

JSIS PTSA 2010-2011 Handbook



JOHN STANFORD
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

A Seattle Public School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This handbook outlines the PTSA-supported activities and events taking place at JSIS over the course of the 2010 – 2011 school year. We hope that you find this reference guide useful and that it will provide you with a good idea of what the JSIS PTSA is all about. We are very fortunate to have so many talented and dedicated families working together to make our school the best it can be. As you read through the Handbook, we encourage you to think about which activities or endeavors you would be willing to volunteer your time to support. There is no better way to get to know the JSIS community than volunteering. We are always looking for better ways to build our community, communicate with our families, and fund our dreams. If you have a suggestion for the PTSA, don't hesitate to contact any of the board members, or come to a meeting to share your ideas. This is your school – make it what you want it to be!

Sincerely,
The JSIS PTSA Board

2010-2011 BOARD MEMBERS

President – Janel London

Vice President – Charles Klement

Treasurer – Christa Woodward

Assistant Treasurer – Melanie Sheets

Secretary – Anne Phillips

Director of Communications – Jane Cover

Directors of Fundraising and Community Building – Julie Pellegrino Gilbert

Director of Sustainability – Barb Burrill

Membership Chair – Megan Holman

Legislative Chair* – Position available

BLT Liaison – Kerryn Reding

Staff Representatives – Hiromy Pingry and Guiomar Grau Rodriguez

* The PTSA Legislative Chair is a member of the PTSA Board who keeps abreast of legislative activity that affects our JSIS families on the local, district, and state levels. Past Chairs have been involved in communicating with JSIS families about school levy campaigns, statewide legislative meetings and changes in school district policy. If you enjoy keeping up on politics and have a passion for creating change from the ground up, this position is for you!

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ABOUT THE PTSA

What We Do

1. **We raise funds to support the school.** In the past, PTSA funds have contributed to the Playground Renovation Project, provided scholarships for families in need, helped teachers buy classroom supplies, and purchased new books for the library and a new vacuum for the janitor. These are but a few of the many ways the PTSA supports the school financially.
2. **We organize activities and events to build our community.** From “first day doughnuts” to the end-of-the-year ice cream social, we find ways to bring us together as a cohesive community of parents, kids, teachers, staff and administrators.
3. **We ensure that communication lines are open.** The PTSA tries to keep parents abreast of the news from the school, from the district, and from the community. We run the JSIS website, publish a monthly newsletter, and organize four annual PTSA general meetings to keep parents in the loop about school and education related issues.

PTSA Membership

PTSA membership is offered to every family at the beginning of the school year in their first-day packet, but parents/guardians may join at any time. Pick up a PTSA membership form at the front desk or contact the PTSA Membership Chair, Megan Holman at (megholman@gmail.com). The fee supports the services and programs that the JSIS PTSA offers and also contributes to work done on the local and state level by the Seattle Council and Washington State PTSAs.

Meeting Schedule

The PTSA Board meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the library. Anyone is welcome to attend a PTSA board meeting. Four times per year the PTSA holds general meetings that explore various topics of interest to the community. In past years, we’ve talked about our compassion curriculum, had our English teachers lead us through a Writer’s Workshop lesson, learned to communicate with our children about their sexual health, and brainstormed ways to improve JSIS. This year’s meetings will be held in the library on October 12th, January 11th, March 8th, and May 10th. Complimentary childcare is provided. You do not need to be a PTSA member to attend the general meetings (but it is a great opportunity to join or renew your membership!)

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT

Move-A-Thon

This first all-school event of the year happens in October and is a very successful fundraiser for JSIS. Families get pledges from their friends, family, and neighbors (such as \$1/mile, \$1/half mile, or a flat donation amount) for the number of miles their child runs, walks, bikes, scooters, skates, skateboards, unicycles, or pogo stick jumps along the Burke Gilman trail. A closed loop on the portion of the trail by Gasworks Park is supervised by parents, and every student who participates receives a free Move-A-Thon t-shirt and is entered into a raffle for a new bike. The classroom that raises the most money wins a pizza party. Helmet and bike adjustments are provided by Cascade Bicycle Club.

Wallingford Yard Sale Tour

Go through your stuff and donate your gently used items to our annual Wallingford Yard Sale Tour. A handful of families host the sale in their yards and a map is produced to guide visitors from one house to another. Parents drop their items off and help with set up, sales, and clean up. Refreshments are provided and everyone has a good time either volunteering during the sale or finding great treasures and bargains. This is a great fundraiser because the larger Wallingford community gets a chance to support their local school and interact with school families. A win-win for everyone - fundraising and community building achieved simultaneously!

Pre-paid Grocery and Gift Cards & E-Scrip

Do you shop at QFC, Starbucks, or PCC (or a long list of others)? If so, purchase a pre-paid card at face value from JSIS and then these businesses will donate 1-15% of the pre-paid card's face value to JSIS. Card sales occur at the office reception desk most mornings or you can fill out an order form and send it in. Great for holiday gift giving and keeping track of your grocery spending. With E-Scrip you register a credit card online, and a long list of businesses will donate a percentage of your purchases to JSIS.

Logo Wear Sales

When you purchase a JSIS logo t-shirt you are supporting the school and advertising our program wherever you go. Shirt orders are usually taken in the fall so don't miss your opportunity.

Eco Product Sales

Under the auspices of the Director of Sustainability (a new PTSA position last year), we now offer a host of environmentally-friendly items for sale, including aluminum/steel water bottles, reusable grocery totes, sustainable sandwich bags, and Chinook Books.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES AND SUPPORT, cont.

Book Fairs

JSIS hosts Book Fairs two times per year to support our library. The Scholastic sale occurs during the Monster Mash and the Santorno Bookstore sale occurs during Literacy Night. A portion of the proceeds from the sales are donated to JSIS.

Teacher Grants and Stipends

Each year the JSIS PTSA Board budgets a Teacher Stipend of around \$100 per classroom for teachers to use at their discretion for curriculum enhancement. The Board also provides a larger Teacher Grant (\$1000-\$3000) that teachers can use on a grade band level (K-2 & 3-5) for larger expenses related to special projects or the coordination of a special workshop or visit from an outside performer/educator. The money for the Teacher Stipends and Grants comes from PTSA fundraisers and are a great asset to the school.

Scholarship Fund

The PTSA Scholarship Fund is available for times when families need a scholarship for pictures on Picture Day, language camp fees, field trip fees, afterschool activity fees, etc. The money for this fund comes from parents who provide additional scholarship money when they pay for a class fee, supplemented by PTSA funds.

Your Idea Here

Have a brilliant idea for a fundraiser or a suggestion for what the PTSA should support? Contact Julie Pellegrino Gilbert (juliepellegrino-ptsa@comcast.net), PTSA Director of Fundraising.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

First Day Donuts

The PTSA welcomes all parents/guardians to complimentary donuts and coffee in the cafeteria after the first day's school bell rings at 9:20am. Come and catch up with those you missed over the summer or make some new connections. Sibs welcome.

Friday Coffee Hour

The PTSA hosts a "Coffee Hour" in the Volunteer Room each Friday morning at 9:20am to give parents a chance to socialize and get to know one another. The Coffee Hour Coordinator makes sure the coffee is ready and parents sign up to bring baked goods each week. Sibs are welcome and can play in our "Kid Corner" while their parents chat.

After School Activities

As part of our commitment to art enrichment, JSIS offers many after school activities that allow our children to explore their creative side in a safe and convenient setting. Classes can be offered by parents, businesses, or organizations as long as a parent volunteers to be the class coordinator. Coordinators ensure that the room for the activity is booked in advance through the school secretary, all fees are paid in a timely manner, all children are accounted for each day the class is held, and serve as a chaperone during the class. Past classes have included: Peruvian dance, Zumba, Art Wizards, Aikido, drama, dress-up classes, Chess Club, Woodworking, and many others. New classes are always welcome – share your talent with some eager learners!

Clothing Bank

The PTSA maintains a closet full of emergency clothing and shoes in a variety of sizes for those times when our children need to change because of a spill or a personal accident. We also provide some of our families in need with items if requested. The closet is maintained by a parent volunteer who will call for donations when the stock on hand gets low.

Giving Tree

Every December parent volunteers ask our families in need if they would like to participate in our Giving Tree. The age and gender of a child is listed on a leaf that is posted on the Giving Tree in the Volunteer Room and families are asked to select leaves and buy gifts for those children. Money donations are also collected to purchase paid grocery cards for each family.

Ice Skating Party

Every December parent volunteers coordinate a private ice skating party on a Saturday morning at the Seattle Center's Fisher Pavilion. A small fee is collected for each skater. Don't forget your gloves!

COMMUNITY BUILDING, cont.

International Performance

This all-school performance night occurs in the spring. JSIS families are invited to dress in ethnic attire. Students perform with their classes and participate in sing-a-longs. The evening is filmed and a DVD is produced for sale. This is one of our most well-attended events and its great fun with 800 or so of your closest friends!

Japan Night

This all-school event celebrates Japanese culture through informational and activity tables as well as performances and food and drink offerings. Past events have included Taiko Drumming, Aikido and Kendo demonstrations, and Japanese storytelling accompanied by live music. Not to be missed!

Fiesta Latina

This all-school event celebrates Latino culture with a dinner potluck followed by folkloric dance performances and a salsa dance party. Come join the fun - es una pachanga!

Monster Mash

This all-school Halloween party happens on a Saturday evening the week before Halloween. Kids (and parents and staff too!) come in costume to play games like the eyeball toss and the skull throw, eat baked goods, and dance. Admission wristbands are sold prior to, and during, the event. Let's do the mash!

Staff Appreciation Week

During one week in spring we show our appreciation for our wonderful staff by having parents contribute to a week of lunch buffets in the staff lunchroom, distribute flower bouquets to each staff member, and donate raffle items. Every year is different – some years we've had parents bring in their espresso machines and provide coffee all day. The committee is always open to suggestions!

End-of-Year Ice Cream Social

This is a fun get together that takes place on the JSIS playground near the end of the year when the weather is (hopefully) warm. Come and eat ice cream and celebrate the end of another fabulous school year.

Adult Language Classes

In the fall JSIS Instructional Assistants offer classes in Beginning Spanish/Japanese to interested parents. The classes held at the school one evening per week and are 1-2 hours in length. The classes are very reasonably priced and parents are encouraged to attend if possible. Parents gain a better

COMMUNITY BUILDING, cont.

understanding of the language their child is learning and a greater appreciation for the challenges of immersion language-learning.

Landscaping

The Landscaping Committee gathers several times each year to spruce up the school grounds. The Director of Sustainability organizes parent volunteers to keep our school environment at its best.

Science Fair

A new event to JSIS in 2010, the Science Fair takes place in the spring and introduces fifth grade students to the scientific method in a fun and non-competitive way. With support from volunteer mentors, student teams come up with a question, formulate a hypothesis, and test their hypothesis through observation and experimentation. The Science Fair is a great opportunity for students to get excited about science.

Your Activity Here

Is there an event missing from this list that you'd love to see happen? Do you have a great idea about how to create a stronger community? Contact Julie Pellegrino Gilbert, Director of Community Building (juliepellegrino-pts@comcast.net).

COMMUNICATIONS

Our World Newsletter

Our World is the JSIS PTSA newsletter. It is published monthly and sent out via email, posted on the JSIS website and is available in paper form (for those who request it). Parents/Guardians are encouraged to submit articles and suggest topics to the *Our World* mailbox in the office, or via the email address ourworldnews@gmail.com.

Student Directory

Each year the PTSA publishes a directory that lists students by classrooms with all or some of the following information: parents'/guardians' names, email addresses, home addresses, and phone numbers. The directory also contains a staff list and other helpful info you'll want to keep at your fingertips. It's great for setting up playdates, arranging carpools, sending invitations, and communicating with other school families.

Website

www.jsisweb.com is our school website. The site is created and maintained by parent volunteers and includes the most up to date information available. Please check it frequently.

Your Suggestion Here

We welcome your suggestions for how to improve the way we communicate with the JSIS community. Contact Jane Cover (janec@uw.edu), Director of Communications.