

**Date:** Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Attendance:** 21 people

The meeting was called to order by acting PTO President Christina Alty at 8:45am

**Agenda Items:**

**1. Financial Report: Christina Alty**

- a. Christina Alty presented the financial report, stating that the current balance in the PTO account is \$160.
- b. Goals for the Year: Christina Alty reviewed the goals set for the year and the accomplishments made.
- c. The following achievements were highlighted:
- d. Donated \$15,686 to the Scholarship Fund, with \$12,145 contributed from Casino Night and \$3,541 from the Color Run.
- e. The PTO Provided the school with 5 laptops, totaling \$517.37.
- f. The PTO organized two successful Teacher Appreciation Events: Taco Night in the Fall and Teacher Appreciation Breakfast in the Spring, with a total income of \$385.
- g. The PTO Awarded \$938.73 in Teacher Grants for various initiatives, including the robotics club, 7th-12th-grade books in English and Spanish, and Reading A-Z decodable sets for Pre-K through 2nd Grade.
- h. Although Campus Improvement goal was not achieved, additional funds were directed towards teacher grants.
- i. Christina said we the PTO did really well this year and she's happy about it.

**2. Teacher Grant Request: Christina Alty**

- a. Two teacher grant requests were discussed during the meeting:
  - i. A request for \$260 to purchase basketball jerseys for the U12 basketball team, which qualified for the national school games in Managua from May 26 to May 30.
  - ii. The High School Prom Committee requested funds to make prom more affordable for all attendees by offsetting the cost of tickets.

**3. Important Dates: Christina Alty**

- a. The following important dates were announced:
  - i. Re-enrollment deadline: May 15
  - ii. Field Day and half day for all students: May 19
  - iii. No school: May 29 (Nicaraguan Mother's Day)
  - iv. No school: May 30
  - v. No school: June 16
  - vi. Half day of school for all students: June 20
  - vii. Graduation/ Moving Up Ceremonies: June 21
- b. Watch for more emails for what to expect for each upcoming important event.

**4. Upper School Presentation: Becca Claassen (Interim Assistant Director)**

- a. Becca Claassen, the Interim Assistant to Director Ana, delivered a presentation on the Upper School, providing valuable insights and updates:

- i. Tuition and Fees Updates & Limited Time, Early Bird Discounts.
- ii. The Board addressed concerns raised by parents and approved the following changes to next year's tuition and fees schedule:
- iii. All Families: May 15, 2023, is the final day to avail the early bird discount. Matricula/Registration Fees are reduced to \$600 until May 15<sup>th</sup>. Parents were encouraged to register online.
- iv. International wire transfer instructions were provided. Parents were advised to contact [Accounting@sanjuandelsurdayschool.com](mailto:Accounting@sanjuandelsurdayschool.com) for technical assistance with payment.
- v. New Families: The Guanacaste (new student) fee will be discounted to \$1000 for new families until July 1, 2023. Afterward, it will revert to the original amount of \$2500.
- vi. Permanent Updates to Tuition and Fees:
- vii. Current Families: The Guanacaste Fee for current families enrolling a new child in our Preschool program (Ositos or Tigres) for the 2023-2024 academic year is reduced from \$2500 to \$1000.
- viii. Payment Plan: The 10-month payment plan will be reinstated. Families opting for this plan must complete a Financial Aid application and provide a credit card to the business office.
- ix. Tuition Discounts for Families with 3 or More Children:
  - 1. 3rd child qualifies for a 15% discount.
  - 2. 4th child qualifies for a 30% discount.
  - 3. 5th child qualifies for a 40% discount.
  - 4. Discounts apply to tuition only; fees must be paid equally by all students.
- b. Special Circumstances: Families experiencing "special circumstances" affecting their financial obligations to the school were encouraged to apply for Financial Aid by contacting [accounting@sanjuandelsurdayschool.com](mailto:accounting@sanjuandelsurdayschool.com).
- c. Becca noted that Director Ana will not be coming back next year, and there is an Interim Director, Bosco Bonilla that will replace her. Bosco will be an amazing addition to the school and there will be a meeting on Wednesday, May 24th at 5PM in Masaya Co., next to Peace and Cake to introduce him to parents.
- d. Becca noted that there is an academic committee being set right now and that they are fleshing out the curriculum plans for next year for the high school.
- e. The upper school curriculum will be compliant for all the places including MINED – and will be college compliant.
- f. She also discussed that electives are being discussed right now and may include items such as: Nicaraguan Music, arboreal sports, theatre and folk dancing, graphic design, and potentially a woodworking program.
- g. Becca noted that parents were requested to respond to the email if they are certain about not re-enrolling for the next year, to aid in the school's planning process.

## 5. Open Q and A Segment:

### a. Updates on School Stability

- i. It was noted that the stability of the school is important to the attendees, and there were concerns about the perceived weakening of the school.
- ii. A question was raised regarding the hiring process, specifically whether it was long-term or year-to-year.
- iii. It was clarified that the school is hiring for the long-term, and this is a priority.
- iv. The upper school is experiencing growth with the graduation of students, which contributes to the need for long-term hiring.
- v. This information helped address concerns about the school's stability.

**b. Introduction of New Leadership:**

- i. Discussion arose regarding the departure of some of the school's original leaders and the implications of this significant change.
- ii. Becca expressed confidence in the new leadership and highlighted the overlap between Ana's role and the new leadership's responsibilities.
- iii. Bosco (mentioned above), one of the new leaders, was praised for his inspiring qualities as a warm, caring, and vibrant educator.
- iv. Attendees suggested that a video introduction by Bosco that showcased his philosophies would be helpful. This discussion reassured attendees that the school was in good hands with the new leadership.

**c. Transition Plan for New Teachers:**

- i. A question was raised concerning the plan or transition process for the incoming teachers during the summer.
- ii. It was confirmed that assistance would be provided to the new teachers, and attendees were encouraged to offer their help if they were experienced in this area.
- iii. Training programs would be conducted to assist new teachers in integrating into the school culture, curriculum, and other relevant aspects.

**d. Second Town Hall Meeting:**

- i. An inquiry was made regarding the scheduling of a second town hall meeting.
- ii. Attendees were informed that instead of a second town hall meeting, the school administration would be offering office hours and personalized assistance to address any individual concerns.
- iii. Office hours are scheduled from 2:45 to 3:00 PM, and attendees were advised to contact Becca for further information.

**e. School Lunch Program:**

- i. It was announced that the school lunch program would be reinstated, much to the satisfaction of the attendees.
- ii. Further details regarding the program were not discussed during the meeting.

**f. Inter-Scholastic Team Sports:**

- i. Attendees were informed that the school would continue participating in inter-scholastic team sports.
- ii. No additional information or discussion took place on this topic during the meeting.

**g. Mastery Transcript Consortium:**

- i. A brief mention was made about the Mastery Transcript Consortium, a non-profit organization focused on project-based learning.
- ii. Attendees were informed that colleges favored this approach. No further details or discussion occurred regarding this matter.

**h. Future Board Meeting:**

- i. An inquiry was made regarding the scheduling of another board meeting to address the various changes happening within the school.
- ii. Becca was assigned the task of finding out more information and providing an update to the attendees.

**i. Cell Phone Policy:**

- i. It was reaffirmed that there is a strict no-cell-phone policy on campus.
- ii. It was communicated that cell phones found in students' possession would be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

**6. Additional Points: Christina & Becca**

**a. PTO Volunteer Opportunities:**

- i. Christina addressed the attendees, emphasizing the importance and value of the PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization) and the need for volunteers.
- ii. She urged individuals to consider joining the PTO committee, highlighting the importance of raising funds and providing teacher grants.
- iii. Volunteers would play a crucial role in supporting the school community.

**b. Enrichment Plan for Next Year:**

- i. A question was raised regarding the plan for enrichment activities in the upcoming academic year.
- ii. It was announced that there would be an enrichment fair held during the back-to-school picnic.
- iii. This fair would provide an opportunity for parents and students to learn about and participate in various enrichment programs.

**c. New Website and Event Blog:**

- i. Attendees were informed about the upcoming launch of a new school website, which would feature a blog section to showcase all school events and activities. T
- ii. his new website would serve as a central hub for staying updated on the happenings at the school.

**d. Additional Meeting Before Summer Break:**

- i. Attendees acknowledged the need for another meeting before the summer break, specifically for each section of the school.
- ii. This meeting would allow for further discussion and address any outstanding matters. The exact date and time of the meeting were not determined during this PTO meeting.

**e. Clear Guidelines for Post-Secondary Preparation:**

- i. A concern was raised by parents regarding the need for clear guidelines outlining the requirements for post-secondary education and high school credits.
- ii. Parents of upper school students expressed the desire for an email communication that clearly specified the necessary steps for preparing their children for post-secondary education.
- iii. This email would help ensure that parents were well-informed about the requirements and could support their children adequately.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:45am**