



**Pearl River High School  
Parent Teacher Student Association  
NOTES  
of  
September 30, 2020  
Meeting**



**Formal**

- Welcome
  - Zoom Meeting, held virtually, called to order at 7:02pm.
  - New Board this year
    - Denise Anselmi, President
    - Ray Neubauer, Treasurer
    - Allison McKenna, Vice-President
    - Tracy Panzarella, Corresponding secretary
    - Christine Reddy, Recording Secretary
  - Opening Remarks by Denise Anselmi
    - Welcome Back to School, knows kids are thriving, thank you to Eileen Kennedy for moderating on Zoom
  - Approval of June minutes by Allison McKenna & Tracy Panzarella

**Old Business**

- Pirate strong mask sales – sales in June and late summer. Good profit.
- Seniors 2020 blanket gift – Along with Project Graduation, we gave stadium blankets embroidered with names and Pirate logo delivered to each Senior on what was the scheduled graduation day
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade orientation – We gifted each 8<sup>th</sup> and each new PRHS student a Pirates tee-shirt and welcomed each new Pirate on their way into orientation, in small groups
- Staff welcome back goodies – We gave gifts to all staff at the end of first week, cookies individually wrapped from Aunt Mia's to thank staff for all of their hard work

**New Business**

- **Membership** – Katee Fortescue is the Chair, she is driving now but has shared her notes. She is hoping to sign up as many or more members as we had last year. As of now, we only have a TOTAL of 143 people signed up so we have a long way to go to reach last year's number of 304. Our 143 number includes 14 students and 43 staff members. The link for sign ups is on our website and Facebook pages. \$10 per adult and \$4 per student. We encourage both students and each parent or guardian to sign up. We get an award if we meet a certain threshold. Thank you to Damon O'Keefe for promoting with teachers! It is a benefit to students and you cannot vote unless you are a member. Community members welcome too.
- **Fundraising** is much different due to Covid. Our main event is always a social event and we cannot do one this year. We are therefore looking for you to help with fundraising ideas. We are also open to straight donations!

- **Fall Apparel fundraiser** – ends/ended Friday 10/2/2020!!!!!! First time ever running this type of an apparel fundraiser. Will run again if there is interest.
- **Meal Deals fundraiser** - Luigi O’Grady’s this week through Friday 10/2/2020. Thank you! We get a portion of all sales.
- **Looking for NEW ideas** for fundraising. Please send your suggestions along.
- Donations also ALWAYS welcome.
- **What do we do with the fundraising monies?** Purchase 8<sup>th</sup> Grader T-Shirts, Senior Gifts/Blankets, Staff gifts, Scholarships and NEW items for this year movie licenses and other items.
  - School wide 2 year movie license. A PRHS teacher, Tricia Sutton, approached us with a movie license idea. It can be used to show movies for entertainment school wide or educational purposes. This is a great deal and we also get a PTA discount. This great idea will benefit students in Grades 8-12. Thank you.
  - Fundraising for – Outdoor furniture for students to use at lunch since we are using the outdoors a lot more.
- **Communication**. Ways for PTSA to communicate with members:
  - Website. Denise Anselmi & Tracy Panzarella update as needed.
  - Facebook page. New one created for PTSA specifically. Pearl River High School PTSA.
- **College Fair**. Working on a potential OUTDOOR event. Early November. It is in the works, stay tuned.
- **Teacher’s Report**. We have a new Rep, Damon O’Keefe, who will report on teacher happenings, news and information:
  - Mr. O’Keefe started with a Thank You from the staff for the cookies, put a smile on a lot of faces. Will again send out the membership link and spread the word.
  - Mr. Parisi wanted to share that National Honor Society has met, applications are out there, forms are due 10/9 on and the deadline is important.
  - Ms. Johnston wanted to share a reminder about school pictures for the Yearbook and for purchase. Pictures are different due to all that is going on, begins 10/3 during PE. There are plans for fully remote students to have pictures as well.
  - Myself personally I feel students and staff are off to as good a start as possible. We are working double time here. Mike Murphy has put hours into the building to open in a safe manner and we appreciate that. Teachers are doing a lot of work. It is challenging, kids are accepting but they do miss their friends. Trying to make the personality of a class happen.
  - Please know that Wednesdays are one of our busiest days. Teachers get together and do everything for the following week. Also phys ed has double students. Posting and grading for core teachers.
  - Sports. A different scene here at the HS. Spread the word to fill out the Covid info for the school in the morning before school PLUS for sports you must fill out another daily form on Sports U. Doing a good job of keeping teams with just their own team. No sharing fields. No overlap, which is great. Cross Country is out running the roads doing the best they can. Off to a good start. Hoping for successful sport seasons.
  - Thank you, parents, for all of your support.

- **Principal's Report.** Mr. Murphy delivered the report.
  - Welcome back. Hoping for some return to normalcy as we continue on. Introduced newest Assistant Principal, Aaron McCasland.
    - Mr. McCasland says hello and welcomes the change from his old district. He has been part of a PTSA for the past 10 years. Also was an advisor for Model UN and is aware of how much a PTSA does for students and is looking forward to working with us.
  - Mr. Murphy also thanks PTSA for the baskets of cookies, many appreciated. PRHS held 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and accommodated students in-house despite the construction. Important to allow students inside the building to alleviate any nervousness if possible. Split into 4 sessions, divided up by Guidance Counselor and had National Honor Society students walk the new students around the building in small groups. Incoming students were greeted by PTSA members who seemed to know many of the students and handed out t-shirts. A few wings were blocked off due to construction but still the students who attended all got tours before school opened.
  - The first Superintendent conference days were high energy. Teachers were eager to get in and set up since construction prevented them from coming in over the summer. Getting the hybrid and remote models.
  - Virtual Back to School night is tomorrow. It will be all remote. The teachers will be set up in their classrooms and the parents sign on via the portal for each class, following the student's schedule. Periods will be 8 minutes long exactly. Teachers will let you in and you have 3 minutes to jump classes, much like in-person. Teachers will be addressing you from their rooms/spaces around the building. The link coming out also has a tutorial. Starts at 6:25pm with a general address from me.
  - On 10/8, there is a virtual financial aid workshop. Guidance set up this first one for 7pm. Go to Guidance website for links and information.
  - Know that some events going forward will be canceled or postponed. So keeping in concert with the delayed/postponed sports season, some related events have been postponed as well, such as the bonfire, pep rally, homecoming, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade dance. Please check the online calendar often because events may shift.
  - Return to school was energetic and great. The teachers were a big part of this work. Group effort. Special shout out to Ms. Horton who took extra hours to integrate students into building and re-shift classes and spread out classes and students. Another key player is Jean Beckerle. She was here all summer. She helped all summer. And of course Janet and the main office staff. Thank you to everybody.
  - Quick note on Arrivals. PRHS AM arrivals is 7:20am. There is no presence in hallways to oversee the quantity of students. Because of the no gathering at lockers we have no ability to oversee. We have three major entrances: main entrance is the digital board side; the old main entrance is the flagpole side; and also the gymnasium entrance. Did and will adjust times for rainy or stormy days.
  - Building navigation. Hallways and floors are separated into lanes with tape. Forces student to stay in lanes. There is even a neutral lane where you cannot go. Most stairwells are one way up and one way down. Have also opened up doors out with

- staff to watch. We have also hired new security who watch our entrances by Holt Drive and Shoprite and have radios to communicate.
- Bells. We 440-550 students in the building at a time. We use a staggered bell system meaning students are released at the bell, half go out then two minutes later another bell rings and the rest are released. Students are respecting this bell schedule.
  - Bond issue.
    - The PRHS Library is nearly complete, there is some delayed cabinetry. We have installed some of the bookcase installation so that we could bring in some classes for purposes of spreading out. For example Mr. Santini has a large space for one of his classes in the library, which can accommodate 20 people when done in this way.
    - Science wing. Also waiting for cabinetry. It was not a surprise. Single stall bathrooms in the science area are a welcome sight to all. Math wing is nearly complete. Music wing spaces are large, welcoming and warm. The word I see is “wow” because it is such a change for spaces from some very small to large. The music teachers helped design these spaces.
    - Art and Tech includes a new design room between these rooms. It is the size of a classroom and can be for design for art and for technology. Our new art room is almost up and hope to be completed by January. You can see it by the Shoprite side.
    - New stairwell. Foundation is poured and ready to go. It is inside so cannot see from outside.
    - Like any construction job, we are in the finishing stages and it is exciting and looks nice. Main office is not part of bond but has been updated and we appreciate it.
  - Ms. Horton appeared and reported.
    - For students learning remotely, some teachers needed to distribute some material and put together and left on table out front by digital sign for pickup. We have a lot of items ready for pickup. Please pickup. It is not for every student, only if your teacher has shared with you or a monitor has called you.
    - For remote/hybrid and switching back and forth. We do not want this to happen day by day but we understand if students are quarantining. The reason is it makes attendance and tracking difficult. We do not want to encourage this as a daily choice. Reach out to Guidance department so that we can keep accurate records of where everyone is so that we know everyone is where they are supposed to be and that they are safe.
    - Covid screenings. Please remember to fill out each morning. We understand it can be confusing but we have to track and check lists. If it is not filled out, we have to call children out of class and down to the health office. Emails come out daily. If you do not get them please call.
  - Clubs. Scheduled to begin and we will announce in the Pirate Bulletin. We are doing clubs. We want to engage students and their interests.
  - Pirate Bulletin is a good spot for communication. Ms. Horton agrees and calls it a go-to place and states more information and links are there now than ever before.

- Mr. O'Keefe jumped in to answer questions that appeared in the chat box.
  - One question was about modified sports that were unfortunately canceled. Mr. O'Keefe stated that we are upset as coaches, sports have started too late and with daylight savings time game play is hard. There is talk about maybe moving the canceled fall sports into later in the year, which is a positive step. There is no communication from governor yet about whether high risk sports can happen yet inside a gymnasium. We are waiting for the communication.
  - Second question was about 8<sup>th</sup> graders being allowed to play JV sports. States there is a selection classification process, ATP, where coaches can ask students from their modified team to be brought up to JV. That process was completed this week. Continue to practice on own. For example some of the soccer guys we are urging kids who cannot play to still play with club and stay in shape for next season, maybe play with their club teams.
- **Treasurer's Report.** Ray Neubauer reported.
  - We need to review and approve the budget.
  - We had a few bigger items; the college fair and we have some placeholder fundraisers since we do not know what will happen.
  - Dues/Membership is \$10 but we pay \$4 to the state for each member.
  - We received a large contribution from the middle school PTA for the incoming 8<sup>th</sup> grade because they had a good amount of money that they did not spend on this group because they didn't get to do some stuff.
  - We approve three \$1,500 scholarships. If you want to be on this committee for awarding scholarships, let me know as I chair it.
  - Some school betterment projects are included. Money set aside for speaker presentations, movie license, welcome back cookies, CPA firm for tax preparation, insurance, college fair expenses, and we put reserves together so that we are not left short. We did put a line item for communications if we are looking to put something together for emails or zoom, and Project Graduation and dejavu dance. The budget could adjust due to things that might be changed.
  - Motion made to approve budget. Raise your hand if not in favor of the budget. No raised hands. Budget is approved.
- **PAC Committee updates.** Denise Anselmi reporting. Met virtually on 9/10/20. Talked about school openings, fundraising challenges, school picture challenges, Dr. Roelle gave an overview of teacher preparation for the hybrid and remote learning environments. Please email Denise Anselmi with any questions.
- **Curriculum Advisory Council.** Eileen Kennedy reporting. Met virtually. There were some unfinished items from last year. Six main topics this year: Elementary Report Cards; Looking at High School Electives Math and curriculum development and program review; social emotional learning curriculum to be reviewed and pushed into classes psychologists to deliver it once a month, a Guidance plan there; Literacy k-12 using some new maps and training; and there is some Tri-state Consortium training going on as that work before school came to an abrupt end.
- **Questions? Comments?** No hands, no questions at first. One question:
  - Tricia Reilly. Thanks so much for having a meeting; I have an 8<sup>th</sup> grader. I have a question about clubs and sports. Is there an opportunity to use clubs as a way to

keep the kids who missed out on sports last year and this year can we use clubs to get kids moving? Running and exercising?

- Mr. Murphy responded that clubs are active groups in whatever their mission or goals are such as the new dance club. So some clubs are more active than other. We are looking for engagement. It is a social activity. We want to keep kids engaged.
- Eileen Kennedy - thank you to teachers for all hard work, her kids love being in the building and feel comfortable and safe. Thank you for sending home award packets and certificates. Could we think about a movie club? A critics club maybe? Show in auditorium? Mr. Murphy will consider and is talking to Ms. Sutton and is aware of gatherings limits but looking to outside events as well. Some electives also use movies and other departments use in curriculum. We will look at it in the club area too.
- Mr. O'Keefe, as a teacher rep, thank you for your kind words. We appreciate the support that we are receiving.

Meal deal in October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Dom To-Go, Chicken parm meal, thank you

Next Meeting 10/29 at 7pm probably on Zoom again

Questions? Email Denise Anselmi at any time!

Motion to adjourn made by Denise Anselmi, Mr. Murphy seconded.