

Mellon Middle School PTA Meeting  
September 14, 2022  
8:45 a.m.  
**Approved Minutes**

**Call to Order at 8:45**

**Jen Larence**

Introduction of Board to new attendees and Kristan Weir as new Council Delegate  
Motion made and seconded to approve May Minutes (Heather B-C. and Elizabeth S.)

**Approval of the May 2, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Motion made Heather B-C. and 2nd by Elizabeth S. to approve Minutes as written

**Treasurer's Report**

**Carrie Reighard**

- Income: Have collected just over 5K in membership dues and donations; this is a little behind our goal, hope Open House gains more signing up
- Expenses: supply closet, faculty breakfast, insurance premium
- Budget presented last May, only change was amount of carry-over

**Approval of 2022-2023 Proposed Budget** - motion by Elizabeth S., 2nd by Natalie K

**Faculty Representative**

**Amanda Saxman**

Photos with student faces within Memo, looking into any policy regarding this practice.  
Jen Larence added, reminder to faculty that PTA here to support them and please request if they need something. Budget has itemized amounts for teams/grades/departments, and gave a copy to Amanda.

**Executive Committee Reports**

**President**

**Jen Larence**

- Expenses in September include donations to MtL Library and instrument fund; varied expenses include cups for Mrs. Amenta (BIT) and deodorant for Mr. Deitz (gym)
- Open House reminder - walk schedule 6:30-8:30 Thursday Sept 15th
- Volunteer Opportunities in school store, Mary Klaber committee chair; open Tu/Th for parents to help, Sign-Up schedule to be sent in coming week(s)
- Meeting with Dr. Davis is next Tuesday, if anyone has items or questions for her to present

**1st VP**

**Heather Boylan Clark**

Nothing to report.

**2nd VP**

**Elizabeth Schwertfuehrer**

Nothing to report.

**3rd VP**

**Chris Wolfson**

- Smooth start to year, 6th grade acclimating to routine, 7-8th grades no hiccups. In 11 years at MMS this is a smoother start than many. He sees middle school from role as Principal as well as from role as parent at another middle school. \*Communication is key\* ANY time there is a concern or question or a clarification is needed please email him.
- ANY Schoology questions there is an email directly for issues: [SchoologySupport@mtlsd.net](mailto:SchoologySupport@mtlsd.net)

- Mike Hladio will be at Mellon during Open House to answer Schoology questions as well if parents want to seek him out between classes
- Expanding on question from Board regarding Smore newsletter and Schoology: Will continue to use BOTH. Past 3 years of Smore very successful. Schoology is new and due to text shifts/font/links there are sometimes corrections that need made and unfortunately every change or correction is then sent out as a new alert. Working to make this smoother but it will take time. Anything in Schoology will be in Smore. Plus e-blasts are still happening as needed as usual. A nice feature of Schoology is that a full history is there of anything ever posted so scrolling back in time is possible.
- IF ever stops using Smore there WILL BE an official announcement/notice; but foreseeable future will continue with both. Smore is the go-to spot as links and flyers and extras can be included. Schoology is more bare-bones, it will have any pertinent items but flyers become embedded and not readily seen so it is more complicated/less friendly for ease of skimming info. MAYBE in a few years Schoology could replace Dashboard but a transition period of full use of features needs to happen first.

- **Principal's Notes**

Schoology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schoology Mobile App provides easier access to messages.</li> <li>● Continue to use Smore Newsletter with Schoology supplementing.</li> <li>● <a href="mailto:SchoologySupport@mtlsd.net">SchoologySupport@mtlsd.net</a></li> </ul>
Open House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● September 15, 2022 6:30-8:30</li> <li>● Information is available on Smore and Schoology.</li> </ul>
E-blasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reminder – make sure we have a valid e-mail address!</li> <li>● Make sure you check your e-mails from “Mellon Middle School”</li> <li>● <a href="mailto:noreply@mtlsd.net">noreply@mtlsd.net</a></li> </ul>
Mellon Middle School Moments newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="http://www.mtlsd.org/mellonmoments">http://www.mtlsd.org/mellonmoments</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://www.smore.com/jdny-mellon-middle-school-moments">https://www.smore.com/jdny-mellon-middle-school-moments</a></li> <li>● Make sure you bookmark it and check back often!</li> </ul>
Important Upcoming Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="https://www.mtlsd.org/district/district-calendar">https://www.mtlsd.org/district/district-calendar</a></li> <li>● District &gt; About Us &gt; <a href="#">District Calendar</a></li> <li>● 9/14 - Picture Day (updated)</li> <li>● 9/15 - Open House (6:30-8:30pm)</li> <li>● 9/21 - Writing Lab Volunteer Training</li> </ul>

**Secretary**

Nothing to Report.

**Natalie Kukla**

**Historian**

Nothing to Report.

**Gillian Stohner**

**Committee Reports**

**Council Delegate, Kristan W.**

Highlighted most applicable information related to Mellon/secondary

Council Delegate Notes, 9/7/22 HES

- Treasurer's Report
  - No changes from previously presented budget in May; budget was approved
- Executive Board Reports
  - PTA Presidents should have received logins and a request to update their websites from council
  - Membership drives should be under way

- Reminder for PTAs to pay their dues to the state PTA to be in good standing for the Reflections program
- Friday (9/9) is the elementary president's meeting and 9/20 is the secondary president's meeting; President's coffee is 9/26
- Technology update: all parents should have Schoology access; may want to make sure parents have it
- Need for Council Committee Chairs - blurb will be sent out to include in newsletters
  - Current need of Arts Chair, Parent Education and Community Service
  - The most pressing need is for an Arts Chair at the Council level
    - Reflections deadline is 10/17
    - If there is no chair our HS projects will all move on (they are not judged) but MS and Elementary may not be allowed at levels outside of our district due to lack of collective judging
    - The Chair judges HS and arranges the judges for the MS and Elementary level
    - Time commitment is around 2 days and everything is electronic; number of judges are depending on number of submissions and unit level chairs can be Council chair
- Dr. Steinhauer's Report
  - Addressed his retiring at the end of the school year
  - Mary Beth Irvin spoke on elementary Schoology implementation; the new ELA program; 1 to 1 tech program and DEI initiatives
  - Ron Davis:
    - Schoology
      - Selected by teacher committee after a number of programs were reviewed including Google classroom
      - 2 reasons Schoology was selected: seamless transfer on grading programs and transferability to PowerSchool
        - District understands there may be growing pains but feel that the program will eventually run smoothly as it is used more
    - Addressed the new PA Science Standards and has said the district is already working on this to be ready by the required 2025 implementation deadline
    - Act 158 Pathways (grad competencies) are also being implemented and a presentation will be made in November to the school board
    - Alumni Surveys are reviewed and focus will be on Language Arts, PE, leadership and public speaking improvements
- General Business:
  - New Environmental Chair was introduced
  - Audit Review of last year's Council budget and accounting was presented
  - Reminder of Band Festival this coming weekend
  - Melissa Berdyk is the new School Board member and has started
- Fire Department
  - Fire safety programs have started in the schools
  - Changes to curriculum at elementary level to clarify Stop, Drop and Roll
  - All school inspections have been completed for the school year and all passed
  - Citizen's Fire Academy applications due
- OutReach
  - New Director has been hired and has started
  - Gave a presentation at the HS orientations
  - Continuing their programs on training for teens and individuals
- Police Department
  - Not present but Firefighter Kris talked about the department's new search and rescue bloodhound named Bear. Bear is currently in training and will be out in the community once that training is completed

*Next PTA Council meeting is 10/12/22 at Howe*

**Membership, Kara M.** presented by Jen Larence

Currently at 40 faculty, 90 1-parent, 74 2-parent for a total of 278 members.

At Open House there will be QR codes handed out hopefully to increase numbers!

**Spirit Wear, Mary K. and Sharon A.**

Small # of items instead of many general Lebo logos, very MMS specific, via Commonwealth Press, available for order now

**Odyssey of Mind, Sarada S.** Blurb in Memo, active now

**Reflections, Meghan B.** Blurb in Memo, ongoing now

**Writing Lab, Natalie K.**

Training next week, Sept 21st. In Memo several weeks. Will email faculty asking to include a mention during Open House if possible. Really need volunteers, starting from nearly zero to build a new cohort, so many new families who have never experienced Writing Lab and students who do not know the benefits of adult conferences yet. None of the current students in the building have ever had a conference outside of their teacher or Clinician Worst-McGregor!

**Welcome Committee, Sarah B.** New event idea this year, but busy time of year so no plans yet. Suggestion from Exec Board to hold at food truck event at Curriculum Night

**Old Business**

Nothing at this time.

**New Business**

Budget - approved during Treasurer's report

Audit - Report delivered by Carrie Reighard (Audit Committee/CPA)

No gross negligence, no errors. A few checks did not have supporting documentation, in future remembering to print emails or attach documentation is an easy thing to keep an eye on. Internal control structure is sound, no missing money, documentation overall is good, just those few missing items.

Eagle Team asked for headphones, \$80, this is within budget earmarked for 7th grade support, Mary K. motion to approve, Heather B-C. 2nd, approved to fund.

Two spots open for School Store tomorrow, both filled by members present, full Sign-Up for future dates coming soon.

Board and many Chairs 'graduate' next year, please be thinking of finding new PTA members

Adjourned at 9:41 am

MINUTES prepared by Natalie Kukla

**Attendees**

Jen Larence, Natalie Kukla, Amanda Saxman, Carrie Reighard, Elizabeth Schwertfuehrer, Sarah Beavdoin, Heather Boylan Clark, Gillian Stohner, Kristan Weir, Chris Wolfson

**On Zoom**

Amy Grella

Jessica D'Angelo

Rebecca Bachner

Megan B.