

MJHS PTSA General Assembly Minutes
9-18-2017

PRESENTATION OF COLORS – MJHS ROTC

CALL TO ORDER and Introduction of executive committee members- President El Baker

DISCUSSION AND VOTE RE SEPARATION FROM NATIONAL PTSA TO FORM INDEPENDENT PTO

Erica Jong - Overview of pros and cons

Presenting a proposal from executive committee to separate from national PTSA organization to form our own independent MJHS PTO.

Review of handout (see attached)

PTSA: national organization with 24 k PTA's nationwide.

Pros: Resources, databases, advocacy

Cons: Largely financial. \$3.75 of each membership goes to national organization; This constitutes majority of MJHS individual membership dues of \$5.00;

Requirement to follow PTSA guidelines re meetings, apportioning budget etc.

PTO:

MJHS already applied for and received 501(c)(3) status. This is typically the most lengthy and costly aspect of forming a PTO. PTO would remain beholden to general assembly and transparent with our finances

Questions:

Last years and this years budget: 18 – 23k last year. This year our goal is 15k to 16k bc we are challenged by not doing 1 major fundraiser.

PTO stands for Parent Teacher Organization. 60k PTOs nationwide. More common that schools are separating.

Costs for remaining with PTSA: yearly dues plus \$3.75/membership to stay

PTO: we still have to buy insurance. We have already paid to form 501 (c) (3).

Resources now available to us online have meant MJHS PTSA hasnt historically relied on PTSA resources.

Q Would dues go up? Don't even have to charge membership fees if PTO. If general assembly wanted to increase fees we could. We don't want to overburden families with high membership fees.

Presentation by Richard Quarterone, Ga. PTSA: Mission of PTSA is to advocate. Agrees membership cost is special problem for schools such as MJHS. Frustrating that the amount of money that proportionately goes to national is so high because membership does not see what they get on a day to day basis. Proposes we work to change it to make it more functional. As

president of SEACS we were working to bring together advocacy groups. Found there was no effective structure to do that to rally people for kids. Learned of framework of Atlanta PTSA. Priscilla and I worked to reform PTA's all over the city. Now we have a capacity to coalesce in city around a few issues. These are cluster models that allow clusters to be self-governing. Other component is ensuring the cluster model is in place, and we need city wide support. Also sees need for changing structure: how dues are collected where they go, oversight over the money.

Asks that MJHS PTSA wait a year, look at this again next year if nothing changes, make that choice to move to PTO then.

Motion and second to vote to separate from Ga. PTSA to form independent PTO.

Additional discussion:

Q: re teacher part of PTO, have they been approached about what they think about this change. Teachers are here today and can express questions. Support for teachers will remain the same regardless of PTA vs PTO. It is affected by the budget and ability to raise money.

Q you requested to wait a year. What will happen by then? RQ, as someone active in Jackson cluster. Don't want cluster to miss out on coalescing happening now. Frustration is money does not come to us at city level. I am volunteer all of us are. You have to pay an extra 60 to support Atlanta council. What you get is support at state level. School PTSA's also like that the organization distributes liability nationally.

Q regardless of voting this yr vs next, do we have to pay the dues up to the time we vote. RQ lengthy process for shutting down the ptsa & obtaining 501c3 status.

EJ: national does not have right to our assets. We can close current PTSA and donate the assets to new PTO.

Q What are the actual dollar savings? We have 3k in dues so far. \$500.00 of that will go to national PTSA. Currently we have 135 members up to now. Any additional is 3.75 each membership. Last year we owed over 1k to PTSA. Money is major component. As growing school we would love to expand our programing.

Membership is 5.00 for individuals. Its about 3.75 of that going to another organization. That 3.75 needs to go to our kids, teachers & classrooms.

Mr. Danser, announces it is also Academic Progress Night and that he cannot ask faculty to stay late. Teachers are in their classrooms and parents who wish to reserve the remaining time to meet with teachers are free to go. Those who wish to remain to discuss the issue and vote can stay.

Priscilla Borders Ga. PTSA . Out of time for presentation. Available for questions.

PB: if you are a member , you automatically are member of Ga and National PTSA. See selves as primarily an advocacy org.

Q Have we had an attny look at this dissolution? Not specifically

Q Can we wait and get more information? **Motion and second to postpone vote to separate, and come back to this issue another meeting** to give members opportunity to review information in more detail.

El Baker requests assistance of Parliamentarian. Parliamentarian states motion to separate has already been presented and should receive a vote unless motion is withdrawn. Motion is not withdrawn. If Motion to separate does not pass, we will proceed with Motion to postpone to another meeting.

Announcement that only current members (verified at door) eligible to vote.

Vote on motion to separate from Ga PTSA and form PTO:

36 yes

17 no

2/3 majority vote achieved to separate from Ga PTSA and form PTO.

El Baker adjourns meeting.

MJHS PTSA PTA VS PTO

PTSA PROS

What is PTA? Parent Teacher (Student) Association: A formal organization composed of parents, teachers and staff that is intended to facilitate parental participation in a school. The PTA is the oldest and largest child advocacy association in America.

Resources: Leadership development, grants to support initiatives, affiliation discounts, access to national database of programs and resources. Organization provides annual training for members.

PTSA CONS

PTAs are bound to the bylaws of the larger association and required to pay \$3.75 per membership to the state PTA.

Parent involvement and volunteer recruitment is increasingly challenging at the high school level and abiding by the strict PTA requirements continue to strain local organizations.

* MJHS has not utilized PTA resources and local council has not reached out to provide support or communications. Generally, information and resources have been accessible and adequate online.

**GA PTA and its board have been scrutinized by state members and National office this past year for their board actions and possible mishandling of funds. Entire districts are withholding dues and local PTAs have shared intent of dissolving their PTAs. Overall participation has been declining nationally.

PTO PROS

What is PTO? PTO (Parent Teacher Organization): An independent parent group; in other words, any non-PTA group. Many acronyms-such as HAS, PCC, PTO and more- fall under the independent group umbrella. PTOs are not bound by rules and guidelines set by national PTA.

Resources: Open source access to support and program ideas.

PTOs are not bound to guidelines and bylaws of PTA. All funds raised are kept by the PTO and no dues are paid to the state PTA or national PTA. PTOs can choose to form a non-profit and create their own bylaws. Goals and objectives are focused on the school's needs and interests. School's PTO can adopt bylaws that ensure appropriate management and financial accountability.

* MJHS PTSA already paid and established its own 501c3 status

** Liability insurance is offered to PTOs at competitive packages as PTA premiums

PTO CONS

- Need to create/adopt by-laws
- Executive Board titles, jobs and responsibilities need to be established and defined