

District 1 PTA Board Meeting Minutes

November 1, 2018 @ 12 noon

Greenville County School Administration Building Board Room

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance – Michelle LaStringer

Meeting called to order at 12:00 pm. Pledge of Allegiance led by Michelle LaStringer.

2. Approval of Minutes from September & October 2018 – Colleen Barnes

There was an update from the Treasurer for the October minutes. The amendment has been made and the updated report is what we'll be approving today. Here is the update:

AMENDED: It has since been brought to the Treasurer's attention that D1 only pays for 2 of the breakfasts. Comments regarding being over budget are removed. D1 is within budget for this expense.

Motion to approve minutes for September and October by Justin Ludley, the second was from Nerissa Lewis. Minutes approved.

3. Treasurer's Report – Debbie Nelson

As of October 31, 2018, the register balance for the D1 checking account is: \$5011.11

A copy of the budget as of October 31, 2018 was provided to the Board by e-mail on October 31, 2018 for the Board's review prior to the meeting.

Treasurer's Comments on the Budget:

- Income reflects a negative variance as some D1 dues remain outstanding
 - 13 units remain outstanding
 - Some units paid more than invoiced due to incorrect membership numbers from prior year (Susan and DeVane are researching)
- Upcoming expenses of which the Treasurer has been advised: None
- Starting next month, will include balance sheet and statement for Board review

Copy of the budget is available at the end of the minutes

4. Membership – Grace Rankin

Reports are not available yet from the State.

DeVane has this issue (no reports) on her list of items to work with MemberHub on. Once we get access to them, we can verify which units have submitted for the next mandatory reporting on Dec. 1.

We had success with our MemberHub trainings in Sept, prior to the Oct 1 Membership deadline. We planned to schedule 2 more informal discussions a few

weeks prior to the Dec 1 deadline.

Grace is looking at coordinating a joint Roundtable and do 30mins/30mins for Programs and MemberHub.

5. Programs – Michelle LaStringer

Michelle is going to post on the D1 Facebook to see how many units know of all the programs offered through National PTA. She will also ask if anyone has any programs they are interested in learning more about. Maybe there will be some interest in either a Roundtable or a meeting at some point to let those units learn more about the Programs of interest.

6. Principals' Reports

Elementary:

Bethel/Lewis: finished up with CoGAT and Iowa testing. Red Ribbon week is going on (some last week, some this week). Veterans Day will be honored on 11/12.

Heritage/Hester: No report.

Middle - Beck/Meisten: No report.

High - Greer/Ludley: Homecoming and Spirit weeks have been happening in many of the HS in October. Principal meeting/workshop with End of Course (EOC) for questions and feedback on the upcoming school report card (made public on 11/15). There has been a 3-year hiatus from the specific report cards from the past where there has been an official Grade assigned. There have been updates/changes to the EOC reports to include the long term results. There are many more college and career ready pieces being included. There isn't a "growth factor" at the HS level other than ELA. Most of the HS rankings/ratings are based on proficiency (not growth/improvement).

7. Committee Reports

a. Spanish Liaison – Miriam Torres

Nothing to report.

b. Reflections – Joy Anderson

Joy expressed her apologies for the delay, however the next official email will go out this week, and she will be getting caught up on all emails. Joy extended her thanks to all for your patience, understanding, and many of your kind works during this time.

The next email will be about judging entries. The one after that will be about preparing entries for turn in Dec. 11th.

c. Health & Wellness – Erica McCleskey
No Report submitted

d. Advocacy – Steve Hairston

Legislative Issues for Possible Consideration in 2019

This is a list of legislative issues which could be debated in the General Assembly in 2019. While this is not a complete or absolute list of education policies to be debated, these are, in my opinion, more important issues District 1 PTA should monitor for the coming legislative term. Additionally, none of the policies below have been vetted or addressed by the SCPTA.

State takeovers of school districts

Over the past several years, various state legislative and federal actions have gradually shifted greater authority to the state over local school districts.

Budget provisos and the enactment of a new fiscal accountability law in the past two years have resulted in the following:

- state takeovers in three school districts with additional districts under consideration;
 - mandated consolidation of administrative services in one school district;
- and
- 13 school districts designated as being in fiscal caution.

A long-standing school technical assistance proviso (Proviso 1A.12) was amended to include criteria for the state superintendent of education to intervene and to declare a state of emergency in a school district. This was enacted in addition to existing law - the S.C. Education Accountability Act (EAA) - that already established intervention criteria and a process for the state superintendent to intervene in school districts. Even though a budget proviso is temporary (lasting only for the budget year that it was established), it supersedes state law.

District consolidation

Legislative calls for mandated consolidation of school districts and/or consolidation of administrative services of school districts have steadily increased over the past few years.

The consolidation issue was moved front and center after a 2017 efficiency study of districts cited a potential \$35 million savings to the state through consolidation of districts and/ or services. The study, required by the General Assembly, was part of a package of legislation aimed at responding to the ruling in the Abbeville school funding lawsuit.

As the General Assembly continues to face the challenges of funding core public services, the issue of consolidating school districts may be seen by some as a way to save money for the state. While some lawmakers acknowledge consolidation does not always save money, others continue to point to the savings

argument.

While several consolidation bills have been filed, the only consolidation legislation enacted since the report is the consolidation of the three school districts in Orangeburg County. Interestingly, a transition committee appointed to help prepare for the consolidation announced recently that an estimated \$1.8 million is needed to equalize staff pay, which may require a tax increase.

Education funding reform

A review and discussion of education funding and state tax reform are underway by special committees in the House and the Senate. The House Education Reform Committee, which was formed in 2017, has continued to meet to consider possible solutions for reforming the state's education funding system. The committee has directed the state Revenue and Fiscal Affairs office to conduct an analysis of K12 funding allocated by the General Assembly and how much of that funding is allocated to and spent at the local school district level.

The House committee has focused much of its discussion on the components and function of the state's two primary funding mechanisms - the 1977 Education Finance Act (EFA), which provides the per pupil state allocation to school districts through a weighted formula, and the 1984 Education Improvement Act (EIA), which funds programs to improve student achievement.

One concept that seems to get repeated is the idea of rolling up certain EIA and other line item program funding and allocating it on a block grant basis to local school districts. Also, past discussions have centered on the concept of a uniform statewide millage rate for school operations, which is one component of an SCSBA-backed funding restructure proposal.

In the Senate, a newly-created Taxation System Review and Reform Subcommittee has begun meeting. At its organizational meeting earlier this month, some members expressed the need to study the impact of Act 388 on school district funding. Others expressed the need to review all sales tax exemptions. The committee is scheduled to meet again before the start of the 2019 legislative session.

Teacher pay, recruitment and retention

News of teachers in several states protesting low wages and successfully lobbying for higher pay has generated increased discussions about teacher pay in South Carolina.

Teachers in West Virginia went on a nine-day strike, shutting down schools to demand livable wages. They won a five percent raise.

In Arizona, thousands of teachers took to the streets in Phoenix, Tucson and other cities to demand a 20 percent pay hike and increased school funding. They

won a nine percent raise with an additional five percent raise in each of the next two years.

In Oklahoma, teachers walked out seeking better classroom conditions and higher pay. They won a raise of about \$6,000 depending on experience, while school support staff won a \$1,250 raise.

In South Carolina, lawmakers this year approved a one percent increase in teacher pay and increased the starting teacher pay from \$30,000 to \$32,000.

The state's current average teaching salary of \$48,769 is about \$2,200 less than the 16-state Southeastern average and almost \$10,000 less than the national average, according to the Southern Regional Education Board. It is about \$5,400 less than Georgia's average of \$54,190 but about \$1,000 higher than North Carolina's average of \$47,941.

Low pay is one contributor to decreasing numbers of students entering the teaching profession and is also a reason for newer teachers leaving the profession. According to a state teacher supply and demand report, the number of teachers leaving the profession each year is significantly higher than the number of students graduating from state colleges who are eligible for teacher certification. Overall, South Carolina does not produce a sufficient number of teachers through the state's teacher education programs to fill current and anticipated vacant positions. Graduates from in-state teacher education programs are the largest source of newly-hired teachers each year.

School start date

For years, board members have expressed the need to change the law requiring schools to start no earlier than the third Monday in August. The uniform start date law has been in place since 2006, and any effort to change the law will not be made unless a majority of lawmakers are committed to voting for such an action.

In an SCSBA survey of school board chairs this past spring, there was not a clear response about local lawmakers' commitment to vote in favor of a change. Efforts to move the start date as little as one week earlier have met resistance, which makes filing a bill and getting the bill to the floor of the House and Senate very difficult to achieve.

School boards must determine whether or not members of their local legislative delegations will support a bill amending the uniform start date to move the start date to earlier in August and/or a bill allowing local school boards to set their district's start date.

e. GCS PTA Liaison – Sandra Welch

Preparation for the 2019-2020 calendar committee is underway. The committee

will be prepared the same as it has in the past... members will consist of parents, D1 board members, teachers, principals, district employees, etc. Any/all considerations will be taken into account and the committee will prepare a calendar and then present it to the Superintendent. It was recommended by Teri Brinkman that the calendar committee start a little later than usual so information can be presented regarding start dates and other state mandated issues.

8. President's Report – Susan Key

Susan met with 2 boards this month that are having difficulties among their officers, everything appears to have been worked out at this point.

Some units are still having issues with their MemberHub accounts, unfortunately. The state is working very closely with the owner of MemberHub to get them resolved. The next mandatory membership payment is December 1.

Board reports were due yesterday to be included in minutes. Susan is out of town; Michelle will be running the meeting today.

We will have a Christmas luncheon at our December meeting. Please remember to bring some canned goods to donate. I look forward to seeing everyone in December.

9. Old Business

Nothing to report.

10. New Business

a. Michael Simmons – GCS Website

Michael Simmons was introduced to the board... he works for the School District and does all PTA updates for both District and State. The GCS updated website will be deployed at the beginning of the new year – January 2019.

Looking for feedback on the site (being demo'd today) content, accessibility, mobile friendly, flexibility of access across all types of devices.

The employee section of the website will be transferred to a Google site... this will be a big change for employees where things will be consolidated. Resource tools will be available

ACTION: Sandra will send a link to the new website to the board so we can peruse the site and send any/all feedback we have (via a google doc) to Michael Simmons.

The look and feel of the site will change so that it's more focused on mobile friendly usage. Each schools' site will remain the same (or however it's designed by the school). Any/all links currently on the school sites back to the main GCS pages should remain functional.

Questions raised:

- if a search is done “dress code” the results bring back all codes from all schools. Is there a way to fine tune the search criteria so that it’s more targeted?
- Will there still be a link to the portal? Yes, there will be a link to the portal to take employees to their portal as well as for parents/students.
- How will important announcements be communicated if the scroll function is moved/replaced to the bottom on the page? If there are important announcements (like school closings) they will be posted to the “hero image” area (main page – top – center) of the web page.

11. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:42pm

Next Meeting: Christmas Luncheon – Thursday, December 6 @ 12 noon at District Office. Please bring canned food to donate

11/1/18 ATTENDEES:

• Sandra Welch / Debbie Nelson / Michelle LaStringer / Justin Ludley / Nerissa Lewis / Colleen Barnes / Michael Simmons

ACTION ITEMS:

- Board Members: bring canned food donations to 12/6/18 meeting/luncheon
- Sandra Welch: will send a link to the new website (presented by Michael Simmons) to the board so each member can peruse the site using different tools (laptops, desktops, mobile devices, etc.) and send any/all feedback (via a google doc) to Michael Simmons. Michael’s contact information will be included in the email from Sandra,

FINANCIAL REPORT: 2018-2019 Approved Budget