



O'Keeffe PTG Meeting - Minutes

Wednesday November 11th 6:30-7:30pm

Via Zoom - zoom link at end of this agenda

Email: okeeffeptg@gmail.com Web: www.okeeffeptg.com

1. **Welcome and introductions** - introductions of all present. PTG overview. Present: Principal Dugas, JoAnn Kraus, Maria Banchik, Nina Lebwohl, Steph Steigerwald, 7 others

2. **Principal's update - Tony Dugas** - Has been checking in with staff and it's OK to not be OK. He normally is on fast forward to keep things happening for the students. But spring was emergency education. Goal for fall was to deliver a quality experience, but it's not traditional school. A # of families think it is "too much" and are overwhelmed, some want more, and the third group are dialed in and connected with students and staff. Staff is listening and adjusting as they get info from district. Still driving for a sense of belonging and do students feel connected behind the screen? These are adolescents! 40-50% of students have screen cameras off. How can we ensure students are present if we can't see them? How do staff make sure they are critically engaged. They keep on digging for info and updating their approach. Virtual schooling may push past January and so staff are planning for being in a place come January so no-one is behind and even can accelerate. So difficult for non-core classes. Every school is different in their approach, looking for consistency across district. What is the best fit for O'Keeffe - Synchronous vs asynchronous. How to make students engaged vs passive consumers in their education. Parent/teacher conferences coming up. Will send out questions to set a framework for discussions. The staff is nimble, learning, being compassionate and engaging students across their range of engagement.

Staff has been working around the clock to make sure families have what they need from wifi, food and shelter and of course education. It is critical for families to continue to communication with teachers/staff so they have feedback on how students are doing and can adjust to what's best for them.

O'Keeffe has also made it a priority to find a way to bring joy. Monday trivia. Weds virtual experience - now the Wednesday question. Friday song of the week. They are continuing to find balance and keep kids coming back. It is tough across the grade ranges.

This is our new normal - an awakening - finding a way to do school that is more individualized and taking advantage of all the technology - for now and when we are back in person.

Please keep in communication, ask questions, keep in touch, keep pushing, and let us know how to best serve the children.

3. **Virtual learning check-in about both students and staff. How are we feeling about the school year? Here are the various responses:**

-Feeling disconnected - our adolescent kids don't share with us. Staff is working hard. Lots of email communications such that I can't get to it all, but go back to that when I need to find out the info I missed.

-Missed out on orientation and so feel so clueless about O'Keeffe. (6th grade parent) 60 students in spanish is hard.

-It really varies by day on how the students and parents feel about how the day went. Impressed with teacher effort.

-Have not been able to get student to keep camera on - peer pressure? Don't want to show background. Equity issues. Camera on to start day, and then off at end of day - zoom fatigue.

-Making it work. Not willing to fight with kid for camera on. He is independently getting his work done.

-Extrovert 7th grader doing well, camera on, student doing well. Feel disconnected even from last year with transition from elementary to middle and student not sharing.

-8th grader loves not being in school and later start time. Thought he was doing everything but really needs clear instructions. Appreciate that school is virtual and MMSD is making the safer choice. Worried about how they will be prepared for high



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school?

-Sad they are not walking the halls and seeing their friends. Not connecting. Looking forward to how we will appreciate being together after this. They are missing some of the fundamentals of being in school - paper books, critical thinking.

-Just keeping up with google classroom and if assignments are completed. Have no idea if student has camera on or is participating in class.

3.5 What can we do to support staff and students when we cannot be in the building together?

Staff needs to hear our support and kudos!

Staff Appreciation - we still have funds from Heartland CU that was supposed to be for a lunch.

Professional Development day - provide lunch delivered to staff or put towards gift certs? Just send \$15 to each?

Ongoing online appreciation campaign - daily shout outs, thank yous, art, photos - have a committee to be in charge of this?

Students - how do we celebrate them in this very hard year? Photo gallery to post to? Art appreciation?

Virtual school parent support group - is this something that would be helpful?

Need to find a way to shout out to staff. Photos, shout outs, chalk the sidewalks, cookies? How do we spend our heartland funds - add on \$600 and provide \$15 per staff member for lunch?

How do we shout out to students as well? From staff?

Give students a space for fun videos, to show they are there even if cameras aren't on.

4. **O'Keeffe Acute Needs Fund** - an email was sent out acknowledging how hard this year is and that families in our O'Keeffe community have been struggling to provide the basics of food and shelter. A very positive response resulted in over \$1400 being donated to be used as an emergency fund. This will be distributed through the Acute Needs Committee that includes O'Keeffe parents, the school social worker, and the PTG treasurer.

Presented By Erika Hagen - members of the committee met last week and are Amy Poole - social worker, Mandy Kuse, Erika Hagen, Jessie Chmell, Steph Steigerwaldt. The history is that Lapham has a small fund for emergency discretionary needs. Historically there were calls for larger help from community and Lapham PTG would ask/coordinate. They did a call for an ANF and had a huge response at lapham. And so 2 overlapping Lapham/O'Keeffe parents (Jessie and Erika) did same thing for O'Keeffe after talking to an O'Keeffe staff member about how families were doing.. Sent an email and got some financial response. Want to do an additional ask when PTG does bigger ask from community before holiday. Funds doled out at discretion of Amy/Jessie. Will send word to staff about the fund so they can let families know. (should they have more time at the next meeting to talk about it?) Put on website? Can model from Lapham Marquette?

Description from Jessie: Acute Needs Fund. The ANF is a fund that was created to support our students and their families. We realize that this is a crazy time and many of our families are being negatively impacted in terms of their finances. If you or anyone you know is experiencing food or housing insecurity, or any other crises resulting from the current pandemic, please know that the O'Keeffe PTG's Acute Needs Fund may be available to help. Feel free to reach out to the school administration,



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social workers, or teachers if you need assistance.

5. **Budget for 2020/2021 - overview and discussion of how to allocate.** Will there be any money raised this year? What does this mean for our budget and for next year?

Budget - by Stephanie - ANF is at \$1534.20. Budget overview - we currently have \$9100 for PTG in bank. Good news is that while we didn't have our fundraisers, we didn't spend as much either. We also won't have the same expenses again this year. Kept staff appreciation at \$600 which does not include \$500 promised from heartland. \$600 for 8th grade promotion. Kept other expenses the same. Consider that we won't have same fundraising opportunities this year.

No Buy fundraiser - want to allow people to earmark funds for general use or ANF or both if they prefer.

How do we make sure there is a smooth transition to new board? Start in January? Now? Mandy Kuse is willing to have her email associated with the PTG tax exempt account.

7 pm - meeting adjourned.

PTG Events & Committees/Volunteer Opportunities from prior years:We are looking at how we may need to change and update in response to COVID-19 - we would love to hear your thoughts! Interested in any of the following future events or committees? Let us know!

ZOOM LINK FOR ALL FUTURE PTG MEETINGS:

Topic: O'Keeffe PTG Monthly Meeting 2020 – 2021 School Year

Time: 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Every month on the Second Wed, until Jun 9, 2021, 8 occurrence(s)

Dec 9, 2020 06:30 PM

Jan 13, 2021 06:30 PM

Feb 10, 2021 06:30 PM

Mar 10, 2021 06:30 PM

Apr 14, 2021 06:30 PM

May 12, 2021 06:30 PM

Jun 9, 2021 06:30 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82869274176?pwd=TUPyTjJXeXFQM3FzM0F3NDRJYVo2QT09>

Meeting ID: 828 6927 4176 Passcode: 867416

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/ktgHQH0yY>