

Sandwich STEM/SHS PTSA General Meeting

Minutes – January 5, 2021

In attendance: Kristin Sareault, Maya Carpenter, Wendy Herren, Laurie Tompkins, Barb Noble, Susan Coutinho, Jim Mulcahy, Jeanne Nelson, Susan Miller

Meeting 6:30PM

Presentation by Susan Coutinho, School Social Worker. Ms. Coutinho is exploring with school support the purchase and care of a therapy dog. The company Golden Opportunities for Independence in Walpole, MA recommends a “facilities dog” which would be utilized in the STEM/SHS setting. The service dog would be cared and housed by Ms. Coutinho, brought to the school to work with students, staff, and faculty.

The therapy dog would be used for intervention to support reading and math skills, used for motivational purposes, help with anxiety issues, etc.

The therapy dog would be fully trained prior to coming to the school. The SHS School principal is in support of this project and is in the process of identifying budget resources to support the \$8,000 initial cost to purchase the therapy dog.

Ms. Coutinho is willing to contribute up to \$1,000 for the purchase. She is requesting support from the PTSA.

The PTSA is in support of the program and will follow the progress of the STEM/SHS budget discussion to determine if a monetary contribution is warranted. The vote on monetary support will be revisited after SHS budget has been determined.

Principals Report

February 11, 2021 – school picture retakes. Additional information to be sent out by school.

MCAS – information and instructions by DESE is changing constantly. The focus is currently on Seniors to be sure their graduation requirements are met. Secondly they are focusing on the 9th grade class and will focus on the June dates for testing. Still waiting on guidance for 7 & 8 and 10 & 11 grade classes.

Jeannie Nelson is happy to answer any questions and will provide information when it becomes available and/or finalized. Ms. Nelson shared the following:

According to a report released by the Commissioner today, January 5, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will take the following steps to modify MCAS testing this spring:

- *The make-up MCAS administration window for 12th graders originally scheduled to open on January 14th will be postponed.*
- *The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has decided that the Competency Determination (CD) requirement will be modified in English Language Arts and Mathematics for students in the Class of 2021 who have not yet earned their CD.*
- *The recommended modification would allow students to receive their CD by passing an approved course and demonstrating competency in that subject in lieu of a qualifying MCAS score.*
- *MCAS Biology test: The Department has provided school districts flexibility on scheduling the high school biology MCAS test. Schools can offer the biology MCAS to first-time 9th graders in February or June.*

Mid-Term exams will take place as usual beginning on Jan. 29th through Feb. 4th.

Term Three begins February 5th.

Additional information including schedules, make-up exams, bussing, etc. will be sent out prior to the exams.

President's Report

- Since our last general meeting in November, the PTSA has:
- Approved grant for \$275 for lifesaving mannequin
- Put motion for \$750 for teacher appreciation luncheon out to membership for vote & it was approved & held on 12/17
- Held parent presentation on resiliency with 139 registrations.
- Held virtual Last Best Craft Fair

Finance Report

Account total: Starting Balance \$12,017.17 - Current Balance \$19,071.42
SHS: \$8,485.46 - STEM: \$5,715.29 - After Prom: \$4,870.67

Stop and Shop Rewards program applied to this year total: \$2,967.19.
Amazon Smile Program: \$24.23 + \$27.17 on 11/12/20 = \$51.40
Citizen's Bank Donation: \$2,500.00
Total from Memberships and general donations: \$2,054.78
69 Members as of 12/1/20

Recent Deposits:

LBCF Vendor Checks = \$320.00
Heritage Halloween = \$923.85

Recent Payments:

Annual P.O. Box Fee = \$92.00
Grant Lifeguard Class Mannequin = \$275.00
Minding Your Mind – John Mattleman = \$500.00
Falmouth Publishing for LBCF = \$176.00

Grant Requests

Class of 2021 requested \$500 for the purchase of a class T-shirt. PTSA approved \$300 for this purchase.

Parent Program

The Secret Lives of Teens by Jon Mattleman. The PTSA approved the 2-night parent educational program, looking at dates in Feb/March. Cost \$1200