

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CLAYTON HIGH SCHOOL PTO
Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at 6:00 pm

A Kickoff Meeting for the CHS PTO Board was held at Joanna Dinsmore's home in anticipation of the start of the 2024-2025 School Year.

The following members of the board were present: Co-Presidents Jena Schaumburg and Joanna Dinsmore, Communications Director Priya Bazzani, Secretary Amber Kempf, and Treasurer John Holmes

The following members and committee/event chairs were present:

Robin Leonard – Senior Parent Connections/Parent Connections Coordinator

Kelley Karandjeff – Senior Parent Connections/Hot Sips and Study Tips

Jane Koster – Senior Parent Connections

Emily Zou – Junior Parent Connections

Jenny Abeles.- Freshman Parent Connections/Homecoming Bonfire

Emily Whitney – Staff Appreciation

Emily Balestra – Homecoming Bonfire

Suzy Oge'- Staff Special Projects (formerly Funds for Excellence), and former PTO President

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jena Schaumburg and Joanna Dinsmore opened the meeting, welcomed all, and each person present briefly introduced themselves.

II. PTO OVERVIEW

a. Parent Survey

Joanna Dinsmore shared the results of a survey done at the end of the 2023-24 school year asking parents and caregivers what they would like the PTO to focus on in the 2024-25 school year. A small sample of about 40-50 responses was received. Feedback indicated that those who responded were looking for information, points of contact to share and address concerns, and community building.

b. Mission Statement for CHS PTO

There was discussion of the mission, focus and purpose of the Clayton High School PTO.

The CHS Mission Statement is as follows:

The PTO is organized for the purpose of supporting and enhancing the education of students at Clayton High School through volunteer service, fundraising and fostering relationships among members of the school community. The PTO helps to further educate, inspire and empower the School's students, and to reinforce the mission, vision and core values of the School District of

Clayton by modeling and promoting excellence, trust, inclusiveness, innovation and accountability in all it does.

This will be posted on the CHS PTO Dashboard.

c. Creating Access for all Parents/Caregivers to the CHS PTO

Jena Schaumburg shared that the Board was working this year to create systems to connect parents and caregivers to the PTO and ensure that everyone can access participation in the PTO in whatever way works for them.

The PTO is also working to set up systems, provide information, and create connections for parents and caregivers who come to the PTO with concerns or questions. If the answers and solutions needed do not fall within the PTO's purview or control, the PTO will support parents in connecting with those who can assist them within Clayton High School or the Clayton School District through the Parent Connections Program.

d. Communications

The CHS PTO Board is always working to streamline communications with Clayton High School families. Each family will receive a postcard right before school starts with information about what the PTO does and how to donate to the PTO. E-mail communication will be condensed and brief going forward.

e. Funds for Excellence September Campaign

The PTO Board plans to hold a one-month fundraising campaign in September to invite families to donate to Funds for Excellence. These donations will fund all the events and support the PTO provides to the CHS community.

Jena Schaumburg is working to ensure that requests for donations are accessible so that families can donate and participate in whatever way works for them rather than asking for a specific donation amount.

QR codes will also be available at the Open House on 8/27/24. Freshman Parents Night starts at 6:00 p.m. All others can arrive by 7:00 p.m. Those who wish to donate can scan the QR code and donate from their smartphone. All other forms of donation will also be welcome.

f. Clayton School District Website Updates

The School District has informed the PTO that the Clayton School District website will soon be updated. The District is working to make the website easier to navigate and find information posted there. The PTO hopes to use the new website to post and share information that is currently mostly shared only via e-mail with the community.

g. PTO Meetings

After considering feedback on meeting times and format from the community, CHS PTO meetings will continue to be held both in person and on Zoom to foster accessibility. The board is working to connect with someone at the Center of Clayton to discuss ways to utilize the existing tech there to make the participants' experience on Zoom smoother.

The first meeting will be on 9/4/24 from 12-1 on Zoom and in person at the Center of Clayton, Meeting Room C.

All Meetings will be on the first Wednesday of each Month.

h. Guest Speakers

The Board and members discussed having more guest speakers attend meetings to provide information and connect with the community. Superintendent Nisha Patel will be invited to be the guest speaker at the first PTO meeting, which will be held on 9/4/24 from 12-1 pm.

Later in the Fall, there may be an informal Q&A session with Carolyn Blair about general college admissions questions if Carolyn is available and the community expresses a need for the Q&A.

III. COMMITTEE AND EVENTS OVERVIEW

a. Clayton Connections

Kelley Karandjeff then shared information about the Clayton Connections Program.

More information is needed about the specific needs of new families and students at Clayton High School to flesh out the parameters of the program. The purpose of the Clayton Connections events is to foster connections with the community for new families to the district.

b. Parent Connections – New Program

Each Grade Level will have a Parent Connections Coordinator.

The Coordinators will:

- Plan and host two parent connection events for each grade level.
- Attend the monthly PTO meeting (on a rotating schedule) to update the community. This will ensure each grade level is represented equally throughout the year at the PTO meetings.
- Be the liaison between grade-level parents and the PTO, the grade-level counselor, and faculty sponsors of their grade-level class.
- Make sure there are parent representatives from each grade level to greet parents at school events such as the Homecoming Bonfire.

- Serve as the parent point of coordination for any grade-specific activities, such as Prom fundraisers. Our Treasurer, John Holmes, can assist folks with setting up a Cheddar Up page to raise money for specific events.

A need was discussed for an initial informational packet to provide to incoming Freshman families in the District. Jenny Abeles is working to create something like that to share with the community.

Kelly Karandjeff will forward an e-mail to each grade-level coordinator with all the information they need to connect with their Grade-Level Faculty Advisor and move forward.

c. Staff Appreciation

Emily Whitney shared that the staff would receive dinner on 8/27/24 before the Open House. Pizza and Salad will be provided from Dewey's Pizza. The PTO had been providing donuts once a month for the staff, but going forward the CHS PTO will fund two of the donut events, and the district has agreed to pick up the cost for the rest of them during the school year.

A survey was conducted asking the teachers and staff for feedback on all the Staff Appreciation events last year. Overall, feedback was positive on the events and food provided, and the Staff was grateful for this support from the PTO. It was also discovered that while gluten-free meals are needed for staff, vegan meals are currently not needed.

d. Homecoming

Jenny Abeles shared that some feedback was received that the CHS PTO Parent Hospitality Tent was utilized mainly by the students last year. The District PTO has rescheduled and re-branded the Back to School PTO Event, which was canceled due to weather. The Clayton District PTO is planning to instead offer coffee, smoothies, and donuts on the Newman Green, the morning of the Homecoming Parade. Parents and students can stop by and enjoy coffee, smoothies and donuts after dropping off their children for Homecoming Events that morning. It was agreed by all present that utilizing this District event in lieu of the Hospitality Tent for Homecoming this year was a good idea.

e. Book Club

The Clayton High School PTO Book Club will start in early October. It is tentatively set for, Tuesday, October 8. The book that will be discussed is – *Learning to Disagree* by John Inazu. More information will be forthcoming.

IV. Treasurer's Report

John Holmes briefly discussed fundraising and the 2024-25 School Year Budget. The board discussed working to share as much information as possible with the community about what the PTO does with the money it raises and what Funds for Excellence (FFE) donations funds for the community. The Budget for the 2024-25 School year is \$27,500.

Some of those items funded by FFE donations include:

- Funding to teachers for classroom or learning items not funded by the district.
- Pilot learning and support programs for students to see if they are a good fit before the district funds them.
- Funding to student groups to support student activities not funded by the District or not fully funded by the District.
- Staff Appreciation Events such as meals for teachers during Conference Weeks, Open House, etc.
- Parent connection events

V. Remaining Agenda Items

The following Agenda Items were tabled until the next meeting due to time:

- Clayton Cares
- International Liaison
- Hot Sips/Study Tips
- PTO Executive Board Session

The next PTO Meeting will be held on 9/4/2024 from 12-1 pm on Zoom and in person at the Center of Clayton, Meeting Room C. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Kempf, Secretary