

Huntington School Parent-Teacher Organization

Meeting Summary

October 10, 2019

Board members in attendance: Meghan Vitale, President

Administrators: Joanne Harlow, Principal

Office of Family Engagement: Melissa Hidek, Selina Lazarus

Others: 2 staff members, 5 parents, consultants and staff from the Facilities Department

I. Welcome

Meghan welcomed everyone to the meeting. This is the first meeting of the 2019-2020 school year. She explained that Ann Yarka, Vice President, was sick and unable to attend the meeting. The remaining Board positions are currently vacant; this will be discussed later in the meeting.

II. Approval of previous minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

III. Board member reports

Meghan stated that school pictures for grades 1-5 were taken today, and the remaining grades will have photos taken tomorrow. So far, everything has gone well. National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) students have been assisting the photography staff. Late orders can be accepted through Wednesday morning; there will be an envelope in the main office to collect late orders. Retake day is November 15.

Yankee Candle fundraiser was successful – we raised just over \$2,000 total, with half of that going to the PTO general account and half to individual class accounts. The next fundraiser will be the fall raffle. A parent asked how the fundraisers are chosen, and expressed concern that the products available through Yankee Candle and Gertrude Hawk are overpriced. Meghan said that the Board decided last summer to try Yankee Candle, but we are open to other ideas. The products are certainly marked-up compared to what you can find in a retail store, but that is because it is a fundraiser. Profit on the Yankee Candle sale is 40 percent, and 50 percent on Gertrude Hawk, while other opportunities tend to have lower margins, for example, the Moe's restaurant fundraiser is only 25 percent profit. Parents did not offer any additional ideas for fundraisers at this time. Meghan reiterated that the raffle will be starting soon, and raffle tickets are only \$2 each.

IV. Old business

There was no old business.

V. New business

Fund request: The Board requested \$628 for the following expenses: insurance (\$273), DJ for fall Family Dance (\$100), and fall raffle prizes (\$255). Meghan noted that Upstate Printing donated the raffle tickets, which is greatly appreciated. The PTO has historically purchased the raffle prizes because we ask for donations for other events throughout the year. Meghan made a motion to approve the Board's request; Mr. Wood (parent) seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. All present were in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions. The motion passed.

Executive Board vacancies: Meghan explained that elections were held at the May 2019 meeting and a full Board was elected. However, the secretary chose to resign in June and the treasurer resigned at the end of September. The bylaws of the PTO require that nominees for the office of president or treasurer have held another elected Executive Board position for at least one year prior to being nominated and holding the office for either of these positions. Therefore, it is proposed that Meghan move to the Treasurer position and Ann move to the President position. The positions of secretary and vice-president will then need to be filled with new candidates.

The bylaws also state "vacancies that occur during the year shall be filled by requesting a volunteer. If more than one person volunteers, the position will be decided by a majority vote of the remaining Executive Board members." Therefore, it is proposed that volunteers will be solicited up to the November meeting, and the new Board will be installed at the November meeting. Mr. Curinga asked how the parents/staff will be notified of the vacancies. Meghan stated that the PTO will post this on Facebook and send an email, and create a flyer to distribute to students (a modified version of the Board nomination form that is usually distributed in April).

A parent asked if the Board would consider waiving the requirement for previous Board membership for the President and/or Treasurer position. Meghan stated the Board does not want to consider waiving this requirement at this time; however, there may be consideration given to allowing new Board members to run for President and/or Treasurer in May 2020 even though the new members will have been on the Board for less than a full calendar year. There was no additional discussion on this topic.

VI. Administrative report

Mrs. Harlow said that we are six weeks into school and things are going well. The after-school program will start next week. There will also be Panther Pride parties next week to celebrate students receiving Dojo points. The Game Night that was to be hosted by the Syracuse Police Department on October 18 has been canceled due to a conflict for the SPD personnel. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for November 5 and 7.

VII. Building renovation update – consultant team

The construction team provided an update on the building renovation (presentation available on the PTO website).

The following questions were asked and comments made by parents:

- When will the main entrance be open? The consultant indicated that they are hopeful the main entrance will open after the Christmas break.
- The bathroom design originally showed sinks in the hallways for all bathrooms. Why did this change, and will the “pre-K bathrooms” need to be changed as well? Tom Ferrara (Facilities) indicated that it is a State Health Department requirement that the sinks be in the same room as the toilets, so the design had to be changed. Since the “pre-K bathrooms” will be fully renovated, the design of those bathrooms will need to change as well.
- Posts have been installed for the fence around the playground. Meghan expressed a concern about the number of access points that will be provided. It appears that there is only one point of ingress/egress. She asked how the playground would be evacuated in case of an emergency, and also expressed concern about the safety of kids on the playground outside of school hours due to the fence. It is very tall and it doesn’t appear that there is any opening on the far end (south end) of the playground. The consultant team said they would look into this and confirm the plan for the fence.

Next meeting: November 14