



Plato Academy St. Petersburg PTO Membership Meeting Approved Minutes

September 28, 2017

Attendees: Ms. Harnen, Mrs. Bryan, Mrs. Idiong, Mrs. Guadago, Mrs. Hally, Ms. West, Ms. Harrison, Mr. Sobczak, Mr. Gunderson, Mr. Donnelly, and Ms. Reinders

1. Meeting Come to Order (6:07 pm)

2. Welcome & Introductions – Welcome to all our families, the room is packed and we couldn't be more pleased. Thank you to all of our teachers who have joined the PTO this year and attended tonight's meeting.

- a. We have three guest speakers tonight. They are here to share information on the Middle School, our new location and the school wide recycling program that is beginning.
- b. Reminded parents that A+ Fingerprints was here to do Level II fingerprinting and if they have not already done so they should go to the teachers' lounge and get them done before they leave for the evening.

3. Guest Speakers

a. Mr. Donnelly

Plato Academy Middle School Program

- i. Guest speaker, Mr. Donnelly spoke about the Middle School Program and that Plato Middle schoolers are at an advantage for when they move forward to High School, because they will be able to receive high school credits while in Middle School.
- ii. Greek is counted as a Foreign Language credit when completed with a passing grade in both 7th & 8th grades.
- iii. Algebra is offered in the Middle School level, as well as accelerated courses.
- iv. He encouraged families to think about their long term goals for their children.
- v. He also spoke about the types of History and Science being offered and encouraged families to think about which high school their child will fit into best when it comes time to place them.
- vi. He emphasized that he is there to assist Ms. West in any way he can along with all of the other Plato Principals. Plato is a family that is there for each other.
- vii. He stated that he would be available to answer any questions for families. If you email Ms. West with your questions, she can forward to him for a response if she is unable to answer.

b. Matt Gunderson

St Petersburg New Location Update

- i. Guest Speaker, Matt Gunderson spoke about the new location. He thanked Pastor Dan for being so generous with the space at Park St. Baptist Church.
- ii. He then spoke about Pastor Roberts at Cornerstone Community Church and how we've been developing a relationship for over 3 years. They will be opening their hearts and arms to Plato Academy School. He thanked them for being so generous to us.
- iii. He stated that the entire time Superior has been working on this they have been keeping the students and families in mind.
- iv. We initially submitted plans and they were denied. Politics were involved. He mentioned that Rick Baker, our formal Mayor has offered to attend a PTO Meeting with us. He is very supportive of Charter Schools.
- v. Plans have been submitted to the city again as of 9/28. The specific plans have to do with the traffic on 38th Ave N.
- vi. He put the plans up on the projector so the parents and staff could see the Birdseye view. He explained the plans of the building. In the current building, along the back of the church, where the pre-school is located there will be six classrooms upstairs and downstairs. K-1 will be located upstairs and the little ones. Pre-K will be located downstairs. The lunchroom will be in the current building. The new building will host grades 2-8 and will have all classrooms, a full size gym, and rooms for the electives along with office space for administration.
- vii. He discussed how they had to change the design of the new school so that it will be easier to get in and out onto 38th Ave.
- viii. Instead of three classes per grade level, it will eventually drop down to two classes per level. This makes it more like a private school. We have to make sacrifices; it makes some financial goals more difficult.



- ix. He explained how the new campus we would have close to a full size soccer field and full size gymnasium with a high school size basketball court.
- x. He showed us where classrooms and administration would be located in the building.
- xi. He spoke about the easement between Cornerstone and the Osprey ALF. Unfortunately, they have been challenging to deal with.
- xii. He introduced Peter Christopoulos and thanked him for all his help.
- xiii. Matt discussed what the space will look like inside and said that they will be bigger than what we have now. We will also have windows. He compared our new building to the Clearwater Campus and said that it will have uninterrupted Wi-Fi.
- xiv. He said if the plans are approved in the next month they will be complete with the construction before the end of this school year.
- xv. A parent asked about where the cafeteria will be.
 1. Matt answered that it is already in place and will be located in the old building.
- xvi. Another parent asked about the carline flow and the parking lot.
 1. Matt used the slide to show us on a map how the carline will flow. Parents were concerned that there would be an overlap, but it was explained to us that there would not be. 68 cars can be stacked in the carline less than what is required by the city.
- xvii. There was a question about whether or not the current building would be renovated.
 1. Matt answered that the renovations will happen in the future as the funds that are being used are for the new building not renovations.
- xviii. A parent asked if there would be a library.
 1. He answered no, that no Plato Schools have libraries. Ms. West stated that the PTO is already working on some type of mobile library.
- xix. Another parent asked about when all of this will be FINAL.
 1. Matt answered that things should be definite within 20 days.
- xx. Parents would like to see the layout and the minutes.
 1. Rose Harnen stated that the Minutes would be posted on the school website.
 2. Matt stated he would find a way to share the site plans with the families after they are approved.
- xxi. Again, parents were concerned about the carline and the safety.
 1. Matt encouraged parents that safety precautions will be put into place.
- xxii. Another parent asked about food service. Would we continue to use the local public school to provide lunch?
 1. Matt & Ms. West said that would stay the same for the time being.
- xxiii. Another parent also asked about the safety of the school and the fact that the Cornerstone church is a Voting Precinct.
 1. Matt said that it would be safe that currently we have safety precautions in place at the pre-school. Anyone entering the building must be buzzed in by a person and is asked where they are going.
- xxiv. He mentioned there being a playground and a bike rack since many families live close.
- xxv. A parent asked about whether or not there would be a stage? Moreover, would there be enough parking for bigger school wide events.
 1. He said no to the permanent stage but that we can bring in portable stage like some other Plato campuses. Matt also discussed that the St. Mark's church next door has said that they will work with us with parking if needed.
- xxvi. A parent asked if we have the option NOT to go in the carline.
 1. He answered that yes, there will be parking. There will be 98 parking spaces.
- xxvii. He reminded us that we are moving into someone else's house, so we need to try to be flexible.
- xxviii. He said that Plato offers more sports than other public Middle Schools. Plato offers street-hockey, Flag football, Basketball, Track and Cheerleading in all of their Middle Schools (6th grade and up).
- xxix. He also spoke about parent participation and encouraged all families to be involved and meet their 30 volunteer hours.
- xxx. Matt encouraged the parents to email him with any further questions.
 1. mattg@superiorschools.com



xxxi. Again, there were some questions about safety and he encouraged them that the building will be safe. He wrapped up his part of the meeting.

xxxii. Follow-Up Action: Matt Gunderson agreed to somehow post or send out the plans for the new location and highlight the carline in some fashion.

- c. **Ms. Reinders** School Wide Recycling Program
- Ms. Reinders spoke about the recycling program and asked for volunteers.
 - Plato St. Pete Is NOT currently recycling, so she would like to get this started right away.
 - Emma stated we have one parent volunteer that will Co-Chair but we still need additional 3-4 parents to make the program work. You can contact her or Ms. Reinders for details.

4. Reports

- a. **Principal's Report** Ms. West
- Ms. West discussed Hurricane Irma and how things were stressful, but that we all pulled through and worked together to get back on track.
 - She spoke about how parents can come to the Plato Academy Board Meetings if they wish, just so they can get stay involved.
 - She spoke about how behaviors have significantly improved this year and she is thankful for that. She thanked the parents for their involvement.
 - She also thanked everyone for coming to Astro Skate and said it was a successful event.
 - She discussed that Curriculum Night went great and they will continue to do that in the future.
 - She discussed the new art teacher and how the students were adjusting well with the change. The art teacher, Ms. Kane, was introduced.
 - She discussed the Grandparent's Luncheon scheduled for 9/29 and how the volunteer positions were filled. She thanked parents for that.
 - She thanked the teachers of Plato for coming to the PTO Meeting.
 - A parent questioned what happened with our school grade dropping from an A to a C.
 - Ms. West was very thorough and answered that she believed a big part of it had to do with the computer problems they had that day. She also said that when she found out the grade, she contacted all teachers and they were available to come in and look at data with Ms. West. She was very pleased. Ms. West said that MATH seemed to be a big problem this past year.
 - She encouraged parents that this will NOT happen again next year and that they are very motivated as a school to move forward and try harder.
 - She mentioned that we will not do a Holiday party this year because of logistics, space, etc. Instead, we will do a School Dance in February.
 - Ms. West discussed that we will start a Student Council at Plato with our 6th grade students. We already have Safety Patrol and will not have Student Council.
- b. **Teacher's Report** Ms. Harrison & Mr. Sobczak
- Ms. Harrison spoke and said that she is very proud to be a teacher and a parent at Plato. She discussed how close the community is and how wonderful she thinks that is. She said that she feels this is our year to shine.
 - Mr. Sobczak also spoke and commended the parents for coming to the meeting and said that he was very impressed by the turnout. He talked about how much he loves his job and how well his students do. He is very happy to be a part of the Plato Family and being on the Board.
- c. **President's Report** Rose Harnen
- Rose Harnen started with asking whether or not parents had received a text from "Remind". She stated that all members of the PTO were added and if you did not receive this text, to let her know so they can be added. She stated that all new members would continue to be added as the parents join.
 - She also reminded families that if they come to the PTO meeting, their child will receive a "Free Uniform Day Pass" (meaning, they do not have to be in uniform for the day) if their parents attended the PTO meeting.
 - Communication to the families was mentioned. She stated that we are using all forms of communication including flyers, Remind, emails via our teachers, monthly newsletter that is send with Ms. West's monthly update and the Plato People FaceBook page, an unofficial page set up



by parents and not part of the school. She hopes the parents feel they are getting the information they need in a timely manner.

- d. **VP's Report** Emma Bryan
 - i. Emma Bryan started with notifying parents that she needs Chairpersons for our December events.
 - 1. Chair needed for the Holiday Gift Shop
 - 2. Chair needed for Holiday Stem-a-Day Fair that was put on the calendar to replace the Holiday Party. This will be a daytime event for the students working with the teachers to come up with projects for the students to do.
 - 3. Emma also mentioned Trunk or Treat is on October 27th. Ms. West said the sign-up sheet for cars would be put out next week. It was stated that if we do not get the Chair's or volunteers that we need we would have to cut out programs or events.
 - 4. Chair needed for the Food Drive
 - a. Chaleeta Mullins volunteered for the Chair position.
 - b. Additional volunteers are needed to help.
- e. **Secretary's Report** Julie Hally
 - i. No report submitted by Secretary.
 - ii. No minutes need approval at this time.
- f. **Bookkeeping Report** Idi Idiong
 - i. Total for PTO \$4,873.52
 - ii. Adopt-A-Class \$2,550.69
 - iii. Idi Idiong stated that we raised quite a bit of money (\$4,873 for PTO total and \$2,550 for AAC). The parents were very pleased.
 - iv. Idi also stated that we have extended the date for Adopt-a-Class because of Hurricane Irma. She asked that the money be given to your child's teacher or dropped off tonight at the PTO table.
 - v. Idi also mentioned that we are still accepting PTO Memberships and those can also be given to your child's teacher or dropped off tonight at the PTO table.
- g. **Fundraising Report** Tressy Guadagno
 - i. Membership 164 members \$1,510.00
 - ii. Spirit Shirts \$1081.84
 - iii. Spirit Night \$297.00
 - iv. Tressy stated that we had 164 people join the PTO this year and that this year, many teachers joined too. This is the highest number to date.
 - v. She discussed our recent Spirit Night and noted the next one that will be at Burger-Fi in Seminole.
 - vi. She also discussed Spirit Shirts and the desire for the Anti-Bullying shirts similar to the camo ones the teachers have and wore last year.
 - 1. Parents weighed in and said yes, they would like another Spirit Shirt.
 - 2. Order forms will go out the week of October 9th and be due back October 20th
 - 3. Cost for shirts will be \$10.00 due to the camo design.

5. New Business

- a. New Board Member: Mr. Sobczak has joined the Board representing the Middle School
- b. Spirit Night – BurgerFi - Wednesday, October 18th 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm Seminole
- c. Fall Fundraiser – Charleston Wrap 10/02 – 10/13
 - i. Will need 15 volunteers for 1-3 hour for delivery – date to be announced
- d. Second Spirit Shirt
 - i. Anti-Bullying – Green & Pink Camo
- e. Box Tops, due Oct 13th
- f. Holiday Party changed to Stem-a-Day Fair, Date TBD
 - i. Will need 1 Chairperson
 - ii. Will need 15-20 volunteers during the day
- g. Holiday Shop
 - i. Will need 2 Chairperson for the one day event



- ii. Will need a minimum of 15-20 volunteers to work the different shifts to help the students pick out gifts and ring them up.
- h. Food Drive – Nov 13th – 17th
 - i. Need 1 Chairperson & 3-5 volunteers
 - ii. Collecting food for Park St. Baptist Church
- i. AmazonSmile - Year-round Passive Fundraiser
 - i. First Deposit - \$17.63
 - ii. Link to join is available in the Digital Newsletter and on the Plato People page.
 - iii. Please pass it along to all your family and friends.

6. Next Meeting Dates

- a. Nov 2nd
- b. Jan 18th
- c. March 8th - Elections

7. Open Floor Session

- a. Jim Sciandra spoke about All Pro Dad's. He mentioned the next meeting and encouraged families to come. He stated that although the group is called All Pro Dad's any parent can bring a student (Mom's or Dad's'). He also spoke about the Annual Camping Trip in February. He said spots are limited and you should sign up as soon as possible.
- b. Christie Cambut reminded families that Box Tops are due on October 13th. Baggies are available at the PTO table for families to use to turn in their Box Tops.

8. Teacher Raffle – Compliments of Dick's Sporting Goods and Publix's

- a. Ms. Stewart was the Teacher PTO member winner of Septembers Raffle. She received a 25.00 gift card to Publix's and a \$25.00 gift certificate to Dick's Sporting Goods.

9. PTO Member Raffle – Compliments of R.W. Caldwell, Inc. – The Sepulveda & McCarthy Families

- a. The Herman Family was the PTO member raffle winners.
- b. They won an overnight Stay on St Pete Beach and a \$100.00 gift card for dinner at Mad Fish.
- c. Next meeting raffle is Four Disney Park Hopper Passes!

10. Adjourn (7:36 pm)

- a. We thanked all of the families for attending.
- b. Apologized for the long meeting but stated that lots of great information was shared
- c. Thanked Mildred Hood, our PTO Hospitality Chair, our volunteers in the Child Care rooms, and our volunteers at the PTO table for handing out the Spirit Shirts, taking in membership and AAC donations along with giving out information to new families on the PTO.