No Halloween Dance this year due to how the holiday falls on the calendar. Another event will be created in its stead.

Items of interest:

* Funding some headset for CAST.
* Adding funding for YEMBA and PING.
* Continue to fund the Garden.

Approved Budget. Move to approve Bobbi Eastman, 2nd Wendy Barrett. Unanimous approval.

**Vote in New Members**

Michele Gurgas - Secretary

Cara Carriveau Busch – VP of Program

Monica Harper – VP of Volunteers

Move to approve Wynne Lacey, 2nd Beth Chi, Unanimous approval.

**Committee Updates**

*Programs*(Cara Carriveau Busch /Lori McConnell)

Back to School Party and Mural Unveiling Event was a success. Due to pizza sales, the PTO broke even for the party. The raffle was a success.

Dine Around Town: 10/24/18, 5-8 pm, Portillo’s at Forest Park on Roosevelt.

*Fundraising*(Bobbi Eastman)

We had a PTO lunch vendor change this year. We allowed an open bid between Fireside Subs and Jimmie Johns. Fireside Subs provided a very competitive bid. We were able to charge students less for the sandwiches. We will make $15,000 more this year. Estimate will make $42,000 this year in total. We have a robust volunteer group to help serve lunches.

*Diversity*(Cynthia Brito)

The team will continue to meet with Julian and Brooks principals to discuss issues and to collaborate on topics. The team wants to focus on more programming and wants to plan:

* more Ice Cream Socials
* a welcoming event
* panel discussion with parents
* workshops

Q: What was the results of the IRRPP Training for Teachers?

A: Dr. Fitzgerald said three teachers from Julian attended the training; that the training was very informative; the training was aligned with D97 values; and that Julian is trying to decide the best way to share the information gained at the training.

*Green/Wellness*(Elizabeth Chi)

The PTO is working on and/or working with the Green Team on:

* The Great Apple Crunch that it is occurring on 10/11/18.
* D97 is working on a grant to bring in an educational rapper to rap about the environment.
* Showing educational movies
* Expanding and maintaining the garden

*Volunteer Coordination*(Monica Harper)

Monica is transitioning into the role. More information at the next meeting.

*Communications*(Wendy Barrett)

The PTO subscription has 1600 subscribers with a 42% read rate.

*Upcoming Events*

Teacher/Staff Conferences Dinner/Potluck

Dine Around Town: 10/24/18, 5-8 pm, Portillo’s at Forest Park on Roosevelt.

**Approval of the May 2018 Minutes**

Move to approve Bobbi Eastman, 2nd. Wendy Barrett, Unanimous approval