

# September 9, 2025 | Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) General Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Slides:** 📄 2025.09 - PTSA General Meeting

## **Attendees:**

TPMS PTSA Board: Erin Martin, Summer Smith, Emily Modde, Jesse Loznak, Chris Campbell, Becca Jones-Albertus, Heather Brown - Palsgrove, Monisha Shah, Mic Murphy, and Ramata Diop.

At 7:10 there were 120 members participating in the Zoom call.

At the height of the meeting there were 131 members Including the Board and 31 students who identified themselves in the chat.

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Welcome**

Emily Modde, TPMS PTSA President welcomed everyone to the first PTSA meeting of the 2025-2026 school year. She encouraged people to join the PTSA using the QR code (*see meeting slides*) and gave a brief overview of the agenda.

### **Meet the board**

Emily introduced the PTSA 2025-2026 Board:

Emily Modde: President

Co-Exec VPs: Becca Jones-Albertus and Monisha Shah

Recording Secretary: Summer Smith

Treasurer: Mic Murphy

VP Communications: Chris Campbell

VP Membership: Heather Brown-Palsgrove

VP Events and NAACP Representative: Ramata Diop

VP Fundraising: this position is currently open

### **Communications Update**

Chris Campbell, VP of Communications shared the different channels the PTSA currently has to communicate with the TPMS community. The PTSA is here to help everyone stay connected in many ways: to the school, community, Board, and to each other.

We have two email list serves :

- **ANNOUNCE**, which allows one way communication from the PTSA to those who have signed up for the list serve. We send our newsletter out to this list.

- *DISCUSS*, which allows for discussion among our community members for those who have signed up. You and the PTSA can also post information about happenings in the broader community here (for instance, sports team registrations, or clubs and camps).

Because these are email list servers hosted by groups.io, those who have joined them can search through previous posts.

We also have a robust WhatsApp community where you can join grade level groups, specific bus routes, and one where you can receive information from the PTSA Board.

Sign up for our communications at this link: [tpmspta.org/abouttpmspta/maillinglists/](https://tpmspta.org/abouttpmspta/maillinglists/)

### **What is the PTSA at TPMS?**

Emily explained that the elementary school PTA model changes for middle school, where there is now a student component. Emily shared her personal connections to PTSAs with her mom being actively engaged. This inspired her to want to help her own kids and the community. It's also a way to know a little more about what her kids are doing during the day. For Emily, the PTSA offers a unique way to see into middle school and also the overall school community. In addition, she enjoys meeting new people in the greater TPMS community.

The PTSA creates opportunities for engagement, including academically, socially, and other ways to be involved. There are many ways to engage in the community - students versus teachers basketball game, multicultural night, and teacher appreciation activities, among many others.

The school provides the curriculum, and it's the role of the PTSA to support in the enrichment of the school lives of our students. Activities include multicultural night, reptile man during 6th grade outdoor ed, Pi day, and so many more ways that we enrich our students at school.

We ask that you support the PTSA with donations. These donations help with so many areas where the school funding isn't fully there. These include, but are not limited to: Welcome Families Picnic; 6th grade Outdoor Ed Reptile Man; 8th Grade Promotion Dance and Cupcakes; Student Dances; Heritage Month Assembly Performances; International Multicultural Night Event; Books and Basketball Community Building Event; We Shine Night; Speakers and Presenters; Teacher and Staff Appreciation Activities, Events, and Meals; Teacher and Staff Professional Development Augmentation; Cafecitos; No Device Policy Materials for Safely Storing Devices; and SO much more! We are open to other ideas, please reach out.

### **Membership Pitch - Join Us!**

Heather Brown-Palsgrove, VP of Membership, shared how you can become a PTSA member to support all that the PTSA does. There are many ways your money helps us: activities for kids, family events, support for teachers and staff. Use [this link](#) to join today!

In addition, Heather shared that the PTSA is important to her and her family for so many reasons, including being from a long line of teachers and she's excited to be part of this amazing group.

One new thing we are doing this year - When you [become a member](#) your student's TPMS STRIVE house gains a point. Value House is winning at the time of this meeting. Get those memberships in so we can keep supporting the PTSA and our community. [Join the PTSA](#) today to help your House. If you join before midnight, Saturday, September 13, you will be entered in a raffle for a TPMS sweatshirt!

### **Opportunities to Get Involved**

Becca Jones-Albertus, Co-Executive VP highlighted areas where we especially need volunteers. We are always in need of help, please reach out to Becca at [BeccaJ@gmail.com](mailto:BeccaJ@gmail.com) if you can help. Specific areas of need are:

- Grant Writing: researching and applying for Grants that support our school and community;
- Minigrant Committee: the PTSA needs a Vice-Chair who can lead this effort this year. This program provides small "mini" grants to support teachers with classroom needs;
- Financial Review: per the PTSA National Guidelines, we need three volunteers that are not Board members to review the PTSA finances. This task will need to be completed by October 2026; and
- PALS Program Lead: the PALS program brings parents/caregivers into the school during lunchtime to support faculty and staff.

### **TPMS Program Committees: Special Education and Magnet Committees**

There are two educational programs at TPMS; Special Education (ARS) and Magnet. To support in their unique needs and ensure that they are well integrated so that we are one school community, the PTSA has two committees each presenting tonight:

- SpED Committee: Bonita Williams, a TPMS Parent, is excited to launch the PTSA Special Education (SpED) Committee with Beverly Hassell. Bonita thanked the many members of the TPMS Community who have helped make this Committee possible. This parent driven Committee is dedicated to creating a space in our community for students with different needs. The overall goal is to build community so that parents/caregivers can help keep each other informed. Specifically, the Committee will focus on: Inviting guest speakers to share the latest information on topics of interest to parents/caregivers; serve as a hub or organizing social outings for students and their families; collaborating with TPMS leadership to ensure that all school programs are inclusive; and building a supportive community for all families. There are two upcoming events of interest: September 30, 7-8:30: IEP Parent Workshop. [Register for the event here](#). This virtual workshop will feature a parent perspective, special education advocates walking through the IEP form, explaining jargon, tips for pre-meeting preparation as well as crucial post-meeting follow up. In November (date TBD), join the SpED Committee for High School Transition Workshop for 8th Grade Families. The Maryland Department of Rehabilitation Services & TPMS/MCPS will present programs and tools available to help

Special Education Students make a successful transition to HS and beyond. These events are designed for 8th grade families, but 6th and 7th grade families are encouraged to register as well. Planning can never start too early. Join the Committee here: <https://forms.gle/3fqFSYii2UWJHUmw5>.

- Magnet Committee: Ha Le, a TPMS Parent, is excited to launch the PTSA Magnet Connection Committee. Ha thanked the many members of the TPMS Community who helped make this Community possible. The purpose of this Committee is to connect TPMS Magnet families and support their unique needs including transportation, social opportunities, and afterschool enrichment. Specifically, meeting the needs of families who commute from different parts of the district; providing social opportunities for families to get to know each other and stay connected outside of school; and creating space for afterschool enrichment for students in the Magnet Program. Ha is excited for this new community to take shape and encourages magnet families to get involved by connecting through WhatsApp, or contact Emily Modde **TPMS\_PTA President** for an introduction directly to Ha Le or Monisha Shah.

### **Budget Update**

Mic Murphy, Treasurer, told the community that the PTSA is in the process of finalizing the proposed 2025-2026 budget. The budget will be ready for a formal PTSA vote in October. Note only PTSA Members can vote on the budget. As part of the PTSA process, the 2024-2025 outgoing Board approved \$5,000 in spending to cover expenses until the 2025-2026 budget is passed.

### **Next PTSA Meeting**

Monisha Shah, Co-Executive VP, let families know that the next meeting would be Tuesday, October 14, 7-8:30 PM. Future meetings are held monthly, with the exception of December, where there will be no meeting. Meetings will be either Zoom or in-person at TPMS, depending on the meeting content.

The PTSA created two polls to learn more about our families and what they need and want from the PTSA. Please use the QR codes to answer the polls.

- <https://www.menti.com/al6c7eermz>
- <https://www.menti.com/alr6ufmaifuw>

Monisha encouraged families to reach out to the Board members to introduce yourselves, get involved, or tell us what you need from the Board.

### **Back to School Night**

Ms. Martin and Mr. Loznak shared that Back to School Night will be Thursday, September 18 from 5:30-8 pm at TPMS. Ms. Martin understands that this is a long event, but she wants to provide comprehensive information on all the school does. From 5:30 to 6:20 there will be a resource fair. This part of the event will include community resource providers, the PTSA Board, and after school activities (information on athletics and all 43+ other clubs and organizations. Note this information will also be shared with students the week of September 15).

During the Back to School Night portion of the event, parents/caregivers will walk through your student's day. Just like your students, you will have 5 minutes to get from class to class (you better hurry!). Then you will have 10 minutes to meet each teacher and hear a little bit about their class and curriculum.

*\*Back to school night is intended for parents/guardians. No student/child will be turned away, but the content is designed for adults\**

We understand this is a long event - the PTSA has organized foodtruck(s) to be on site!

### **Executive Functioning (Ms. Martin and Mr. Loznak)**

Ms. Martin and Mr. Loznak presented how the school supports executive functioning skills and how this leads towards High School success and beyond. The goal is to give students the tools to build healthy habits for your student. These include:

**Creating Routines:** help your student set consistent times and places for their homework and studying. Mr. Loznak shared that there is so much more that we ask of our students as they enter middle school. Parents/caregivers can help students set a consistent time and place for homework and studying. This could look different for each day of the week, for each family, and even vary from student to student. Mr. Loznak said that timers work well for his family.

**Encouraging Organization:** Help your student how to use planners, calendars, and or apps to track assignments and activities. Ms. Martin said that each student was given an agenda book at the beginning of the school year to help them track and plan. Some teachers are "stamping" assignments and others are initialing them to make sure that they are building habits of tracking assignments. The pages in their agenda book then become their to do list for the day/week. For bigger assignments, Ms. Martin suggests teaching students how to break out larger tasks into smaller chunks that they can do each day to work towards the overall project.

She also said that students should use Canvas to ensure assignments are completed and submitted. At the middle school level there is a list of "to do" for each teacher by subject. This can help students make sure they check and don't miss any assignments. She said that there are many ways for families to access this information. She suggested that students pull up their assignments in Canvas, and then show parents/caregivers what they need to do. Let them take the lead on what they need to do. Ms. Martin also stressed that not only is it important to complete assignments, but to also click the "submit" button to get credit for the work they are doing.

**Promote Independence:** Offer your student guidance, but let them take the increasing responsibility for their learning. Ms. Martin said that students should use Canvas to ensure assignments are completed and submitted. At the middle school level there is a list of "to do" for each teacher by subject. This can help students make sure they check and don't miss any assignments. She said that there are many ways for families to access this information. She suggested that students pull up their assignments in Canvas, and then show parents/caregivers

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Stay Connected With the School: Check the parent portal, teacher updates, and attend conferences to stay informed about student learning. Ms. Martin stressed the important role parents/caregiver play by staying connected with TPMS.

In addition to the actions parents/caregivers can take, the school has built time to help students succeed.

Level Up (formally TAP). The Leadership Team looked at how TAP time was used in the past and how successful it was. For students who had all their work completed and were on top of things, TAP time was not always well utilized. Level Up focuses on helping all students with academic support, intervention, research, and enrichment.

The other way the school is supporting students is during STRIVE Advisory time, which occurs every Wednesday. This time focuses on lessons to provide enrichment, community building and other important needs.

At 8:06 Emily formally closed the meeting. She thanked Ms. Martin and Mr. Loznak for their time with us tonight, and all the families and students who participated.

**The meeting stayed open for another 10 minutes to address questions.**

After school activities: start October 7. They will be previewed at Back to School Night and during PE/Health classes for students the week of September 15.

Lunch Duty: PALS Program. We need someone to lead this activity! Please reach out to Emily and Becca: [beccaj@gmail.com](mailto:beccaj@gmail.com) or Emily at [tpms.pta.president@gmail.com](mailto:tpms.pta.president@gmail.com).

Student participation in the PTSA: Darren Hymes encouraged students to join the PTSA and be part of this group. He suggested updates in the newsletter and other venues to make students aware of this organization and how to be involved, including seeing how the PTSA is run and working directly with the PTSA Board. Others chimed in with reactions and chat comments that they thought this was a good idea.

At 8:16 Emily formally closed the meeting, stating that the conversation will continue.