



# PTO Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2021

*The PTO mission is to support the educational experience at TJHS and to foster a stronger school community for students, parents and staff.*

**PTO Board Members in attendance:** Brooke Bolinske, Wassila Hamitouche, Karla Henke, Teri Hetzel, Carrie Oss, Megan Perkins, Eileen Robinson, John Trujillo, Krista Zizzo

**Total attendance:** 37

## 7:00pm: Welcome

Eileen Robinson, PTO President, welcomed Board members and parents in attendance. The meeting was held virtually, via Zoom.

## 7:01pm: Administration Update

Assistant Principals Paula Hammel and Jon Poole gave an overview of second semester's schedule and plan for in-person learning. Staff and students are acclimating to the new schedule. Ms. Hammel explained the thinking behind the shift to the second semester schedule. The administrators had to plan for a schedule that worked for both remote and in person learning. Students participated in a survey last fall that helped shape the current schedule.

- Feedback included that Friday office hours weren't useful for students and not many were taking advantage of them. Office hours are now available, each afternoon, not just on Friday.
- The current schedule with shortened meetings of periods 1-8 on Monday is intended to prep students for the week. It's like a Monday morning meeting to set expectations with students for the week.
- Students said that there was too much asynchronous learning with the 90-minute-long classes, so classes are now shortened to 70 minutes of live instruction with the teacher and 20 minutes (per period) of asynchronous learning shifted to the afternoon. Exit tickets are open until midnight and students can work on them at any time during the rest of the day.
- When we do go back to in person learning, health guidelines require 72 hours straight with nobody in the building. It was easier for facilities staff to make that Mondays vs. Fridays.

**Return to School:** As of today, DPS has indicated that all students that chose in-person learning should be back in the building by Feb 1. TJ Admin will share these details in a Zoom meeting with parents next week and will be in the school newsletter. All learning will be asynchronous on Monday, February 1. This will allow for all teachers to be in the building that day to review protocols, health and safety measures, etc. Tuesday, February 2 will be the first day with students in the building.

- Students with last name A-K (Cohort A) will be in the building on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Students with last names L-Z (Cohort B) will be in building on Thursdays and Fridays.

Students will enter through the front doors. There may be additional directions for students to enter through a different door based on their first period class. The schedule will help naturally stagger how students come in. If they have advisement, students come in by 7:30am. Everyone else will arrive for 8am. Health screenings will be in the lobby. This will consist of taking temperature and making sure each student is wearing a mask. (A self-check will be completed at home before each school day).

Students will move to their classrooms according to their schedule. Ms. Hammel said that once students get through the main doors in the lobby, there will be directional signage. The main hall will be two directions. The first-floor math/science wing will be a North to South hallway. Other halls will be South to North hallways. The administrators will send out pictures with directional signs on them so students will be able to figure out where to go per their schedule.

Students will wear masks all day. They will need to bring water bottles as drinking fountains are turned off. Students are to remain in their assigned classroom during a given period and are not free to move throughout the school. If they need to use a restroom, they may use the one nearest their current classroom. There will be no eating in the school. Breakfast and Lunch will be available as “grab and go” products, but students must eat outside the school. The school is trying to limit the amount of time with masks off.

For contact tracing purposes, teachers will have to use a seating chart for each class, so they know who was sitting where, how far they were from another person, etc.

**Questions** submitted by parents to the “Chat” included:

*Can students who chose remote switch back to in-person?* No. The only option now is to go from in-person to remote, a change you can make at any time during the semester. If you chose remote, that stays in place through the end of the semester at this point. (The semester ends at the end of May).

Ms. Hammel addressed the concern that information given in December when the decisions were due was incomplete and now there’s no way to change from remote to in-person learning. TJ administrators have heard that concern and if the DPS Instructional Superintendent allows them to make changes, they will try to do so. TJ is the only HS that decided not to move to the quarter system. Mr. Poole echoed that the instructional superintendent has been very responsive so parents should feel free to reach out and give him your feedback. It would be great to make a change later this spring when vaccines are in force but know that you have a voice too. The Instructional Superintendent is Timothy Dale.

*How many students do you expect to have in the building?* About 594 selected in-person learning, so about half the school. There will be around 300 students in the building on T/W and a different 300 students TH/F, plus 100 staff, for a total of about 400 in the building Tuesday - Friday.

*What does the health screening consist of?* Students will be doing a “safe access” health screening at home - basic questions with Yes/No answers. If a student is sick, we ask that you keep them home. Then when they get in the lobby, staff will do a temperature check and make sure that they have a mask on.

*Are any classes going to be taught live?* No, they’ll all be virtual. The teacher may be in the room, but half the students in the class will be learning remotely. Any breakouts will be done online, students will attend class with their headphones on.

*Will students be changing classrooms?* Yes, but they’ll have to follow the directional signage.

*CHSAA announced that Season B is starting for sports. Is there any update on how that will work?* Girls Basketball has started, Boys Basketball is up and running, Swim Team was in the water today, Wrestling has also started. This week was preseason week, registration is due this Friday at 5pm. They are using the same “golden ticket” process, it’s all done online now. The official start of practice is Monday. Most sports will have

daily practice, some going in shifts until 9pm as only 14-15 students can be together at a time. No clubs or other student activities can be in the building at this time.

*Regarding freshman transition - what might be done for 9th graders?* Mr. Poole reported that TJ shirts are waiting for everyone, yard signs, too, and as soon as we can have small events, we'll be working on outdoor social "mixers" where we rotate groups though the same event, like a scavenger hunt in small groups. The goal is to get them seeing other students and getting them on campus exploring the school. Administrators will send ninth graders a video to help orient them to the school, perhaps showing one freshman walking through their schedule of classes.

*Will the video school tour include transfer students?* Poole - yes, we can look at doing a video specifically for transfers. He'll make note of that so upperclassmen can have a separate tour.

*Will Schoology still be the main platform for communication?* Schoology will continue to do a grade pass through to Infinite Campus nightly. That will be maintained for the entire year, so parents can use Schoology for missing assignments, grades, etc.

*There were questions about the ACT prep course that starts on 1/26, some students have not received information yet.* Poole indicated that's a district class so students should get a message about that through Schoology. There are also test prep resources available in Schoology if your student did not get a spot in the class.

*Will students have to leave campus at the end of Period 7 or 8, or do they stay on campus for the afternoon asynchronous time?* They are not allowed to be on campus or lingering in the parking lot during the asynchronous time at the end of each day. There may be exceptions for students in sports but that's being worked out.

### **7:38pm - Update on Senior Activities**

John Trujillo reported that he and the senior class parent sponsors have been working with the administration on a tradition that the seniors could participate in each year, "Senior Showcase," which would be like a talent show. Right now, it being planned as a virtual event, to be held on April 7. Please mention it to your senior so that everyone who wants to participate can. It will be a talent show of sorts, to include an introduction to the event with dance submissions like TikTok videos that will be merged together. Then nine participants doing talents, which could be silly, fun, memorable, or a recognized talent like guitar, singing). It will be an accessible, fun format. If things change, perhaps it can be held in person, maybe just the seniors participating would be in the building together, then streamed to everyone else. If a miracle happens and we can do it live, then that's the best-case scenario. There will be attendance and GPA requirements as with any other school activity. Mr. Poole said that it's something we'd like to see happen, ideally in person attendance, maybe outdoors with a screen, if allowed by the city/state. It would be great to have the seniors present.

John Trujillo suggested that perhaps PTO can buy an outdoor tent or a screen so that we'd have that for future needs. To the extent that there's the ability to purchase something that can be used in the future, given the PTO budget.

Before signing off, Mr. Poole thanked the PTO for the teacher gifts. That meant a lot to our staff.

### **7:46 - Treasurer Report**

Treasurer Teri Hetzel reported that the PTO books have just been handed over to our new treasurer team. There is \$80,177 in the checking account and \$10,385 in the savings account. Class accounts were reviewed. Several classes have done fundraisers this fall. The King Soopers card funds have been transferred to each class. The balance of the PTO general fund is about \$70K. Classroom grants will be coming up next. Eileen commented that it is great that we have funds to support our mission - which is supporting our classrooms and school. The financial reports will be posted to the PTO page on the TJ website.

There was a question about funds from "Amazon Smile." We get around \$70 per quarter. It's a small portion of our income.

### **7:51 - Teacher Appreciation Update**

Thank you to Suzy Stone for heading up the holiday gifts for teachers. The PTO bought staff each a soccer scarf with TJ logo and colors. Suzy with help of other parents put together a lovely gift bag, which included individual handwritten notes from parents. Staff picked up their bags in a drive thru event. Eileen received many thank you notes from teachers. Support staff were included and felt really appreciated. This was in addition to a \$5 coffee gift card that we sent them in the fall. They were thrilled to get both gifts! Refer to the addendum to these minutes for the thank you notes the PTO received.

### **7:55 - Food Bank/Adopt-a-Family Update**

Co-Chair Megan Perkins reported that the TJ Adopt -a-Family program, spearhead by Matt Nicolo and Samanda Davis, was a huge success. They made it happen with minimal contact. There were 67 families who were adopted. Families worked as "Santa's elves" to provide gifts for the family's children. Every kid's wish was fulfilled. Each family received wrapping paper and tags so the family could wrap the gifts themselves and participate. They were blown away by the participation.

Megan reported that every month the TJ Food Bank is feeding more families. They started in August with 40, now they are feeding about 90 families, including meals for Thanksgiving and Christmas. So many people are collecting and delivering food! It has been a logistical nightmare without being able to use the school facilities. The Food Bank is currently housed in her garage, and she just got 150 boxes of cereal delivered this week! So many people have reached out to help. This month, we're requesting COVID-19 safety supplies to provide to families as we prepare to return to school: hand sanitizer, face masks, sanitizing wipes.

The Food Bank was pretty much wiped out in December. There's a big push to get more food. They especially need: snacks, peanut butter, canned protein, boxed meals. The next distribution is January 26. How to donate? There's a blurb in the weekly school newsletter with the information and a link. There are 8-10 collection sites around TJ area, also a link if you want to donate money to the PTO's fund.

### **8:00 pm Announcements & Reminders**

- Spirit Wear Pop Up Store at Onsite Consulting (6446 E. Hampden Avenue) Wednesdays, January 20 and 27 from 5-6pm. Karla Henke indicated that they sold \$1000 in 2 hours at the last one!
- Senior Challenge Day is January 25. This will be a follow up event for Seniors as they participated in Challenge Day in person last year. This event will be virtual, registration is open now. Current Juniors won't get the traditional Challenge Day until next year. Send questions to Samanda Davis.
- All individual student yearbook photos are due by Feb 15. Each student is asked to submit a personal photo, like a school photo. The submission link is in the TJ Journal newsletter.

There was a question about whether we are having an auction this year. Megan Perkins confirmed that yes, we are! More to come soon!

**8:05 pm Meeting Adjourned**

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, February 9 at 7:00pm**

## Addendum

Thank you notes from staff for the scarf gift distributed in December.

# To our thoughtful PTO.....

Wow wow wow. This gift from you all is amazing! The quality and detail of the scarf is so beautiful. Thank you so much for taking the time to HANDWRITE cards, make the creative TJ colored "virtual" tag (I'm making this into an ornament), cut the two different colors of ribbons with the buffalo checkered tissue paper. The assembly of this gift shows great detail, time and effort. Ya'll are sooo thoughtful and appreciated. This gesture made my heart full. Thank you! - Brittany Nicolo (Physical Education)

Just to echo what my wife said above, TJ PTO is the best! I can't believe how much you supported our community with AAF and all of the support throughout the year for our faculty & staff is beyond measure. We are so grateful to all of you and thank you! Matt Nicolo - Business/DECA

AMAZING, I love the TJ spirit and now I have something to also keep me warm. We appreciate all you do for TJ and thank you for always making support staff feel they are part of the TJ community as sometimes we get lost in the shuffle.

Dearest TJ PTO, Thank you so very much for the gift. This is so thoughtful and so amazing. I cannot say thank you enough for the TJ scarf, **handwritten** note, and seasonal treats. It is clear that a great amount of effort, attention, love and standing in very cold and windy weather went in to making sure the TJ staff feels valued and appreciated. We are forever thankful to be supported by you all. ❤️ - Natalie Koncz

TJ PTO,

Thank you very much for the Starbucks gift card and the TJ scarf. What a unique, fun, cool gift!

Also thank you for the awesome support for TJ and its teachers. I really appreciate all of the work that our PTO does.

Have a great holiday break.

Stacey Fornstrom

Wow, thank you so much for the Christmas gift. This may be the most thoughtful gift I have ever received on the job. Obviously you all put a great deal of thought into the gift and it is most appreciated, something we will have for years to come.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!! The TJ scarf and hand written note is amazing and so very thoughtful. I cannot even begin to express my gratitude to the PTO. You guys are amazing and are so supportive. You always go above and beyond to support the teachers, faculty, staff and TJ community. We all appreciate you and what you do so much. Thank you for the gift card as well. Thank you again for your support and all you do. Julie Thibodeau

Thank you for the Gift and the scarf. I was walking my dog in a cold wind last weekend and was saying maybe I should get a scarf. So you got me something I probably wouldn't have gotten myself but wanted. Thanks so much for your support over the years. Tim Owens

We are so lucky to have the MOST AMAZING PTO EVER! Thank you all so much for the scarf! It is absolutely incredible! Also, thank you for all of your support this year and being so flexible with all the remote learning challenges! We couldn't do it without you! Enjoy the break and I hope we all get to be together again soon! – Angie Jacobson

Dear PTO

Thank you so much for the amazing gift. We at TJ are so lucky to have you as PTO. It has been a difficult year to state the obvious, but knowing we had all this support has definitely made it easier. Have a great break and see you in 2021. THANK YOU! Sabrina Janczak

Gracias PTO por el precioso regalo...Gracias (Yantas)

Dear PTO,

Thank you, thank you, thank you!! You all have made such a difference in our efforts this year to get food out to students and families. Your consistency in these efforts showed that our TJ family and community is here for each other. And, these scarves, well, those are spectacular! I know that we all appreciate receiving this at the end of a difficult semester. We can end 2020 in style!! Thank you so much! P. Hammel

Dear PTO,

Thank you so much for your thoughtful gift. I am so thankful for your support. Your continued support is so appreciated and makes TJ a great place to be. THANK YOU!

Anne Rice

Thank you PTO for the lovely and thoughtful scarves and gift. Just the fact that you were willing to hang outside in the cold and wait for us to drive by really meant a lot! Always, and especially now, I feel so grateful for your support of TJ teachers and staff. Carlie Frydman

PTO,

Thank you for such kind and thoughtful gifts. I love the TJ scarf and will be wearing it proudly. How lucky are we here at TJ to have such a supportive and thoughtful PTO? A million thank yous, sincerely to all of you. Con mucho cariño, Laura Prow

Thank you so much for the beautiful scarf! The brown and gold has never looked so good (or felt so soft)! Thank you also for the kind words and all the support you give us year after year. I so appreciate your trusting us with your wonderful children. They have been so much fun this semester and have really made the best of a new and strange situation. Surprisingly, I have been able to connect with many of them in ways I never have been able to before. Sometimes quiet voices can be heard more clearly in the chat! Have a safe and happy break! Jeffrey Almond

The generosity of the PTO at TJ is always so heartwarming. I am thankful to work at a school with wonderful community support! Thank you all so much for all that you do and Happy Holidays! - Jillian Gleason

Thank you so much for the thoughtful scarf and gift. The TJ PTO is amazing and we are so grateful for all of you! Kathleen Aubert

Thanks again to the TJ PTO team!! I've been at TJ for 11 years and you have always shown so much support to the TJ staff . We are very lucky to have such an amazing PTO here at TJ. Again thank you, Chief Gaines (JROTC)

PTO - thanks for making us feel appreciated, even from afar! What a thoughtful and kind gesture. It is clear from the amazing gift, complete with lovely packaging and a handwritten (!) note, that this took a lot of time and effort on your part. We love your kids and are proud of them for making the best out of a very strange year. Can't wait until we can see you all again and thank you in person for your ongoing support. Enjoy the holidays! Eileen Adair

Awesome PTO! Thank you for all you do for TJ teachers and students. Your help with the SkillsUSA Thanksgiving food drive and now the cool TJ scarf, the personalized note was heartfelt. We have the best parents at TJ and am so thrilled to be apart of this caring community.- Jerry Esparza