**June 6, 2023 PTA Meeting Minutes**

**PTA**: Virtual Meeting, via Zoom

**Date:** June 6, 2023

**Time**: 7:17pm – 9.14pm

**In Attendance**: Kristina Kunkle, Kathleen Denny, Sean Larsen, Lisa Ciarapica, Emily Griffin, Opeyemi Awolesi, Melissa Zawadzki, Karin Popkey and 58 others on zoom.

1. **Call Meeting to Order**: Kristina Kunkle Roll call, Introductions of executives, parent liaisons and administration.
2. **Review and approval of minutes from May 9, 2023**: Opeyemi Awolesi presented the minutes from the May 9, 2023 PTA meeting. Opeyemi Awolesi asked for any objections and corrections. The minutes approved by a motion by Megan Grosso and seconded by Melissa Zawadzki.
3. **Reports of Officers**
4. Treasurer's Report: Karin Popkey- Current account balance is $29,414.66 (includes income earning from the Spring Carnival). Total Fundraising receipts - $17,875.44 and Total Membership receipts $ 1,954.00, Total receipts - $ 19,82.44. Total Fundraising expenses: $7,558.21, Total Operating Expense: $3,179.97, Total Project Expenses: $12,243.04 and Total Expense: $ 22,981.22. No questions on budget.

Summer Budget Expense: 3,840.00 Increasing Spirit wear budget to $800 and Back to School Advertising to $1,350. Motion to approve Emily and seconded by Megan Grosso. Voice votes with a majority of Ayes passed the summer budget expense.

1. Membership Report: Kathleen Denny

We currently have 208 PTA members. We added 4 new members to the PTA (3 faculty/staff and 1 new family).

1. PTACHC Report – Melissa Zawadzki

* Scholarships were awarded to High School students.
* Reflections: students submit projects and 2 HoCo students won the award on a national level.
* Safety updates- following the swatting incident at Reservoir HS, PTACHC action step template would be vetted through the school district and available to schools. Emergency Preparedness & Recommendation which is lessons learned and best practice for schools when such police incidents happen at schools.
* Board meeting coming up- important to HES because we get to find out who our next principal would be.

1. **Old or Ongoing Business – Kristina Kunkle (President)**

* Cultural Arts – Soul Defined (Percussive dance) would be performing on Thursday June 8, 2023.
* School Tool box- July 9th
* Volunteers needed- for Spirit wear, Talent show and cultural art
* Teacher Appreciation- happened since last meeting. Little treat through out the week and was appreciated.
* End of Year activities- Promotion/celebration for 5th graders. Volunteers still needed to assist with the celebration. If you’re interested, please email [president@hespta.org](mailto:president@hespta.org)
* Grade Level End of Year celebration- all grade levels have a celebration planned during the school day. Volunteers needed, 1st Grade needs an additional volunteer.
* Restaurant nights successful- La Palapa & Ice cream
* Fundraise receipts- Playdates/social hours, fall movie night, talent show, art/cultural night, inhouse field trips, end of year ceremony, coordinate spirit wear and school supply boxes, teachers funds to refund teachers for classroom supply, dinner for back to school night and parent teacher conferences, custodian appreciation, bus drivers appreciation. Last year we provided a shed for supplies, a buddy bench. Grade level liaisons, PTACHC delegates. The PTA does a lot but we do it with all the parents and families support.
* Outgoing PTA officers appreciation – Kathleen Denny and Opeyemi Awolesi
* Principal Appreciation- the PTA provided a small gift in appreciation to Ms. Ciarapica for her service as she retires from HES. Grateful for Ms. Ciarapica’s support of the PTA. Ms. Ciarapica also provided a gift to the PTA President for her tireless leadership of the PTA.
* Please relink your Harris Teether VIC card. Please google Harris Teeter Education and should be able to relink quickly.

1. **New Business**

* Transportation: Mr. Brian Nevan (Director of Transportation)
* Explain basis for busing ES & MS together: Concept of combination routing stems from the change in school start times. The idea of combination was proposed as a tool in January, the board Combination Technique that is a viable routing strategy to effectively use bus for schools that are located closely or share the same campus. Cant state which schools would have combination rally, there is no guarantee of which schools would utilize the combination technique. This would be determined by the number of kids in the area and schools close to the area.
* **Q- Have other solutions been considered instead of combination technique?** This is currently being reviewed by staff. Each bus would serve all tiers ex: if HMS starts at 8.15 and HES starts at 8.30.
* **Q- Is the overarching guideline efficiency overall?** Primary objective is safety and efficiency.
* **Q -How is combining ES & MS students improving efficiency and safety**?
* **Q**- Issue of exposing young children to language and conflict (cursing, violence etc.) without any adult support to step in. Are there plans to have another adult beside the bus driver on the Combination busing? No. there is no other adult for that would be on the bus, other than the bus driver. Bus drivers and students have been and will be trained to handle students. **What sort of training would be provided to bus drivers?** The drivers have been trained and the rules are the same- whether or not the conflict is between a 7 year old and a 12 year old.
* **Q- If there was an issue on the bus, who would parents report to?** Ms. Ciarapica: If there is an issue between students at different schools, parents should reach out to their school administration who would collaborate with the other school. **What if parents do not have sufficient identifying data especially with different schools?** It would add a layer of difficulty if the universe of students are unknown. If we can’t get to the root of the problem by interviewing the students, we would access the videos.
* **Are videos available on every bus?** Yes. **How much of the bus can the video capture? Ciarapica:** There are 4 cameras inside the bus but you can’t see every single angle; however, you can often tell enough from watching the video and additional testimony from other students.
* **What are the consequences for misbehavior on the bus?** Consequences are from the school and not Transportation. Transportation works with the school as a partner by providing videos and testimony from drivers.
* The decision on combination routing wasn’t made singlehandedly by the office of transportation but was submitted and reviewed by the Board, Superintendent.
* **Middle School day is longer than ES day, whats the plan for aftercare?** Once new administration is on board on Thursday, DoT would work with new administration bearing in mind that the school start time could still change.
* Bus drivers are responsible for driving safely and also managing the bus. PreK/K are expected to sit in front while other grade levels can sit behind. Other tools that can be utilized for combination routing would be to have older kids in the front so its easier to monitor them and keep younger kids away in the back.
* **When will the planning be finalized?** Mid-July.
* **Parents expressed dissatisfaction and vote no-confidence in the plan for combination routing transportation.**
* **Q: If the MS & ES are departing/arriving at same time, whats the plan to handle traffic in the area?** Superintendent has charged the SMILE office and existing schools to work on plans to handle the increased traffic in the car loop/ walkers following this change in plans. These plans should be finalized by August 1, 2023.
* **Q: How can parents stay apprised and have input on the plans as they develop over the summer?** Routes will be finalized by mid-July which would be communicated to the school and will be released publicly by mid-August on school bus locator/Synergy.
* **Q: Educational Equity Policy requires a yearly review by the Superintendent, what is the plan to address this?** Policy 5200 does not have an educational equity policy in the transportation policy.
* **Q: Would the insurance policy be adjusted based on this increased risk in combination routing?** Insurance is self-insured, exposure/policy has not been adjusted and insurance is handled by the Board of education and not the office of transportation.
* **Q:** **Data on combination busing in suburban areas like Columbia?** Consultant, Superintendent and Watts have had experience on combination busing. Will report back to the HES PTA on where the combination busing has been practiced across the country.
* **Q:** **Would you be able to hire sufficient bus drivers for the next school year?** There are 95 driver positions unfilled at the moment. Confidence level in a bus driver company from California who were busing over 4000 students. Already, the company has received 200 applications and have over 40 students in class today. The school system does not hire bus drivers but the school offered sign up bonuses and consumer pricing index adjustment to eliminate the driver shortage. This has not worked as expected, however with the new company holding their own job fairs and doing advertising; offering medical benefits, new buses with higher seats for driver’s comfort, 401K etc., the expectation is that we would have sufficient buses to run the school year. This is not a guarantee and will be known by mid-August.

**Administration Report: Ms. Ciarapica:**

* Ms. Ciarapica shared a teary heartfelt gratitude to HES parents and PTA for supporting her tenure as Principal.

VI. **Announcements**

* July 9- School Toolbox deadline.
* Summer playdates – dates not set yet but information will be sent out in the next few weeks.
* HESPTA website will include details about the Board of Ed meeting and how to sign up.

VII. **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

* What are the Details of Board of Ed meeting coming up?- Thursday June 8, 2023 at 4pm.
* What is the SMILE referred to during the meeting? SMILE oversees school-based administrators.
* Proposal- draft a position statement by the HESPTA that would be deliberated by the PTA at a scheduled meeting in the next two weeks. Agreed.

VIII. **Adjournment**: Kristina Kunkle moved a motion to adjourn at 9.14pm.