



Clayton High School PTO

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL PTO

Wednesday, February 5, 12:00 pm

This Meeting was held on Zoom and in person at the Center of Clayton, Meeting Room C.

The following board members were present in person:

President Joanna Dinsmore, Secretary Amber Kempf, and Treasurer John Holmes.

The following CHS Staff, PTO Members, and PTO Committee/Event Chairs were present:

CHS Principal – Dan Gutchewsky

T-Shon Young – Coordinator of Sports and Activities for the School District of Clayton

Emily Whitney – Staff Appreciation Committee

Amy Wilson – Staff Appreciation Committee

Jenny Abeles – Homecoming Committee and Freshman Parent Connections

Bridget McAndrew – Faculty Special Projects Awards

Suzy Ogé – Faculty Special Projects Awards

Cara Downs – Parent/Staff Book Club Committee

Leo Human – CHS School Board Member

Chellie McLellan – Clayton All In Coalition

Emily Milchanowski

Tahnee Jackson Whitlock

Deanna Simanowitz

The following members and Board/Committee/Event Chairs were present via Zoom:

Communications Director - Priya Bazzani

Michelle Cissna

Michael Perman

Michela Henke-Cilenti

Jessica Niehaus

Tori Sombright

Erin Linnenbringer

Lucy E.

- **Welcome & Introductions:** Joanna Dinsmore
- **Clayton School Board, Legislative Committee Update** – Leo Human, Clayton School Board Member
 - The Clayton School Board has always had a Legislative Committee, but it has not

been as active in recent years. The purpose of the Legislative Committee is to monitor and engage in advocacy regarding legislation at the state level that could affect the Clayton School District and its students. 25-30 years ago, Clayton was a leader among the state school districts with its legislative engagement. Given the current actions being taken by the Missouri Legislature and how some of those actions could affect our staff and students the Clayton School Board is currently taking steps to have the Committee become more active. Right now, the Committee is working to provide information to the community about proposed state legislation. As a leading public school district in Missouri, it would be good for us to be involved and be a leader in speaking out about these issues and how they will impact students both in our district and in the state. Right now, the Legislative Committee is concerned about things at the state level, but down the road perhaps federal legislation will also be considered. The below google site will allow you to sign up to receive information about proposed state legislation relevant to the Clayton School District. More information and details about actions you can take with the Legislative Committee will be shared by the School Board as they develop.



- **Presidents' Report:** Joanna Dinsmore
 - Our January Meeting had to be cancelled due to the Winter Weather.
 - A motion was made to move to approve the December 4th meeting minutes. It was so moved, seconded and the meeting minutes were approved by vote of the members present.
 - The Board is working to see who will be filling positions on the PTO Board and Committees for the 2025-2026 School Year. Please reach out and let Joanna or Jena know if you want to continue in a position you are in or interested in becoming more involved and/or taking on a Board or Committee position. The Co-President position on the Board is open as Jena Schaumburg will be stepping down. The Board appreciates all her work serving the PTO for this past year.
 - Thank you to Jenny Abeles for setting the CHS PTO up with a Canva Account. It can be used by the Board and Committees for PTO events. Reach out to the Board if you need to use it for a PTO sponsored event.
 - The yearly golf tournament to support CHS Athletics was taken over by the Clayton Education Association. The CHS PTO did spend \$500 out of its approved budget to support the golf tournament this year by sponsoring a group of golfers and received a letter of thanks for the donation. Funds raised to go support CHS Athletics. Questions about how much money was raised at the Golf Tournament and how much of that money went to the Athletics Department can be answered by the Athletics Department or the

Clayton Education Foundation.

- After some discussion it was agreed that the CHS PTO will no longer be the go between for communications about events at CHS not sponsored by the CHS PTO. It makes more sense to have the Communications Director for the District send out those communications and keep the CHS PTO from being the go between for events we are not sponsoring. It will also make sure that all communications that go out about school events have been approved by CHS Administration and/or the District before they are sent out. The CHS PTO would have no problem including information/advertising for CHS events in its Newsletter if given enough notice.
- Emily Milchanowski graciously volunteered to provide paper plates and napkins as she had a large quantity left over from sponsoring a recent Chess Club Event to support a need for the upcoming Student Sponsored Dance Marathon.
 - If the Student Dance Marathon needs further funds or donated items, the PTO can possibly assist once we know what the need is.
- **Treasurer's Report:** John Holmes
 - The CHS PTO has \$67,479 in the bank.
 - All of the tax letters have gone out to everyone that donated to the CHS PTO. If you donated and did not receive a letter, please contact John and let him know.
 - \$16,766.00 has been donated to the Funds for Excellence Account.
 - The CHS PTO is within its budget at this time.
 - The CHS PTO contributed funds out of our surplus funds to support the Teacher Appreciation Budget to purchase gift cards that were given to staff at the Holiday Luncheon. A separate grant was received to provide these gift cards for teacher appreciation, and the PTO was asked to provide some additional funds to allow almost all staff to receive a gift card.
 - \$2178.21 has been paid toward Faculty/Staff Special Projects Awards
- **Guest Speaker** – Michael Parkinson, Clayton School District Director of Safety and Security came to speak about this new position with the District.
 - Before coming to Clayton, Mr. Parkinson worked for 23 years public safety in the area of higher education, was the Public Safety Director at three college campuses, and is excited about working in the K-12 area for the District
 - Current Projects he will be working on going forward
 - Upgrading the camera systems in the District. Currently, the cameras are outdated, and very difficult and time consuming to retrieve footage from. The security cameras will be replaced at the high school and middle school over the summer and then at the elementary schools next year.
 - Updating each school and the District's overall Emergency Operations Plan. His plan is to take the existing plan, which is good overall, and mainstream the plan so that it operates the same way at all the schools and covers all possibilities of both long- and short-term emergencies.
 - Providing staff safety training and training in use of the new Centegix Badges. There have been two false alarms, but nothing that would call

out an emergency response. Staff is doing well overall in getting used to this new safety tool.

- Mr. Parkinson is aware of concerns around Clayton High Schools Open Campus Policy. As someone who worked at the College Level he has lots of experience enhancing safety for students under these conditions and is looking into ways to keep track of who is in and out of the building using applications or software.
- Mr. Parkinson has time set up in the next month to meet with both the Clayton Fire Chief and the Clayton Police Chief to build relationships to continue collaborating on safety issues involving the Clayton School District.
- With all the data breaches happening in government on the federal level, the Director of IT for the Clayton School District would be the person to ask about the steps being taken to protect student data.
- Dr. Gutchewsky shared that students are being given information during intruder drill training at school on what to do if they are not in a classroom but are somewhere else in the building during a drill. While students are not tracked on when they enter and exit the building right now, that is something that is being considered to help keep track of where all students might be in an emergency. The District is also looking at ways to connect with students, locate them, and check in once an emergency has occurred.
- **Principal's Update:** Dr. Gutchewsky
 - Students and staff are getting back into a routine after the many snow days that started this semester and are doing well.
 - The Staff really appreciated the Holiday Luncheon and Holiday Gift Cards.
 - The Performing Arts Department is continuing to display excellence. Dr. Gutchewsky was able to see the CHC Symphonic Orchestra play at the recent MMEA State Convention. Many comments were made by attendees that the performance was the best high school Symphonic Orchestra performance they had ever seen. We have 6 students on All State Band and 1 student on the All-State Choir.
 - Les Misérables is going to be performed by the CHS Theatre Department this weekend – February 6-8. There are over 100 students involved in the production and is going to be a great show.
 - Counselors have finished visiting all students in class to assist them in registering for classes for the 2025-2026 School Year. After Spring Break, students will be meeting with counselors one on one to review their course selections.

- The Long-Range Facilities Master Plan has completed the first round of community engagement meetings. Some initial ideas for the Plan were shared at the last CHS Board Meeting. There will be several options offered for consideration.
- CHS has a Celebration of Black Achievement on February 24, 2025, from 6:30pm-8:30pm. It's a great night of learning and celebration and the CHS and Clayton community is invited to join in the experience.
- **Activities Update: Ms. T'shon Young**
 - Winter Sports Playoffs are coming up and there will be more updates as they progress.
 - National Girls and Women in Sports Day was celebrated in February with events to recognize and celebrate our female athletes. Staff want to encourage incoming Middle School students to participate in opportunities for women's sports on the high school level.
 - CHS has 14 Athletes that will signing National Letters of Intent to play sports post high school. Information will be posted about these athletes on Instagram and in the District Athletics Newsletter. Congrats to these student athletes for their hard work.
 - The Junior and Senior Classes will soon be making a big reveal for the theme for the Junior/Senior Prom. The Prom will be on April 26, 2025, and more details will be coming soon after the student's announcement.
 - February 21, 2025, is a Trivia Night at CHS to raise funds for the Junior/Senior Prom. It is open to parents, students and the community.
 - The Senior Send Off is going to take place on Monday May 19 to avoid conflicting with AP testing occurring on the Friday after Graduation. The same events for the Seniors will be taking place, just before Graduation instead of after.
- **Committee Chair Updates**
 - **Staff Appreciation:** Amy Wilson, Emily Whitney
 - The Holiday Luncheon went well. The next event will be dinner for the staff during the week of conferences. Dewey's Pizza will be the meal.
 - Book Club – Cara Downs will be taking over organizing the Parent/Staff Book Club. Many thanks to Suzy Ogé who has been taking care of keeping it going while the Board found someone else to take over. A new book will be announced soon and dates for the next gathering will be shared when available.
 - Parent Connections
 - There will be Parent Connections events in the Spring and details will be forthcoming.
 - The Counselling Department will be handling college informational meetings for Freshmen and Juniors in the Spring and more information will be forthcoming.
 - Faculty Special Projects Awards Committee
 - An Award was given to Katie Storms, CHS English Teacher. She has her

students watch a documentary about Mr. Rogers as part of activities themed around how students can “Make the World a Better Place.” Students then often take on projects to spread kindness in their community. The funds will help sponsor those projects.

- An Award was given to Josh McMillian, PE Teacher. Josh is providing a class to students around strength and conditioning training which is reaching students who may not be interested in athletics but want to participate in exercising for their overall health. The funds will be used to purchase t-shirts and other small awards for kids who set and meet goals in the program.
- An Award was given to Carroll Lehnhoff-Bell in the Learning Support Department to support providing ways to recognize students setting and meeting goals in the Learning Center. The funds will be used to purchase small gift cards to give to students who set and meet their goals.
- More Awards and information about the outcome of Awards made will be shared in future PTO meetings.

- **Questions and any other business**

- The PTO does have a budget line item for Parent Teacher Conferences that is separate from Teacher Appreciation. In the past these funds were used to provide snacks and drinks for parents coming to in person conferences. Now that 50% of the conferences take place on Zoom it was decided to not purchase snacks as their no longer seems to be a need and the PTO can keep those funds in reserve for Teacher Appreciation if they need additional funds.
- If the upcoming Board of Education election is a contested one, candidates will be invited to speak at an upcoming PTO meeting. As of right now, the election is not contested.
- The All In Clayton Coalition is doing surveys in the community regarding community concerns and experiences about drug and alcohol use and will be happy to come back another time to share those results at a future meeting.

The Next PTO Meeting will be held on Zoom and in person at the Center of Clayton, on March 5, 2025, Meeting Room C, from 12 to 1 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Kempf, Secretary