

**St James PTA Minutes**  
**Wednesday, September 10, 2015**  
**8:15 AM in the School Cafeteria**

Jeanne O'Connor called the meeting to order.

**Opening Prayer:** Ann Mazza

**Introductions:** Jeanne O'Connor

Jeanne welcomed everyone to our first PTA Meeting for the 2015-2016 school year. Since it is new this year to have Grade Parents attend the PTA Meetings, we went around the room for everyone to introduce themselves and state their role, either PTA Board Member or Grade Parent. At least one Grade Parent per grade is expected to attend the meetings in an effort to further bolster communication with parents. Jeanne has requested feedback on this process as the year progresses.

**Principal's Report:** Mrs. Giordano

- So far, the school year is off to a great start! The students are happy to be back, and the school is fully staffed, following some changes in teacher assignments and new hires.
- Back to School Nights will take place next Tuesday, September 15 (Grades K-5) and Wednesday, September 16 (Grades 6-8) from 7-9pm. At that time, Mrs. Giordano will discuss, among other things, Advanced Ed which will be taking place in the school the week of November 2. Advanced Ed is facilitated through the Diocese, and it is basically an overall report card for the school which reports strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
- Mrs. Giordano introduced Mrs. Catherine Golden as the new Vice Principal. Mrs. Golden discussed her background, schooling and teaching career as a lifelong Monmouth County resident and teacher. She is very excited to meet and get to know the students, and anticipates a wonderful year ahead. Mrs. Giordano explained the rigorous committee-driven interview process that both Mrs. Giordano and Mrs. Golden went through before being offered their new positions.
- PTA Funds from the 2014-2015 school year were utilized towards some important projects, including replacement of the Social Studies textbooks and retiling of the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the building. Mrs. Giordano has an ambitious wish list for the upcoming year, which may include new Reading textbooks, facelifts for classrooms, and updating the Gym (considering renting the Gym out in order to help raise those funds).
- Mrs. Golden discussed her idea of inviting the middle school teachers to take part in STEM, which would create a middle school academy with science and technology focused projects for the students to engage in. St. James would change the name to STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) in order to introduce the Religion component. This will be an exciting way for the students to get involved with science and engineering.

- The question was posed to Mrs. Giordano about the state of preschool enrollment following a very successful school year, doubling its size. The enrollment numbers are high once again, with 86 preschool students so far. Just before school started, there were some changes to the preschool staff, but all staff is now in place and everything is running smoothly.

**President's Report:** Jeanne O'Connor

- Fee-Exempt Positions – All positions for AM monitor, nurse's office and playground duty have been filled. We are still in need of at least one more lunchroom aide on Thursdays from 11:45am-1:15pm. Please communicate this need to parents, especially new parents who may not understand how the fee-exempt positions work.

- New Family Orientation – These dates were held in August for those new to the school in the pre-K program and grades K-8 and they went very well. Jeanne and Dana spoke with each new family to let them know the role of the PTA and the ways in which we can help. Jeanne has asked the Grade Parents to also reach out to any new families in their grade to extend their help, especially to explain the very important items on the calendar, events and fundraisers. The most updated list of new families will be disseminated to the Grade Parents in order to facilitate communication.

- Visitor Sign-In – We have been experiencing a few glitches in the system in the first few days of using it. Please continue to use the sign-in book in the office as they work to get the electronic system working.

- KidStuff Books – Managed by Maria Rimmele and should have already been sent home with the youngest student in school. Some stated that they have not received it, so there will be follow-up to ensure they all are sent home. It is the first fundraiser of the school year, and St. James will receive 50% of the book sales. Parents can chose to send in \$25 for the cost of book, or return the book to the school, either of which is due back by the end of September. This counts toward the \$300 PTA Fundraising commitment at 50% (when you receive goods, you get 50% credit towards your family fundraising, a straight donation counts as 100% credit towards family fundraising).

- Fall Fundraiser – Begins Tuesday, September 15 with a school assembly to get the kids pumped up. All catalogs and order forms will be sent home that day. The fundraiser ends on October 1. This fundraiser also counts towards the family fundraising commitment at 50%.

- Diocesan PTA Fall Conference – The Executive Board has been invited and will attend on Saturday, September 19.

**Vice-President's Report:** Dana Franznick and Robert Lowe

- Grade Parents – Dana thanked the Grade Parents for attending and doing a great job so far. She emphasized the importance of personalizing information per grade as a way to better disseminate it. All slots have been filled for grades K-8. Dana is now going to reach out to the preschool to get some volunteers, as it is important to include the preschool in events, fundraising and programs in order to make them feel part of the Saint James family.

- VIRTUS Training/Fingerprinting – Must remind people that they must complete both in order to volunteer in school and around the students.

- Used Uniform Sale – Kim Vowteras and the volunteers did an amazing job, raising \$1100. Most of what was there sold, with about 30% of stock remaining. There will be a drop-off day for used uniforms designated prior to the next sale in November, and items needed will be communicated (definitely small sizes in everything and gym uniforms). Kim found it was much easier to set up for the sale the day before, so that is something she would like to continue going forward, and Mrs. Giordano gave her approval. Kim also started the sale at 8am (1 hour earlier than prior sales) which was very well-received, so going forward, the sales will be 8am-11am. The online signup page for volunteers was a great tool in getting commitments to help, so that will also continue for future sales.

- Trunk-or-Treat – This 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual event will be held on Saturday, October 24 from 7:30-9pm. Last year over 400 people attended, so it is a popular event that will need volunteers to run. Dana created a checklist of what was done last year as she coordinated it for the first time. People sign up to decorate their cars and music is provided, so it is really just some simple coordination (Grade Parents should ask for volunteers, and people can work together). The location is being shifted in the parking lot which will be solidified soon, and the Royals are handling traffic control to allow for better flow and safety. A request can also be made for middle school students to volunteer to help at the event to fulfill their volunteer hours.

- Red Ribbon Week – Will be held October 26-30, and raises alcohol and drug awareness for the students through an assembly speaker and activities through the week. There is a need for volunteers to help coordinate, and Dana will send a description of what needs to be done to the Grade Parents in order to disseminate. There will be online sign-ups to help throughout the week as well.

- Basketball Hoop – Thanks to Lisa Goga for noticing the need for the hoop to be fixed. Rob Lowe ordered and received the parts to fix the hoop, and has contacted Ken Keyes and Craig Seba from the Royals to fix the hoop.

- Rob Lowe also mentioned that he has taken a look at the RBC BSA as a site for a major fundraiser/social event in February, and he has a number of ideas to discuss with Mrs. Giordano. This fundraiser will be an adults-only social event to generate a significant amount of money towards improvements.

#### **Treasurer's Report:** Lisa Noonan

At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, we wound up with approximately \$30,000 to the PTA financial commitments. The monies raised went towards the new Social Studies text books, new Family Life books, replacement of text books, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor facelift. It is the hope that our fundraising will continue to increase. We would like to emphasize a surplus goal for this school year (i.e. \$50,000) in order to rally support around some tangible improvements in the school, including new textbooks, classroom facelifts, etc.

Lisa pointed out the schedule kept in her mailbox in the Saint James Business Office for submitting vouchers and when those subsequent checks will be issued by the Rectory. The voucher request forms can be found online. In addition, there are also deposit forms in Lisa's mailbox for those running events. All money from events should go directly to the office, it should never leave school grounds. Mrs. Schimpf will authorize the deposit, and everyone gets a copy of the deposit slip. If an event happens at night after the office closes, place the deposit in the drop box at the rectory.

**Recording Secretary's Report:** Laurie Williams

Attendance of Executive Officers:

Jeanne O'Connor – present  
Dana Franznick – present  
Robert Lowe - present  
Laurie Williams – present  
Lisa Noonan – present  
Fay Eigenrauch - Present

May 27, 2015 Executive Meeting Minutes approved by Lisa Noonan and Robert Lowe.

**Corresponding Secretary's Report:** Fay Eigenrauch

Fay requested an updated list of all faculty and staff, including their home mailing addresses and birthdays in order to send cards from the PTA.

Liz Coscia (Marketing/Legislative Affairs) will be tracking donations for our events so we do not continue to make requests to the same individuals or businesses. Fay will work with Liz to ensure that all donors receive thank you letters.

**Hospitality:** Ann Mazza

New Family Social – Will take place on Friday, September 25 from 7-9pm in the RBC Meeting Room. It is very important for PTA Board members and Grade Parents to promote and attend the event. An invite will be sent to all new families (an updated list will be provided to Ann), and the Grade Parents will also communicate this event to their new families. Ann will be purchasing alcohol and some fresh fall decorations (hay bales, mums, etc.) Other decorations will be utilized from the PTA closet. Ann requested \$500 for the event, which was approved by Laurie Williams and Lisa Noonan. Food will be provided by PTA Board members and Grade Parents via an online signup.

**Technology:** Jeanne O'Connor (for Maria Rimmele)

Grade Parents should emphasize the need for parents to go to the Saint James School homepage ([www.mysaintjames.com](http://www.mysaintjames.com)) to sign up for eblasts if they are not already receiving them.

Directory – The directory will be available online this year. The software has been purchased and Maria has the file with family contact information. As soon as she has it uploaded, an email will go out asking everyone for their approval to be included in the directory and to make edits to their information as needed. This is a priority in order to get the directory up and running as soon as possible.

**SJAA:** reported by Ann Mazza and Dana Franznick

Golf Outing – Will be held on Monday, September 14 at Rumson Country Club. This is one of the main fundraisers for Saint James Athletics and supports all of St. James sports. They are in need of volunteers to help the day of the event, particularly from 1-5pm. Golfers are still welcome to join. Grade Parents have been asked to send out reminders to encourage support of this important event.

**PTA Meeting May 27, 2015 Attendance**

Mrs. JoAnn Giordano  
Mrs. Catherine Golden  
Jeanne O'Connor  
Dana Franznick  
Robert Lowe  
Laurie Williams  
Lisa Noonan  
Fay Eigenrauch  
Ann Mazza  
Tiffany Havard  
Deanna Ryan  
Molly Cimini  
Lori Dougherty  
Jackie Mazucco  
Carol Sama  
Stephanie Christiano  
Kim Vowteras  
Lisa Goga  
Meghan Lupo