**Royal Oak Middle School PTSA**

**September 21, 2020**

**Meeting Minutes (held via Zoom)**

**\*\*\***Present at meeting: Alicia Pokmokly, Andrea Hanley, Becky B, Beth Simms, Bridget Nelson, Burgendy Gullo, Cara Kissling, Carie Hooker, Catherine Brueckman, Dan Colligan, Elizabeth Mulheisen, Elizabeth Rummel, Emily Abrutyn, Emma Dunn, Heidi Schollenberger, Ian Worcester, Jane Bofferding, Jason Vinluan, Jennifer Acevdeo, Jennifer Law Sullivan, Jennifer Tietz, Joelle Jarrait, Joni Say Gan, Joseph Homrocky, Julie Aichler, Karin Jenson, Katherine Chambers, Kathleen L, Kathryn Condit, Kim Collins, Kimberly Schuetzler, Linda Fairo, Lindsey Potterack, Lori Klopfenstein, Marshan Taylor, Maryanne VanHaitsma, Megan O’Shea, Melanie Macey, Michelle Vinluan, Myron Miller, Nancy Antwan, Patti Fritz, Peggy Miller, Sheri Zgoda, Stephanie Scobie, Thad Podmokly, Todd Noonan

Quorum is met (7 members constitutes quorum)

1. **Call to Order - Michelle Vinluan**

**Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance**

Called to order @ 7:05 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance recited by all present.

**Introduction of PTA Executive Board**

Michelle Vinluan started with general “house-keeping”/etiquette on Zoom:

Checked to see if everyone could be seen, if “speaker” could be heard, if anyone was having problem using platform (Zoom).

Please keep yourself/your connection muted; please use chat as much as possible and questions will be answered as they come; please raise hand if you’d like to speak, will call on you to speak, unmute yourself, speak freely; please raise hand for voting, if agreed; if proposing motion or seconding motion, please unmute or use the chat to do so.

Regarding Presentation by ROMS Administrators & Teachers, which will be given/shared (Thank You!), right after introductions: They will be sharing their insights/take-aways/best practices/etc. regarding Remote Learning @ ROMS, so far, and how it has been going/challenges. We will conduct the rest of the meeting, adjourn the meeting, and then have a Q&A with Teachers and Administrators who graciously agreed to stay and answer questions, after meeting, thanks again!

Michelle Vinluan Introduced 2020-2021 Executive Board:

* President: Michelle Vinluan
* Vice President/Membership: Open
* 2nd Vice President/Historian: Megan O’Shea
* Treasurer: Elizabeth Rummel
* Secretary: Jason Vinluan
* Member @ Large: Lori Klopfenstein
* Member @ Large/Communications: Bridget Nelson
* Teacher Representative/Student Council - Lindsey Potterack
* Student Representative - Finn Rossbach

**Presentation by Administrators and Teachers**

**———-**

* Administrators who spoke/shared how things are going with Remote Learning @ ROMS: Dan Colligan, Myron Miller, Todd Noonan

———-

Todd Noonan (Principal) started off by thanking ROMS PTSA, families, students, teachers/educators, & support staff. Thanked everyone who came to the 1st ROMS - PTSA Meeting of the year and commented on how great it was to see so many members in attendance. Thanked ROMS - PTSA President (Michelle Vinluan) for setting up, moderating, running, and establishing guidelines.

Biggest challenge that Todd has experienced, seen, and/or heard articulated by ROMS Staff is: being able to fully engage students, parents, & families, face-to-face, during Remote Learning. That said, given our current environment during Covid-19, he indicated he was quite pleased with the plan ROMS Administrators, Educators, & The District, came up with, and how well students and families were adapting and thriving under the current conditions/constructs of Remote Learning @ ROMS.

Dan Colligan (Assistant Principal) talked about how there isn’t/wasn’t much information/literature/direction on how to educate students in The United States nor @ The State Level, remotely, and that the two plans they all came up with (Virtual Academy & Remote Learning), for the start of the school year; with a focus on “Our Districts” key values, needs, and constraints, seems to be working, quite well.

Virtual Academy - Fully remote program that will stay fully remote through January.

Remote Learning - Fully remote program that will stay fully remote through October.

* Monday: Independent learning w/additional, asynchronous assignments & student/parent(s) can sign up (in advance) for student/teacher conference times as needed/desired.
* Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday: 3 Remote classes with synchronous (virtual), teacher led instruction/education: Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday.
* Friday: Student asynchronous learning/study/working on assignments given earlier in the week. Teacher professional development, brain-storming, preparing for coming week (students and/or parents can e-mail teachers, and teachers will get back with them; as soon as possible)

Goal was to have a schedule that could work well/effectively, both inside and outside of Royal Oak Middle School, for all stake-holders (students, parents, families, ROMS staff, community @ large, businesses, etc.).

Myron Miller (Assistant Principal) talked about, and commended staff, on how great they were doing - adapting to the current environment, pulling double-duty/putting in extra hours, striking a healthy work/life balance, and going above and beyond in their strategies and techniques in engaging & educating ROMS students as well as helping parents/families to ensure their child(ren) are utilizing (all) the tools and resources available to them, in this new learning environment.

Take-aways from The ROMS PTSA Zoom Meeting, from all three (Todd Noonan, Dan Colligan, & Myron Miller):

When we enter the next phase of educating ROMS Students, we will integrate the following, to the best of Our ability, for the students’ learning opportunities, safety, and educational growth:

1. Cohorting students/splitting up in classrooms
2. Limited/controlled/directed/monitored passing time, keep students in pods, keep students together in their group, shared spaces
3. Opportunities to dive into curriculum, with individual attention and monitoring of progress

Felt they almost needed/need to, given remote/hybrid learning environment options, reduce to three classes, as opposed to seven classes, for the best interests and development/education of ROMS students.

Anticipating/preparing for a hybrid, educational learning plan; moving forward.

Still considering, in next phase, between A days and B days, versus running “X” number of classes, straight.

Hoping to run full days, two times a week, with alternating days.

Hope and plan to continue to build school connections, deeper learning, and a more authentic/natural/nurturing learning environment.

We will continue to evaluate and get feedback from teachers, students, and parents/families @ ROMS regarding student engagement/ability to stay engaged, best practices on how to run classes, & how many classes on each day, as well as per quarter/semester, are ideal.

We want to make sure we’re making the best choices for students, parents, and ROMS staff; moving forward and into the future.

———-

* Teachers who spoke/shared how things are going with Remote Learning @ ROMS: Emma Dunn, Joseph Homrocky, Katherine Chambers, Stephanie Scobie

———-

Joseph Homrocky (Social Studies & Civics Teacher, Basketball Coach) started off by saying he loves what he’s doing and loves teaching Our children @ ROMS. Every year brings challenges, but this year has brought some unique ones, due to the necessity of starting off the school year; teaching 100% remotely. The biggest challenge, so far, has been making a connection with each student, assigned to his classes. It’s difficult to do, in general, but remote learning has made it that much harder to have talks and discussions with students, especially of a more informal nature (as well as one-on one) - in order to gauge their interests, learning style, learning needs, emotional/developmental standing (as well as any distractions), and communicative skills. Students want to learn and are working hard at it, but us teachers still worry whether they are picking up on what we are trying to teach them, have questions that they are (even more) reluctant to ask, and/or have things/information/insights to share that they are less inclined to do; due to remote learning. Further, he understands that students, as well as parents, are likely worried, too; given this new learning environment, format, and structure… and we’ll all get through this together, as long as we keep ROMS students @ the center of Our concern and all of us teachers continue “working hard.”

Katherine Chambers (Mathematics & Language/Literature Teacher; Drama Club, SAGA, & Student Council Leader/Co-Chair) agreed with Mr. Homrocky that truly connecting with each student in her classes, and knowing when she was; has been the biggest challenge/adjustment for her and her colleagues; with remote teaching. She went on to say that determining when students in her classes are having “good or bad days,” emotionally and/or cognitively, is much more difficult to do, remotely, and therefore makes it much harder to figure out if, and how, she needs to make adjustments; during a class she’s teaching.

Regarding the “technical side” of remote learning we’ve had a “big learning curve” - teachers, students, and parents. Learning how to use the various platforms, agreeing on trying to get some continuity between platform usage, and grading/assessing students has been difficult; but we’re getting it down and getting on the same page. Furthermore, communicating with students and parents, remotely/electronically, and determining what needs to be shared and how (a call, using classroom platform, a text, a detailed e-mail; etc.) versus what doesn’t/shouldn’t has been “hard;” but we’re likewise getting that down, too.

Stephanie Scobie (Language/Literature Teacher & ROMS Reading Specialist), in addition to elaborating on what Mr. Homrocky & Mrs. Chambers, said; indicated that she has had the most difficulty with ascertaining if students are engaged as well as determining how to get them engaged, remotely, during class. My husband, also teaches, we have four kids and us teachers now have to learn how to engage and instruct our classes/students, remotely, teaching them “deeper learning,” how to be introspective regarding “what they’re doing,” as well as being reflective regarding “how they’re doing things” and what their options might be. Also, how we assess students, remotely, is not a one size fits all, and I really appreciate that we have less students to assess, then we would have had if the necessity for remote learning had not occurred @ ROMS. It has been somewhat difficult to retool and get things more engaging; but we’re doing it, as best we can, here @ ROMS.

Emma Dunn (Foreign Language - French Teacher & Drama Club Co-Chair) shared that it’s been very exciting for her & the students. So, far, things have been working well; but we’re trying to get students to take remote learning a bit more seriously, as if they were physically in the classroom and on a set, formal schedule. I’m very thankful that we’re not doing seven classes, in that it would be nearly impossible to assess and handle that many students; remotely.

While the situation may not be ideal, it is going quite well, considering everything we and the students have to learn new and as we go.

I have found:

* that I have to use new & different techniques to encourage students to engage,
* that small groups seem to work really well,
* that I need to get them to more thoroughly utilize office hours to get one on one attention if they or their parents feel they need it,
* that they like to manage their schedules and time-lines, but that they need help on this,
* that better engagement will be key, going forward
* and that we all are experiencing a sense of urgency in adjusting and adapting to this remote/hybrid learning environment.

Todd Noonan finished off by thanking the four teachers, who spoke, as well as all of his teaching and support staff @ ROMS; who are making this student owned and inquiry based, remote learning, so successful, during the start of the school year and under very anomalous/unusual/unique conditions/circumstances.

1. **Secretary’s Report – Jason Vinluan**

**Approval of May 2020 Minutes**

\*\*\*Jason Vinluan made a motion to approve May 2020 minutes, Melanie Macey seconded. All approved; no dissent. Motion passed.

1. **Treasurer’s Report – Elizabeth Rummel**

Treasurer indicated that there have been quite a few changes to the budget, that we are not expecting as many “happenings”/activities/fundraising, and that the “budget will need to be limited due to the pandemic” and the current state of ROMS operations and functioning.

There was discussion regarding how we might need to modify various activities and events; as well as fundraising.

There was discussion about some line entries, given the unusual state of operations and expectations, this year; and agreement on not changing the line item budgeted expenses during the meeting.

There was discussion about The DC trip and; general consensus was that it would probably not be happening this year; unfortunately for the students in 8th Grade, due to conditions in Michigan, as well as across The United States, as a result of Covid-19. Basically: decisions regarding whether or not the DC trip would even be able/permitted to occur/happen, have yet to be made, @ political levels far above that of Our School District.

Melanie Macey asked about the DawgWalk and we discussed some ideas about how we might do differently, this year.

**Approval of 2020-21 Budget**

\*\*\*Lori Klopfenstein made a motion to approve 2020-21 budget, Megan O’Shea seconded. All approved; no dissent. Motion passed.

1. **Principal’s Report – Todd Noonan**

Principals Report was done @ beginning of PTSA Meeting - See Section I (Thank You).

1. **Board Member’s Report - Maryanne VanHaitsma**

Thanked ROMS Students, Parents, Administrators, Teachers, & Support Staff regarding, and, for how well everyone has been adjusting to, and helping to facilitate, remote learning @ ROMS.

Royal Oak Public Schools will be offering free school lunches, through December, which can be picked up @ ROHS & ROMS from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Save The Date (October 14th): State Diversity & Equity Committee Meeting - Equity for Special Education Services, Educators, & Staff.

1. **President’s Report – Michelle Vinluan**
   1. Open chair positions:

* Book Fair Co-Chair (with Mrs. Shultz)

Fall book fair will be held on-line; yes we still need a volunteer! Let us know if you’d like to chair, after meeting.

* Health and Wellness

Especially this school year, during COVID-19, this is a chair we would love to be able to fill. Please let us know if you’d be interested, we’d greatly appreciate it!

* Diversity & Inclusion

The Michigan PTSA is really encouraging each individual school PTSA to have a chair for this important initiative, please consider contacting us, by e-mail, if you think you’d be willing and able to make a positive impact in celebrating student differences and acceptance of others.

* 1. Open VP Membership position. Hold vote on Joelle Jarrait.

Joelle Jarrait inquired about filling this position and we think she’d be great; let’s put it to a vote!

**Voted to elect Joelle Jarrait as VP**

\*\*\*Jason Vinluan made motion to vote, Bridget Nelson seconded. All approved; no dissent. Motion passed.

* 1. Please join the PTSA, if you haven’t already; we’d love to have You! Access to the FB group and future meeting links will only be available to members.

If you are not a member of the ROMS PTSA, please become one, ASAP. Access to the FB group will be locked out to non-members in December. Access to the FB group and future meeting links will only be available to members.

Membership is only $7.00 per year; what a bargain for everything You & Your child(ren) will be getting in return!

Also, please remember to use Your access to the ROMS PTSA FB group respectfully; keeping in mind & heart the best interests of ROMS Students, Teachers, and Parents; in addition to Support Staff, Administrators, and Our Community @ Large, who all play role and part, in raising and educating the youth of Royal Oak, MI (and beyond).

* 1. Washington DC Funds that were returned due to the cancelled trip are remaining in individual student accounts to be used to reimburse families for pay to play sports and other school related costs. More information to come.

Per Todd Noonan: All funds will be staying with the student and put into their own, individual student account; to be used for qualifying ROHS activities, sports, and other variable/voluntary/elective expenditures/purchases. There’s a good chance, it will be the same case, for the 2020-21 school year.

1. **Membership Report – Michelle Vinluan**

385 Members

Acknowledged by the Michigan PTA for 2019/20 membership numbers and asked to participate in membership webinar with Michigan PTA to share our positive experience and best practices.

We’re doing really great, exceeding last year enrollment pace and numbers; and last year was fantastic - kudos to all! Membership chair, Lori, was going to present, tonight, @ the Michigan PTSA webinar; but it ended up being rescheduled. Nice job; everyone!

1. **Teacher Representative/Student Council Report – Lindsay Potterack**

I just want to echo what my colleagues said, earlier: It’s been challenging, but rewarding; building a plane, as I fly it; a lot of engagement; diving deep into this new format.

1. **Student Representative – Finn Rossbach**

Unable to attend.

1. **Committee Reports - Michelle Vinluan**

None, Nothing, Nada. Anyone have anything to share? No? Good.

1. **Old Business - Michelle Vinluan**

ROMS PTA will partner with Student Council to purchase and present a memorial gift for Sarah Klaus; once we can get back to school/grounds.

We still plan on doing so, this year, and we were thinking a tree, with a plague, etc. We can’t wait to get started!

1. **New Business - Michelle Vinluan**

No new business.

1. **Adjournment - Michelle Vinluan**

Meeting adjourned @ 7:54 PM

Next Meeting: Monday, October 19, 2020 at 7:00 PM; on Zoom

————————————

\*\*\*After meeting; administrators, teachers, and numerous PTSA members stayed for an informal Q&A session; which was awesome and informative, thank you to all ROMS teachers & administrators! Session ended @ 8:37 PM.

…Glad/Wish You Were There! ;)