



### **Board Members**

**President:** Susan Pastir

**Treasurer:** Joe Cole & Kori Rushton

**VPs of Fundraising:** Ana Mota & Jeff Petrella

**VPs of Programming:** Shannyn Johnston & Sonal Agrahari

**Corresponding Secretary:** Nicole Kobis

**Recording Secretary:** Nicole Sharkey

**Principal:** Dr. Sasha Slocum

### **William J. McGinn PTA**

William J. McGinn Elementary School

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Scotch Plains, NJ 07076

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<https://www.spfk12.org/McGinn>

## **McGinn PTA**

### **June General Membership Meeting Minutes: Pending Approval**

**Wednesday June 12, 2024 at 9:30 am**

### **Establishing a Quorum:**

See sign up sheet, 10

### **Call to Order/Welcome:**

Time: 9:33am

### **Approval of Minutes:**

[We didn't have a quorum, minutes approval tabled until September's meeting.]

### **Principal's report:**

#### **PTA Meeting Agenda**

**Wednesday, June 12, 2024 9:30 AM**

#### **THANK YOU**

- **McGinn PTA, Families and McGinn Staff for the Etch-A-Sketch Assembly, the Ed-Data Gift, Sensory Playground Gift (TBD), Kindergarten Orientation, Field Day, Fourth Grade Picnic, BOGO Book Fair, Book Fair Wishlists**
- **Teachers - Kindergarten Day, Fourth Grade Concerts, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Grade Field Trips**
- **Thank you for providing numerous ways to make us feel appreciated and celebrated!**
- **Thank you to our outgoing Executive Board:** Ms. Pastir, Ms. Agrahari, Mr. Cole, Ms. Johnston, Ms. Mota, Ms. Kobis, Mr. Petrella, Ms. Rushton, and Ms. Sharkey! You have brightened our year!
- **Thank you and Welcome to our incoming Executive Board:** Mr. Petrella President, Ms. Agrahari VP Programming, Ms. Kobis VP Programming, Ms. Simko VP Fundraising, Ms. Durante VP Fundraising, Ms. Murphy Recording Secretary, Ms. Casanova Corresponding Secretary, and Mr. Cody Treasurer

#### **STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS FOR THIS YEAR:**

- **Goal 1: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion** - To increase opportunities to develop a district committed to diversity, equity and inclusion through hiring practices of educational and support staff, curriculum development and student empowerment.





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- **Goal 2: Educating the Whole Child** - To engage students academically, socially and emotionally to be resilient, creative, critical thinkers through authentic learning experiences, so that they feel validated, self-aware and interconnected and can approach the world's challenges with empathy and passion.
- **Goal 3: Community Partnerships and Engagement** - To create a communication system that utilizes various appropriate channels so all stakeholders receive information that is timely, concise, clear and balanced and utilizing these channels to cultivate and continue awareness of existing and future community partnerships that will enhance the student experience and the larger district.
- **Goal 4: Facilities and Infrastructure** - To improve and expand facilities so that we can provide safe, accessible and innovative modern spaces for all students that are sustainable ("green")

### **CHANGES**

- We will have six sections of kindergarten, six sections of first grade, five sections of second grade, five sections of third grade and four sections of fourth grade.  
[There was a discussion here, led by Nicole Kobis who had questions about the particulars of the newly planned school for the referendum. For example, where will the new school go to middle school? Why was a kindergarten-only school not the chosen plan? Dr. Slocum said that these were very important questions and that she would bring them up at the next meeting.- NS]
- There will be some movement of teachers to different grade levels.

### **SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS**

- **PRIDE Month, Carribean American Heritage Month, Immigrant Heritage Month** - We have focused on being proud of who we are and where we come from.
- **Spring Concert** was fantastic Monday night!
- **Student Council Carnival** - The students have done it! They will run Field Day like games and provide face painting on Thursday, June 13th, after school!
- **Juneteenth** - We are connecting classroom lessons with the commemoration being led by Social Justice Matters at Shady Rest Country Club on June 22, 2024 from 12 - 8.
- **McGinn Family Culture Survey** - Once again, this has been the source of fantastic information about our families. We have shared information with the whole school community through announcements and communications.

### **CURRICULUM**

- **MAP Testing** - Students in grades 1-4 have taken the MAP test in Language Arts and Math. Families will receive the results this summer.
- **End of Year Assessments** - Students are completing our reading, writing and word study end of year assessments.
- **Juneteenth Lessons** - All students are participating in lessons. Our 3rd and 4th graders are making class quilt pieces to be connected in one district Juneteenth quilt. Students' quilt pieces will be on display on Saturday at Shady Rest Country Club on June 22nd.

### **TECHNOLOGY**





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- Families may keep the devices over the summer. [Dr. Slocum to reach out to Dr. McGarry to ensure that the directions about charging the devices is sent to parents.- NS]
- We continue to use Second Step to support our socio-emotional learning curriculum.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **Recorder Concert** - Third grade families, 6/13 at 9:00
- **Student-Run Carnival** - Everyone! 6/13 after school
- **Second Grade Showcase** - Second Grade families, 6/14 at different times
- **Celebration of Learning** - Families will join us on June 17th in the MPR with a reception following in the Gym.
- **Clap Out** - Join us at 12:30 PM on 6/18/24 [A map is coming says Dr. Slocum-NS]

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- **Class Placements** - Placements will go out in late August. [New student scavenger hunt will be Sept. 3rd.]
- **Student Council** - They would like to thank you for your generous donation to support their carnival!
- **Book Fair Books** - Thank you for adding to teachers' collections through the wish lists!
- **Juneteenth Celebration** - June 22nd at Shady Rest Country Club, 12 - 8
- **Career Day**/Take Your Child to Work Day - We fulfilled participation!
- **Committees** for the 2024-25 School Year - We welcome new members for the following committees:
  - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
  - Gardens Committee [Amy and Sunith to come in and clean the garden beds today. Planting might take place on Friday with leftover plants from the classrooms. Dr. Slocum to reach out to teachers. Susan and Sonal to come in and help.- NS]
  - School Climate Committee/Health and Wellness Committee
  - School Improvement Panel (SCIP)

## **Old Business: (Susan)**

***Install Sonal:***

### **Installation Ceremony**

Sonal... Please respond with *I WILL* after each question.

Will you, as an officer of the William J. McGinn Parent Teacher Association hold the welfare of our children and youth paramount in all you do? (I will)





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Will you represent the William J. McGinn PTA, the New Jersey PTA and the National PTA so that the dignity and worth of parent-teacher work may be upheld before the community to the honor of those who have elected you? **(I will)**

As an officer of the PTA you hold a responsible position. The duties and opportunities for service that await you will challenge your devoted effort at times but the rewards will be great. I acknowledge your intention to serve faithfully and to the best of your ability. With sincere pleasure, I declare you installed.... **Congratulations!**

### *Programming*

**Think Purple Week** - We had a successful Think Purple Week. The PTA beautifully decorated the front display and designed a theme week emphasizing making healthy choices. A district PTA assembly was not provided for the first time this year. The committee also wrapped trees in purple ribbons and delivered purple hearts to classrooms for teachers to complete with their class, writing inspirational messages of congratulations to graduating seniors. Thank you to Pooja Rastogi, Geri Ferraro, and Marcy Cohen for chairing this event. Kelly Robertson and Rick Dory were the contact people at the HS. Some hearts (grade 2) are currently missing.

**Food Drives** - Thank you to our school community, fourth grade service learning students and food drive chairs, Karen Sullivan and Erin Decker, for running four successful food drives this year with all items going to the IHM food pantry.

**Sharing Lunches** - Thank you to our school community, fourth grade service learning students and sharing lunches chairs, Sara Taner and Joanna Flavin, for once again running an extremely successful program this year. We donated over 1,500 lunches to the Plainfield Salvation Army this year. **Katie Smith coming in as a third non-4th grade parent to help out.**

**Spring Assemblies** - On May 9th we had a wonderful assembly from the Montclair State University West African Drumming and Dance Ensemble. Thank you to Ms. Nicole Castellano and Ms. Pooja Rastogi for arranging this for us. All of the students were able to actively participate. On June 11th we were able to provide an additional assembly. Artist Keith Drake came to give four different presentations on his Etch-A-Sketch artwork to children in grades 1-4. The students were then able to try out the PTA purchased Etch-A-Sketches that will be kept to be used for indoor recess and other STEAM activities in the school.

**Reflections Art** - We had a brief lunchtime assembly honoring our student participants in this year's PTA Reflections Art contest. Students were able to share their artwork with their peers.





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**Gardens** - Parents came into K-4 classrooms to both plant in the classrooms and in the gardens. Parents will be coming in this week to weed the beds and prepare them for the transfer of classroom grown vegetables into the gardens for the summer.

**Wellness Night III: Yoga and Mindfulness** - Ms. Amanda Marchica led a very successful Yoga Night for families. The PTA purchased 25 yoga mats that can be used by the school throughout the year. Ms. Marchica taught families some basic yoga poses and relaxation and mindfulness techniques. Families enjoyed healthy snacks provided by the PTA after the event.

**The Yoga Mats were used at field day!**

**Fourth Grade Activities** - Thank you chairs, Katie Smith, Suzi Pellegrino and Rachel Nudel-Feldman!

- **Service Learning Project** - Sharing Lunches and Food Drives have run smoothly all year.
- **Fourth Grade Picnic** - Children enjoyed dancing to the DJ and playing lawn games, pickleball, basketball and baseball. They also had ice cream sponsored by the PTA and enjoyed a fire truck spray down. There were many smiling faces from kids and adults. Thank you to our chairs, Stacy Amador, Jen Murphy and Susana Reisinger.
- **Fourth Grade Signs** - arrived the end of May and distributed to all families
- **COL** - our chairs, Nicole Mana and Amy Condon, are busily at work making preparation for COL on Monday, June 17th. John Basuino is busily at work creating the montage. Katie Smith asked if Flame was available for a guest appearance that morning.
- **Yearbooks** - the yearbooks have been ordered and are on their way.

**Clap Out** - What does the PTA typically provide? **Usually some sort of final walk through from the 4th grade committee. Can we use the Color Run walk finish line? Ana and Nicole to talk to Katie Smith about this.**

- We would like to thank all of the McGinn teachers who partnered with us on our many projects such as...
  - Global Family Night (Ms. Perri Fuerst and Senorita Marin)
  - Family Wellness Night (Ms. Kathy Fritz, Ms. Heather Filipiski, Ms. Amanda Marchica)
  - Parent Social (Mrs. Kristen Cecchini, Ms. Suzanne Toriello, Ms. Tashira Wheeler, Mrs. Amy George, Ms. Ayleen Noriega, Ms. Leoni Kika and Mr. Lohn)





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- Variety Show (Ms. Ayleen Noriega, Ms. Suzanne Toriello, Ms. Tashira Wheeler, Ms. Breanna Marin, Ms. Perri Fuerst, Ms. Heather Filipiski, Ms. Amanda Marchica)
  - Enrichments (Ms. Alba Gonzalez and Mr. John Lohn)
  - Kids Kreations (Ms. Jessica Cavaliere and Teacher G)
  - PTA Meetings (Mrs. Mercedes Korn, Ms. Perri Fuerst, Ms. Kristen Cecchini, Ms. Suzanne Toriello, Ms. Susan Bradley, Ms. Kerri Horvath, Ms. Dorothy Lusk, Ms. Tara Scrofani and Ms. Jean Swartz)
  - Fourth Grade Activities - Mrs. Silvana Cacciatore
- **High School Scholarships** - We awarded two \$2,000 scholarships to graduating McGinn alumni on May 29th. The recipients are Lily Jayinski and Ryan Adams. Lily will be studying biomedical engineering at Brown and Ryan will be studying environmental science at the University of Connecticut. Thank you to Nicole Sharkey for reading through countless applications and attending the awards ceremony to help present the scholarships to Lily and Ryan. We are grateful for all the time and care you took with this task. We will be looking for a new scholarship reader for next school year. We are also considering offering three \$1,500 scholarships next year.
- **McGinn Student Scholarships** - We will be awarding ten fourth grade students each with a \$100 scholarship to help fund the pursuit of an academic, artistic or athletic passion. We will also be awarding eight fourth grade students with \$25 scholarships, for a total of \$1,200 awarded in student scholarship funds. We had a total of 18 students apply. Thank you to Karen Sullivan, Andrea Quintanilla, and Lauren Murphy for reading the applications.
- **Gifts for our School** -
  - *Subscriptions and Student Supplies* - The PTA is pleased to be able to provide \$3,950.53 to the school to cover the cost of the datebooks for incoming 4th graders for next year, Scholastic magazines for all of the classrooms and a subscription to Time for Kids for the classrooms. We've also purchased green McGinn homework folders for students to use for the next two years, totaling \$1,800.
  - *Classroom Supplies* - We were able to provide all classroom teachers with an additional \$100 for classroom supplies through BOE accounts used to fund EdData classroom orders, totalling \$5,400.





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- *Assemblies* - We were able to provide an additional assembly totalling \$800. We were also able to purchase fifty Etch-A-Sketches for children to use during the assembly and during indoor recess in the future. The purchase totaled \$1,250.02.
- *Wellness Equipment* - The PTA donated 25 yoga mats to the school for use during Family Wellness Night, PE class and field day. The gift totaled \$330.
- *Playground Equipment* - Up to \$7,000 was voted on and approved for sensory playground equipment additions to our school playground. Jeff and Dr. Slocum will work on this project over the summer.

### ***Fundraising***

- **Parent Social:** We raised \$9,093.34 and had a very fun time. Next year maybe consider less tricky baskets as that took lots of time. The silent auction was the big money maker. 80s theme was a huge success. It was great to see people really embrace the theme. We are looking for an additional chair. Nina is fundraising chair and will be overseeing the event with Laura, but she could use additional help with Jamie Glickman.
- **Variety Show:** Another great success. Next year? Don't send the candy grams backstage. The backstage staff requested this. The candy can just be handed to the kids by the parents at the conclusion of the event as if it were flowers. Thank you Kara Kennedy and Kristen O'Grady for all your years of service. Welcome Nidhi Mehta and Lara Wildesen!
- **Hershey Park:** Thank you Allison Murray! We made \$1,056.65 on our ticket sales.
- **Kids Kreations:** Thank you, Stacy Amador for your service. Laura Lopez Keegan will take over for Stacy next year. We will start running the program earlier in the year so gifts can arrive in time for mother's day and the art teachers will have as much advance notice as possible. Our fundraiser made \$2,342.21. **Susan suggested Jeff reach out to the Art teachers.**
- **Spring Apparel:** Naomi Del Mastro is staying on as chair. **Ana said there was \$300 profit.**
- **Spring Plant Sale:** Thank you chairs, Vikki Lamela & Marisa Muzyka. And thank you for returning. We need to ensure the Givebacks shop and Lynwick Gardens order forms are in alignment as this discrepancy caused delays for a few deliveries. The idea of using shoeboxes, charging \$5/plant and advertising well ahead of time for the in school plant sale worked well. We ordered 830 plants for the in school sale and children were allowed a maximum purchase of three plants. All students were given a plant if they forgot their money. Many parents were appreciative of this and dropped off money to the PTA





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mailbox in the office the next day. The sale ran smoothly and kids, teachers and volunteers were happy. We also made much more than last year! ( \$1,433.90)

- **Scholastic Book Fair** - We earned \$1,144.03 in Scholastic Points for Mr. Lohn to use to purchase books for the library. Families also donated over 100 books to the McGinn classrooms! We made sure each class had at least one donation and many had several books purchased for their classroom library. Thanks to our book fair chairs, Dawn Weinstein, Alli Kagan and Samantha Bachman, as well as our incredibly generous McGinn families!
- **Field Day Tshirts:** Keep the pricing reasonable again next year and encourage parents to share/swap shirts to keep costs down. We made \$0.25/shirt this year, as this is mainly provided as a service to parents. We will keep the design the same for next year.
- **Pretzel Sales on Givebacks:** Pretzel Sales on GiveBacks and the 4-month pretzel pass were both a success. Decisions need to be made for next year. Pretzel Pass for the year and then sell some at the event is the current plan. Maybe only offer the pretzel pass for sale the first two months with the pricing the same (essentially, if you sign up early, you get one month free? What do you think?)

## **New Business: (Jeff)**

**Jeff's Speech:** As we near the end of the 2023-2024 school year with happiness, success and most importantly our children living the McGinn Experience. That happens with the preparation by board members, event chairs, and volunteers. The planning for that experience for next year has already begun. As you can see, next year we are already planning for big things in both programming and fundraising events.

[Jeff also took a moment to recognize the enormous efforts of Susan AND her family. :) A special thanks for Nicole S too.]

### *Programming:*

- GiveBacks Directory, talk to Nicole Sharkey
- Room Parents at Meetings, talk to Nicole Kobis
- Scavenger Hunt, Sept. 3rd
- Staff Welcome Back Luncheon, talk to Ms. Save for a date
- Kindergarten Picnic, create a signup genius for 4th grade parents to supply food
- Party on the Black Top, Sept. 20th





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- Sharing Lunches and Food Drives, schedule TBD
- Walk to School, see Sonal Agrahari
- Week of Respect & Assembly, discuss possible dates with office and Nicole Castellano

### *Fundraising:*

- Membership in first eblast in August (along with the GiveBacks Directory)
- Fall Apparel Sale, Ana has contacted Naomi Del Mastro and the new Fundraising VPs to make sure some shirts are available for scavenger hunt.
- Pretzel Sales in 2024-2025, pretzel pass and sold for cash at school
- School Photos, find a third person to chair who isn't leaving after this year?
- Color Run, confirm dates with Dina Lindner

## **Treasurer's Report:**

Current Balance: **\$38,197.82**

Accounts Payable: \$14,351.91

- \$6,533.90 scholastic
- \$800 Etch-A-Sketch Assembly
- \$1,200 Student Scholarships
- \$3,618.01 Student Subscriptions to Time and Scholastic
- \$1,800 Green McGinn Homework Folders, \$400 Student Council Carnival Supplies)

Final Balance: **\$23,845.91**

## **Unfinished Business, Questions, Comments, Announcements:**

### **Susan's Speech:**

Outgoing speeches are hard, especially this one. I've been a McGinn parent since 2015. Parents who take on this role do so with great hope in their hearts for everything that can be. Thank you to the entire executive board, Shannyn, Sonal, Ana, Jeff, Nicole, Kori, Joe and Jeff for all of their efforts to make those dreams a reality. There was truly never an event or an idea they didn't support. They helped bring back Breakfast with Flame, the Variety Show and incredible Parent Socials. They worked to support our teachers and staff by providing lunches, breakfasts, gifts and encouraging words. They organized countless activities and assemblies for students over the





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years. The sheer amount of communication this required was astounding, but their energy and enthusiasm was constant. I know that Laura, Nina, Ally, Lauren, and Dom will all work to carry on many of our old traditions infused with their new ideas and creativity.

Thank you to Dr. Slocum for her unwavering support. We appreciate all the help you've provided us to ensure our activities, events, and initiatives were successful over the years. The parents and students of McGinn are truly lucky to have such a kind and caring principal at the helm. I will miss working with you. Thank you for helping to create a PTA and community that is open and welcoming to the unique talents everyone can bring.

Jeff, from the time you brainstormed different ways for the Kindergartners to stay safe and enjoy the Color Run, I knew we had a good one! Your easy going nature, analytic mind, and thoughtfulness will serve our PTA well as you lead the way next year. Thank you for stepping up and remember we're here for you!

### **Nicole's Speech:**

Short and Sweet- like us!

I am going to quote one of my favorite picture books, "The PaperBag Princess":

"I am a very busy dragon. Come back tomorrow."

If only Susan could have said, "come back tomorrow." But no. A PTA President's job is — sorry, Jeff— never done.

Susan has worked tirelessly these past two years. Two years I am very grateful to have shared with her. When I first met Susan it was in Kramer Park. I recognized her as the woman who I \*thought\* I'd seen around the school. Sometimes in a dirndl....

She approached me and it basically went down like this, "Hi, I'm Susan Pastir. I will be the new PTA president. You're the new Recording Secretary, right? Are you also going to accept the 4th Grade Activities Chair?"

Later on I sent her my first text (and meme). The Anakin Skywalker one. You know: "[what have I done?](#)"

What have we— with Susan at the helm— done? EVERYTHING. No, really. Think about it...



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Susan has led the rest of us dragons to resurrect so many programs that had disbanded during the pandemic— with a team of people, many of whom had never gotten to experience these programs before!! She had to train them all! Here are just a few of the things she brought back: Breakfast with Flame, in-person Bingo Night, Super Science Saturday, Global Family Night, Parent Social, and 4th Grade Scholarships.

What else?

She created a Lego Club and all the lesson plans for it.

Started a Family Wellness Program.

Made a friend for life. Me. We first met in Kramer park two years ago and now we meet there weekly for runs (ahem, therapy sessions).

Susan's time here as PTA president marks her coming full circle. Her first grade class here at McGinn, I believe, was the class that came up with the Dragon mascot. Or named Flame? Whichever. The point is, once a dragon, always a dragon.

Another quote from that picture book I love? "The dragon was so tired [s]he didn't even move."

Susan, my wish for you is to get the rest you so deserve.... so you can be refreshed tonight when you get sworn in as Rotary President.....

**Adjournment:**

Susan, "Can I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?"

First: Nicole Sharkey

Second: Nicole Kobis

Susan: The meeting is adjourned at 10:58

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Nicole Sharkey**

**Recording Secretary**

