



# United Steele Workers PTA Meeting

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 at 8:10 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

In-Person Meeting with Zoom option

## Attendees

### Morning Session

Trudi Jackson  
Kate Hume  
Meg Ford  
Mark Perrault  
Megan Harris  
Scot Hume  
Lauren Brenner  
Steve Pike  
Diana Starkus  
Meghan Misiasz  
Alison Ogren  
Sarah Muro  
Nuno Rosa  
Sallie Kate Angelidis  
Ryan Capp

### Evening Session

Trudi Jackson  
Kate Hume  
Meg Ford  
Mark Perrault  
Ann Griner  
Aracely Juarez  
Terry Spotts  
Caitlin Casai  
Alex Thornton  
Julie Witherow  
Jessica Warren (zoom)  
Mariea Gallashaw (zoom)  
Ryan Capp

## Morning Session

Note: Zoom was not connected until 10 minutes after start. No attendees via Zoom.

### Governance

President Trudi Jackson called the meeting to order at 8:14 a.m. A quorum was present.

The board/PTA leaders introduced themselves first:

- Trudi Jackson: President
- Kate Hume: Vice President
- Meg Ford: Secretary
- Mark Perrault: Treasurer
- Megan Harris: Volunteer Coordinator

Trudi introduced PTA leaders who were not present:

- Rosanne Mason: Community Support Liaison
- Jen Cooper: Fifth Grade Coordinator

All attendees introduced themselves.

## Principal's Report

Principal Ryan Capp provided the Principal's Report.

- Welcome to all the families. He said we are looking forward to having a mostly normal school year. Looking to restore a lot of what goes on in the grade levels. Excited about the diversity in kindergarten, first grade is rebuilding work with social studies and contacts with CC especially the fine arts center, second grade is working on community, get back to valued fifth grade traditions. Right now things are hard to plan.
- Back to School Night is on Thursday, August 26. Air will be moving through the building. Masks recommended for the event. He encouraged parents to come.
- Planning on some exciting events in addition to Back to School Night. Looking forward to ways to reconnect to the community, especially the people who kind of got lost during the pandemic such as kinder and first grade. First Community Night, in September, will be focused on food and a math learning opportunity for parents to understand the math language being used in the classroom. Mr. Capp said they want an opportunity to “do math with you.” Counselor and Teaching Learning Coach are working with Mr. Capp as well on planning that program.
- Steele's academic goals for the year: 1. Student and teacher reflective practices – How well did we do our work? How can we do our work better next time? 2. Student goal-setting, in particular related to math. Set goals, track goals, and reach goals. 3. Social-Emotional Programming – working to build S/E awareness in kids. Mr. Capp said that we know that when kids can identify their emotions, it helps them understand what they can do next. Leadership group is helping Mr. Capp work on planning the Social-Emotional programming.
- COVID Update: Threshold for D11- If the transmission rate reaches 200 per 100,000 during a seven-day period will result in the district going to mandatory masking. The trend is upward. Almost 190 yesterday. Steele did have to quarantine a small group in a first-grade class. The quarantine rules have changed significantly from last spring. You can access them through the letter from Dr. Thomas (<https://www.d11.org/Page/17491>). “Who Needs to Quarantine” will help you understand what kinds of steps and protocols are involved when there is a case or expected case. If anyone in a small group is wearing a mask and there is a suspected COVID case...if the whole group was wearing a mask, they are unlikely to have to quarantine. If someone in the group was not wearing a mask, then they have to quarantine. Much more complicated for teachers – piecemeal quarantining. Nurses in the district are working on a lot of cases across the district right now.

Megan Harris asked about what happens with quarantine when the teacher and some kids are wearing masks but the rest of the class is not. Mr. Capp said he recommends going above his head for questions about protocol and the inconsistencies in following protocol - to influence Cory Notestine (Executive

Director of Student Success and Wellness), directly contact Dr. Thomas (Superintendent), others at the district level who are making the protocol decisions. Lauren mentioned someone was quarantined at a different school but that the kids who were masked continued going to school. Lauren said she will share Holmes Middle School's communication with Mr. Capp. Mr. Capp said he has to follow the district policies on COVID.

- Mr. Capp said parents are always welcome to contact him with questions or information they have regarding COVID.

Vice President Kate Hume motioned to approve the 11 May 2021 meeting minutes and Megan Harris seconded. Motion carried.

### Financial Review and Budget

Treasurer Mark Perrault presented the results of the Financial Review for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

- Mark Perrault and Alex Lugo completed the financial review/audit with previous Treasurer Meg Ford for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.
- We are in a good position financially coming into this year and there were no discrepancies during the review.

Mark Perrault presented the proposed budget for 2021-2022 school year.

- We used the two previous years' budgets to base the current year's budget on.
- Mark said we have good funds going into this year, even a surplus. He asked members to consider ideas for how we want to use our PTA money this year.
- Kate mentioned people should keep in mind that the budget is a work in progress because of some of the unknowns of the year.
- Trudi explained that last year we were fiscally conservative with our goals and that following the spring Steele the Show fundraiser we were in a much better financial position than we had hoped going into this year. There are so many uncertainties about what events we will have this year. She said that Mr. Capp had suggested beautification as a goal for use of PTA funds.
- Megan Harris asked to add a budget line item for Green Team, which would be another \$1500 contract in the spring. Megan provided an overview of the program - developed by Lisa Dewil, it is an all-inclusive leadership and environmental program for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, who apply. They will work on probably two projects this year. The Green Team will meet once a week either before school, during lunch time, or after school. The kids who do the program get to teach the other students at Steele. Lisa will lead the program via Zoom and Megan will lead the program here in person. We still have a contract that will be honored through winter break. To continue the program in the spring, we will need more funds. Need to determine meeting times. Meetings will start the week of September 13. Megan would like to have the application available for

- Back to School Night in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms. It's a great, large-impact program. Energy use at Lisa's school dropped as a result of the program.
- Last time PTA paid \$300 for the Green Team and Mr. Capp contributed the other funds. Mark suggested sponsors could be a way of funding the program as well. Mark and Trudi suggested we add the \$1500 for Green Team on the budget.
  - Sarah asked what the Hour of Giving line-item was: Trudi explained that in the past we have done Sips for Steele as our big fundraiser, but that it is a lot of work. She mentioned that Kate and Meg had attended fundraising training last year and learned of this power hour of giving. The idea would be that if we raised our goal, we wouldn't bother the community for the rest of the year.
  - Scot Hume motioned to approve the Financial Review and Megan Harris seconded. Motion passed.
  - Sallie Kate Angelidis motioned to approve the proposed 2021-2022 budget with the \$1500 Green Team line-item added and Scot Hume seconded. Motion passed.

## Calendar

Vice President Kate Hume presented the calendar review:

- Back to School Night – Thursday August 24: Please come.
- Pictures in the Park – October 2: Great fundraising opportunity. Donna Guthrie sponsors a photographer. Families pay \$20 for 2 professional photos and Steele PTA gets the revenue.
- Walk to School – October 6: Good opportunity for families to come to school in a healthy, active way. Megan Harris asked if anyone would like to organize the event. No one volunteered as of yet.
- PTA Meeting Schedule was included in the PTA welcome packet. We will post it on our website as well. The meetings include a Zoom option.
- Fundraising and Community Events Ideas: We are looking for ideas to build community, especially since we didn't have that last year. We are also looking for fundraising ideas. Kate said that this year, as Mr. Capp mentioned as well, is a very good year to take a look at what kinds of things we do and doesn't have to be things "we've always done." Please fill out the volunteer form or reach out to Megan Harris if you would like to get involved. Your involvement can be as big or little as you want it to be. Kate said the PTA is only as good as its members.
- Members asked to be updated on whether or not volunteers are allowed in classrooms this year.
- Megan Harris asked for us to ask Mr. Capp at this evening's meeting about timing for Green Team meetings.

## New Business

Buddy Family Program

- Meg Ford presented the idea for a new program at Steele where families new to Steele or returning to Steele could be matched with families who have been at Steele for a longer period, to create connection in the community and ensure new families feel welcome. Meg said she is planning to have sign-ups hopefully as soon as Back-to-School night followed by a kick-off event where matched families can meet. Then it would be up to the buddy families to decide how often and in what way they want to connect.

#### Gaga Ball Pit

- Trudi presented a proposal from a previous Steele student who is working on an Eagle Scout Project. The student had approached the PTA and Mr. Capp about setting up a Gaga Ball pit on the Steele playground. He requested a donation from the PTA or for the PTA to match what sponsors give. Trudi mentioned we forgot to include the Gaga Ball Pit in the budget. Trudi said she would seek clarification on whether the budget for the project included labor and there may be ways to save money by having parents volunteer to build it. Sarah, a scout leader, explained how scout projects work and that the student would provide the leadership and fundraising and that his troopmates would provide the labor with him. Sarah said a gaga pit would be an amazing idea and a lot of fun.
- Trudi asked for a motion that we add \$500 to the budget for the Gaga Ball Pit. Sarah motioned. Sallie Kate seconded. Motion passed.

#### Enrichment

- Trudi explained the Enrichment program - independent vendors/programmers, teachers, and parent volunteers come in and provide an after-school program for students. In the spring of 2020, we had to cancel the remaining enrichment. People would really like to bring back enrichment. Some of the classes were grade dependent, but there was something for everyone. Erica Roberts has organized it for the past couple of years and is willing to help someone new. We are looking for someone to lead the program.
- Megan Harris said we need to find out more information about COVID restrictions (e.g., grade-level mixing) before we start it up. Megan suggested that perhaps people could sign up for week by week sessions. Ali suggested we could separate by grade-level cohort as well. Trudi agreed we need to find out more before we set it up.
- Sarah asked if there are any after-school intramurals. Trudi and Ali explained that Mr. Marchiani used to do PE club. Trudi mentioned running club and that Mr. Marchiani is trying to get that back up and running. She also said D11 is hoping to have the cross-country series they have had in the past.
- More discussion needed for Enrichment.

Trudi thanked everyone for coming and asked if anyone had any more questions or comments. There were none.

Trudi adjourned the meeting at 9:10 am.

## Evening Session

### Governance

President Trudi Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

The board/PTA leaders introduced themselves first:

- Trudi Jackson: President
- Kate Hume: Vice President
- Meg Ford: Secretary
- Mark Perrault: Treasurer

Trudi introduced PTA leaders who were not present:

- Megan Harris: Volunteer Coordinator and Green Team Lead
  - Trudi mentioned that we're hoping to have more volunteers this year.
- Rosanne Mason: Community Support Liaison
  - Trudi explained that Rosanne works with Lisa Korte to support families who need clothing, school supplies, food, etc.
- Jen Cooper: Fifth Grade Coordinator
  - Typically, fifth grade does special activities like Estes Park.

Attendees introduced themselves.

Trudi explained that normally we have a meeting the second Tuesday of every month, alternating between morning and evening. Since this is the first meeting, we have meetings in both the morning and evening, so we approve things twice.

Ann Griner moved to approve the minutes from May 2021 and Kate Hume approved. Motion carried.

### Financial Review and Budget

Treasurer Mark Perrault presented the results of the Financial Review for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

- Alex Lugo and Mark Perrault conducted the audit with previous Treasurer Meg Ford. Everything looked great and had no issues.
- Trudi explained that the state PTA requires a financial audit each year to be sure that everything looks good financially.

Mark presented the proposed budget for the 2021-2022 school year.

- Mark explained that at this morning's meeting we added the Green Team to the budget.
- The budget was based on the budgets from 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. Mark said we will vote on the budget now and can add things in later if necessary and approved by vote. Mark listed several of the budget items.
- Mark explained the King Soopers program and how much financial support it provides to the Steele PTA at no cost. Kate shared that the instructions to sign up for the King Soopers rewards program are in the PTA Welcome Packet.
- Trudi explained the Teacher Support Accounts – at the beginning of each school year, the PTA provides money to the school for teachers to use for classroom support like school supplies, books, other classroom support items. Last year we held back on the accounts because we were unsure how much we would be able to raise. Then a fundraiser called Steele the Show – a professional Dancing with the Stars type show – raised more than we anticipated so we are starting off this year better than we had hoped. Last year it meant that we were able to pay out the remaining funds for teacher support and library support.
- Ann Griner asked about the AmazonSmile fundraiser and how well it raises funds. Mark and Trudi said that it does not raise much money.
- Mark mentioned the Goat Patch Fundraiser as another fundraising opportunity throughout the year.
- Trudi mentioned that we added two line-items this morning. We added the \$1500 for Green Team and \$500 for a Gaga Ball pit. There were many questions about what Gaga Ball is. Mr. Capp explained that it is a ball game in a wooden pit that would go on the playground and is lots of fun for the kids. Trudi said there was a parent this morning who is an Eagle Scout Leader and knows about Gaga Ball - she explained that the Eagle Scout has to coordinate the building of it. Trudi said that we would add \$500 from the PTA budget toward the Gaga Ball Pit. Ann asked where the Eagle Scout would get the rest of the estimated \$2100 cost. Trudi said sponsors.
- Ann Griner moved to approve the Financial Review and Kate Hume seconded. Motion carried.
- Ann Griner moved to approve the proposed 2021-2022 budget and Terry Spotts seconded. Motion carried.

### Principal's Report

Principal Ryan Capp provided the Principal's Report.

- Ryan welcomed everyone and said the PTA can build relationships for years.
- Ryan said that he is happy to be trying to do school like normal and plan for the in-person things that we normally try to plan each year.
- Three main school goals for the year, which can be found in the Unified Improvement Plan. 1. Student and Teacher Reflective Practices. 2. Student Goal Setting, especially in math. Students will be setting their own goals with teacher

guidance, tracking, and reporting out on those goals. 3. Social/Emotional Practices: Steele has been working on Social/Emotional strategies for the last 2-3 years in particular. One of the best things we can do for kids is to help them understand the range of emotions we all have. We're hoping that we can track kids' abilities to solve problems on their own, use strategies they learn from the counselor, use the Random Acts of Kindness curriculum. This is our 2<sup>nd</sup> year with a counselor. To have the counselor to pull everything together has been really meaningful.

- COVID Update: With the Delta variant moving around and the District's current policies we are really watching the El Paso County Health measures of incidents per 100,000. The threshold that Dr. Thomas said would trigger a mask mandate is 200 per 100,000 within a 5-day span. As of today, we are at 187 which is way up from last week. The trend is going up. There could be things that happen at the state level that could change the District's policy, including what other districts do. D12 has gone to a mask mandate, D49 probably would not. It is a possibility for D11. Ryan said that as a principal, he cannot make that decision. There are probably parents on both sides of that particular issue. Ryan encouraged parents to continue talking with him when they have feedback or concerns. We did quarantine five 1<sup>st</sup> graders late Sunday. Working with director of health and wellness on quarantines. Three feet or less for 15 minutes or more is one parameter we really have to follow. Being more discretionary this year to determine who should go home and for how long. It sounds good, but it's very fussy. Schools may be doing it differently, not because we aren't talking but because there are so many factors to consider. Hopefully that smooths out and gets clearer because it is really difficult to describe it well to parents. Right now you may get a letter that your child may have been exposed to a possible case. It's an alert so you can plan for care if your child will be quarantined. Right now those tests are taking 3-4 days all of sudden which really changes the calculus of how quickly Ryan can tell families what's going on.
- Volunteers are allowed in classrooms, but questions remain like whether schools can require masks for volunteers or if they need to follow the same D11 process for school. Volunteers are so important. Teachers will hopefully be able to speak to that more on Thursday at Back to School Night as they get more guidance from district.
  - Trudi asked if there are different types of tests that will or will not be accepted for returning to school. Ryan believes that a negative rapid test will be accepted for end of quarantine due to exposure but not someone who has been quarantined with symptoms. Ryan said he can review his notes in a moment.
  - Julie asked is it a 14-day quarantine? Right now it is a 10 day quarantine if you have symptoms or test says you have COVID. If a household member tests positive for COVID, then you have to quarantine 10 days.
  - If a parent gets a note that their student may have been exposed? Ryan has one letter that says they do not need to be quarantined but to watch



for symptoms for several days. There have been a lot of parents choosing to keep their kids home for a day just to be sure, especially after a 3- or 4-day weekend. We had to shut the whole school down a couple times last year.

- Kate reminded Ryan that he encouraged people to come to Back to School Night in this morning's meeting. Ryan said please come, masks are encouraged, air will be flowing through the building. Teachers will talk, then Mr. Capp will speak, then a second session with teachers for people with more than one kid. Kindergarten parents do not need to come on Thursday because they came before school started. Kindergarten parents are still encouraged to ask questions if they have them!
- September 16 is the first of at least two family engagement nights. There will be food, math centers, and some fun stations too. With a fairly new curriculum for K-2 math, the terms we are using are not the ones you may be familiar with and the way teachers talk about grouping is very different from math methods you have probably been around. You can work with your kid to understand what we're doing and get a handle on that. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, we switch back to math expressions but our teachers really bring a conceptual focus back to math and wanted them to have the chance to talk about the way they do things in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, same with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. The next family engagement night will probably be October 7. It will probably be a festival of reading night overlapping with book fair.
- Questions about distance for COVID – are they marking the 3 feet rather than 6 feet? Ryan said that is a shift in policy and protocol that may make people uncomfortable. What changed since last fall really is the policy. If you would like to express your opinions on this beyond what Ryan shared, he encourages you to talk to Cory Notestine, Director of Student Success and Wellness. Ann Griner mentioned the updated Return to Learn policy is on the D11 website. Ryan said there are documents embedded within documents. Colorado's Practical Guide for Operationalizing CDC School Guidance has some interesting information on the 3 feet, etc. Teachers have given Ryan a map of where each student's homebase is in the classroom. They're also taking photos each day, should they need to jog their memory when asking questions about quarantine.

## Calendar

Kate presented upcoming events.

- August 26 – Open House: Please come. Good opportunity to meet your teacher and find out opportunities for parents going forward.
- October 2 – Pictures in the Park: Community Event and fundraiser where we have a professional photographer who will do 2 photographs per family for \$20. Ann Griner is helping with the sign-up genius. More information will be coming. It's a great way to support Steele and get a family photo.
- October 6 – Bike to School Day: Looking for someone to lead this event – set up a table with snacks and communication ahead of time. Fun and interesting way to

- get kids and families out. Reach out to Trudi, Kate or Megan Harris if you're interested.
- PTA Meetings: The PTA meeting calendar is in the welcome packet. This one is unusual because it is the first. But they are generally alternating mornings and evenings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

Kate said that we try to do fundraising and community events. If you have a great idea, bring it up. There is no "typical way" we've always done it because that went away last year. Kate encouraged everyone to volunteer, which can be as big or small as you like.

## New Business

### Buddy Family Program

- Meg Ford presented the idea for a new program at Steele where families new to Steele or returning to Steele could be matched with families who have been at Steele. The goal of the program is to create connection in the community and ensure new families feel welcome. Meg said she is planning to have sign-ups at Back-to-School night followed by a kick-off event where matched families can meet. Then it would be up to the buddy families to decide how often and in what way they want to connect.

### Gaga Ball Pit

- Trudi described the Gaga Ball pit, apparently similar to dodgeball. We're hoping to have it installed as an Eagle Scout Project. More information to come on costs, construction, etc.

### Big Fundraising Goals

- Trudi said that a couple of years ago the PTA raised funds for some big items, like the new playground. We are looking for ideas this year. Mr. Capp had suggested beautification as an option. Columbia Elementary has enhanced their fencing with artwork, as an example. As for raising the funds for a large project, one idea has been an hour of giving where we would set a goal, ask for donations through the online platform, and then not bug you again. Sips for Steele has been great, but a lot of work. Ann asked Trudi to explain Sips for new parents who may not know. Trudi explained that Sips has been at different venues with a silent auction, baskets from each classroom, big event. The challenge has been finding someone who has the time to organize it. Mark suggested we could still do something where we get together, but to keep it simple we could do this hour of giving and maybe have incentives with sponsor matching. We've also had fundraisers at Goat Patch to get people together to build community.
- Caitlin said she is an Assistant Principal and that they just did an auction for two reserved parking spaces and raised a lot of money. It was about a week and a half for bidding and raised close to \$1000 just for parking.

- Jessica (via Zoom) says she is new to PTA and asked about where the PTA as a community sits within the school? Is it intersecting needs the teachers and students have? Do teachers or students ever have ideas of what they would like in their community? She suggested 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade could do a Shark Tank type thing where they could pitch ideas to the PTA. Ann responded that our PTA is fairly small, but that she knows other school communities that have students and teachers as part of the PTA as well. Ann said she thinks that's great space to grow into.
- Jessica asked if the beautification was an idea that Mr. Capp was able to recognize as a need in the school? Mr. Capp said this is his sixth year here and he's been able to see the PTA change through the years. Several years ago, the question was how do we raise 100K to replace the playground? The PTA got after it with this intentional goal. Along the way we brought students in on design elements, had a parent who works with City Parks, then everyone went out and built it together. It was a big involvement. We don't have to press on that. For one thing, he's not sure what that would be. This is the smallest footprint of an elementary school in the district. Ryan suggested it may be good to survey parents with a list of options and do that with staff and students - we may get a better idea of where we should focus.
- Alex agreed with Jessica about asking teachers how best to support them, with academic goals in mind. He suggested looking to what other PTAs and school districts have done to boost learning and academic performance during and after school. He suggested putting together packets for adults on how they can support the staff.
- Trudi mentioned coffee talks as a way to get parents more engaged and to better disseminate information in a non-threatening way.
- Jessica said she appreciates the idea of reemerging and reconnecting. Maybe getting into the earth and doing a beautification project is a good activity to see that process, interweave that intentionality of creating community.
- Trudi said last year the PTA really focused on the teachers because they were having such a hard time and this year is focused on recreating that community piece.

#### Enrichment:

- Trudi presented the enrichment program. Kids can pay and sign up for different programs provided by teachers and external organizations. Past programs have included American Girl, biking, arts, etc. Unfortunately in Spring 2020 we had to cut the program off and didn't have it at all last school year. We are hoping to restart. There are some concerns about what if we quarantining again. Would it be online? How would that work. Need to look into it further. But we need someone to lead that program. Erica Roberts has done it in the past and is willing to help someone learn it, but doesn't want to take it on this year. If anyone

would like to volunteer or knows of someone who would like to take it on, we'd love to hear from you.

#### Green Team

- Trudi presented a Green Team update. The program is coordinated by Megan Harris. Again it started in Spring 2020 and had to be cut off. Run by someone remote in Evergreen for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Leadership and environmental program. Schools that have used it have made significant reduction in energy and power usage. Applications will be available for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders starting on Thursday.

#### Directory

- Ann Griner presented a directory update – In the past we have done a bound book of all the students in school. You could have your student included or not and could choose whether to have your contact info included. Great way to set up play dates, connect with other families. Last year we tried to do it online with COVID and didn't have a lot of input. Ann said she likes the idea of having it digitally because it could be a living document, but that she is happy to do whatever the PTA wants. Ann suggested we could take a poll of whether people would use it. Trudi agreed the electronic would be better in a lot of ways but we didn't get a lot of uptake. Ann said we can do it digitally this year. She said she couldn't remember if it was a big money-maker in the past. Mark and Meg said they could look back at old records but didn't think it would take away from the budget if we did it digitally.

Trudi and Kate said we had some very good discussion. Thanked everyone for coming. You should have our information in the emails and welcome packet. If you have any ideas, please reach out.

Trudi adjourned the meeting at 7:15pm.