

Tilden Middle School PTSA General Meeting

September 10, 2019, Tilden Media Center

Celina Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:06pm, welcomed all in attendance and introduced Irina LaGrange, the school principal.

PRINCIPALS REPORT

Irina LaGrange welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Aaron Williams the new 6th grade administrator. Ms. LaGrange said she was excited to have all the new staff.

Ms. LaGrange said the children should feel safe and welcomed at the school. At the school they focus on social and emotional learning. The staff want the children to feel good about being at Tilden MS. She said that she will be at every meeting. Her door is always open and some people have her personal cell phone as well. She encouraged parents to contact her right away if there is an issue and not to wait a few months.

Ms. LaGrange talked about Mr. Atwood who was recently recognized in Bethesda Magazine. He created the STEM program at Tilden.

This year the focus will be on moving into the new school building, which will happen next September. She is working with the PTSA to fundraise potentially for an art sculpture for the front of the new school.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Celina Schmidt introduced the executive board. She also talked about the importance of all of the parents working together and volunteering to make a strong community and create programming for our families.

PTSA Officers 2019-2020

- President - Celina Schmidt
- Vice Presidents- Wendy Ellman and Traci Moran
- Treasurer -Michele Wisniewski
- Secretary - Rachel Weinstein
- MCCPTA Delegate (1)- Joanne Kee
- MCCPTA Delegate (2)Natalie Shelton
- Cluster Representatives -Sheri Weiss, Deborah Kornbluth and Jim Bradley

Celina said that there are many different committees and events and encouraged parents to check the Tilden PTSA website and sign up to help.

TREASURERS REPORT

Michele Wisniewski reviewed the budget and funds from last year and also presented a budget proposal from this year. Michelle reviewed the various activities that happened last year and what is being planned for this year.

There was a motion made to pass the budget. The motion was passed.

Michelle explained that donations are important for the success of PTSA programs. There are events that bring in money, but straight donations help the most. The money is used for programming and to support the teachers.

There were questions and discussion around the costs for the new school. MCPS will be paying for all the school-related costs. However, the PTSA may work with the school on a Buy-A-Brick campaign to fundraise for an art sculpture and/or other enhancements in the new school that will not be covered by MCPS.

MCCPTA NEWS

Joanne Kee explained that there will be county-wide meetings and she will be attending these and then reporting out. Also, there are county committee meetings (with specific topic areas) and she can connect you with various county groups if you have a specific interest.

CLUSTERS REPRESENTATIVE NEWS

Sheri Weiss

Sheri explained that there are three committee representatives. Their job is to advocate for what works best for our specific community. If you think something is of interest and should rise to the level of the committee, contact the representatives to discuss the issues.

- After the move, this building will go back to being a high school, Woodward. This is to relieve the overcrowding at Walter Johnson HS. However, there are discussions about the purpose of this high school. Some people want this new school to be focused on the arts, but this is not decided. There is also a question about if there may or may not be an athletic stadium. Our representatives are advocating that there should be the same components at this school as there are at Walter Johnson. Woodward's opening date is fall 2025.
- There will be county meetings that we will ask you to attend and to wear green. It is really important that families (parents and kids) attend these meetings, wear green (our community colors) and represent our community. This will show the people that are elected that we care how they vote on issues and to vote in ways that will support our community.

Deborah Berger

Deborah talked about her experience in doing this work and also working with other schools. She has been involved with Montgomery County for a long time.

- Montgomery County has hired someone to do a boundary assessment. We are advocating for one study (not two) which would mean that our students would only have to move one time (not twice). This is an important issue with the community. Deborah will keep us up to date on the issue.

Jim Bradley

Jim talked about his experience and doing this work with his local elementary school.

- There are sub-division staging policies (SSP) which determine when and how communities (housing and amenities) are built in our community. These decisions are important because they impact many areas of our neighborhoods, including our schools. There is currently a building moratorium which will end soon so we need to pay attention on what will happen after this ends.
- Walter Johnson HS is expected to exceed 120% of capacity and there is no solution for this (the school is already overcrowded). The SSP will impact WJ and our surrounding community so we need to be sure that updates are made to benefit our kids and that the community addresses the overcrowding in schools.
- Jim is going to send a note out about an upcoming hearing and he will describe the updated situation and what we should do and how we should advocate. He also suggesting that community members know your County Council members are because they need to hear from you about what you want to see and what decisions you want them to make.

Again, there was further discussion about the importance of getting a lot of people to attend the community meetings and wear green. The Council notices, people take photos and share on social media, and we have our voices heard.

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Since we are just starting the year, Celina reviewed the activities to give everyone some highlights. She encouraged everyone to go on the Tilden PTSA website to see the activities and to sign up and volunteer.

Fundraisers

We have a few of these throughout the year, but really we rely on direct donations.

- Restaurant Dine-Outs at restaurants and some of the money goes to Tilden. –
- Barnes and Noble Book Fair in December -Students can volunteer and earn SSL hours.
- Artistic Night – Candle making or wood signs

Retail Incentives

- Shop on Amazon (SMILE) and link to Tilden- It costs you nothing and goes right into the Tilden bank account
- Shop Harris Teeter –Link your card to Tilden. This needs to be renewed each year.
- Eat at Silver Diner (Eat Well, Do Well) – The money goes to Tilden. Plus, there will be two fundraiser nights at Tilden.

Introduction of Committee Chairs

- The meeting agenda listed all of the upcoming events and initiatives (also on the website). Look for programs of interest. Even if you can't volunteer on that day, you can volunteer at other times. Look for signup opportunities on the website and through the listserv.
- Book Fair - There will be one in the Fall (Nov) and the Spring (May).
- Day of Caring – The day before Thanksgiving is a half day. Students will participate in a day of service (within the school). There are many opportunities to volunteer this day.
- The Charity Staff vs Student Basketball game is scheduled for Feb 21. This helps fund the Day Of Caring. We are still looking for an event chair for this.
- Family Heritage Night – This is an International Night to celebrate different cultures. Consider representing your culture and participating in this event.
- There are committees for the 8th grade field trip and also for the 8th grade graduation ceremony.
- There is a membership committee that is responsible for the student directory.
- There are committees for restaurant nights, students with special needs and more. Review the website or contact a PTSA committee member if you are interested in volunteering.

Staff Appreciation

- Every month there is a Tilden staff meeting and the PTSA supports them by providing snacks. There are 75 staff members.
- There are two staff lunches that the PTSA supports.
- The PTSA provides holiday desserts on December 18th.

Announcements

- Everyone in attendance should sign in on 'sign in sheets' at the back of the room.
- Volunteer sign up sheets are in the back of the meeting room.
- There is a list of calendar events in the back of the room (and on website).

The meeting ended at 8pm.

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