

Huntington School Parent-Teacher Organization
Meeting Summary
January 11, 2018

Board members in attendance:

Ann Yarka
Meghan Vitale
Leeann Wiess
Emily Pascale

Administrators: Joanne Harlow, principal

District staff: Selina Lazarus, Office of Family Engagement

Others: 3 parents, 1 staff member

Welcome

Leeann welcomed everyone.

Board member reports

Leeann reported on Karate. Tournament and test were held in late November and early December. Everyone did well and had fun. The program is progressing nicely.

Emily recently received a check for \$285 from Box Tops. We are not sure which class brought in the most Box Tops last month, but will check with Mary Beth. Leeann reminded parents to label your Box Tops with the teacher name so the class gets credit. She also reminded teachers to put them in the Box Tops mailbox near the men's bathroom in the office, not in the general PTO mailbox.

Ann reported on the Moe's and 5 Below fundraisers that were held in December. We did not make as much at Moe's as in past years – only \$33 this year – because of the snowstorm that night. They offered to do another night for us. We'll think about it – maybe later in the spring. Ann has not received an update from 5 Below yet. We were able to include both Destiny and Erie Boulevard this year, so we're hopeful that the proceeds are more than last year. The 5 Below check comes from directly from their corporate office, so we just have to wait.

Leeann reported that picture retakes have all come in, and she has not heard of any issues. Group photos for sports and clubs are scheduled for Wednesday, February 28. Best Eye will take the group photos. A parent suggested that it would be nice to have everyone in their jerseys, and with coaches. Leeann suggested that if parents could take a nice group photo during the season, we could use that. Our contract with Best Eye only includes one date for group photos, although we could consider paying for an extra day in the future. A parent asked if students will be informed of the date for group pictures, so they could at least wear team clothing. Leeann also talked about the yearbook photo submission page. Meghan will email the link in next newsletter. Meghan cautioned that we have limited space in the yearbook, so please only submit photos that are of high quality and relatively small groups – these

work best on the candid pages. When submitting photos, we do not need the student names but the grade level must be indicated. Leeann asked if we could get the spreadsheet of student information to upload to the yearbook ordering site, which would prevent data-entry errors and Mrs. Harlow said she would coordinate this. We are hoping to have the yearbook out earlier this year than in the past (yearbook will be created primarily by NJHS students).

New Business

Mrs. D'Hollander presented the teachers' plans for the "Taste of Huntington" event. Grades 3-5 will be involved in creating the event, which is meant to celebrate the many cultures in Huntington. Each homeroom will choose one country to present (to make it fair, they will draw names like a lottery). Each class can decide what to include in their presentation, such as language, culture, geography, fun facts, dance, food, music, etc. They will run it like a gallery walk in the classrooms, so other grades can visit and learn about the various cultures. The teachers have chosen March 15 as the date. It will take place during the school day. Darcy Jones is working with ENL parents and hoping to have some parents involved. Mrs. Harlow noted that it's the week of the book fair, which could be a good partnership. She noted that this will be the first time the new librarian will run a book fair. Ann asked if food would be included. Mrs. D'Hollander said that the teachers would like to be able to include food, but this is complicated. They would need to figure out how to cook and/or keep food hot, and how much food to make. They are thinking about a ticket system for food, where each student might get, say, two tickets to redeem for small samples of food. The teachers will consult with other teachers that have done this at other schools. They are also trying to contact some performers from local groups. Meghan cautioned about food allergies and stressed that communication with families is essential, so that those with food allergies are aware that cooking/eating of unfamiliar foods may be happening at school. Parents need to be able to discuss this with their children ahead of time, especially for those with food allergies. There must be other activities so that those with food allergies can still participate fully in the event. Mrs. D'Hollander said that they would communicate the details to parents, and also consult with the school nurse in planning the event to ensure that it is safe for all the students. Mrs. Harlow also expressed some concerns about the safety of electric appliances (for example, Crock-Pots) or other devices for heating food in the classrooms.

The Winter Ball will be held on Friday, January 19 for students in grades 6-8. This is a new event this year. Permission slips with behavioral expectations have been distributed to students. Another note should be sent home to ask parents to donate refreshments. Selina asked if there is a need for donations of appropriate clothing, i.e. dresses. Mrs. Harlow said she is not aware of any such requests, although a few students have asked for transportation and Mrs. Harlow and other staff will provide rides. The dance will be from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Permission slips should be returned to school as soon as possible. Students will be able to have portraits taken. PTO has ordered some winter-themed decorations.

Bingo Night is scheduled for April 6, but we need to start soliciting prize donations very soon. PTO has ordered small prizes to hand out to students, such as panther paw school supplies. In the past we've had Crunch tickets, SkyZone, MOST, restaurants, zoo, and Black Mamba skate park. Other ideas include bowling at Destiny, pizza shops, Fifi's (if they're open again by then), Gannons, Chiefs tickets, and the

Destiny package. PTO could use help taking letters to businesses to ask for donations. We could also use some help packaging prizes and Bingo cards, and at the admission table the night of the event. Selina asked how the event will be advertised. Leeann said that, as in past years, PTO will post the information on Facebook and in our email newsletter, as well as distribute a flyer to students. Meghan noted that it is intended for Huntington families, not the larger community. No refreshments will be served.

Next meeting is February 8 (which is a half-day of school, for parent-teacher conferences).

Emily noted that the Gertrude Hawk is coming up. The 6th grade class wants to use their profits for their Darien Lake trip. Product will be delivered before Easter. We will provide more details soon.

Fund requests

No fund requests.

Administrative report

Mrs. Harlow spoke about how the school community showed support for the family of the student that recently passed away. It was especially difficult for the students in 5th grade. District has procedures in place; crisis team was on-site for any students that needed services.

Kindergarten information session is being required by district for each school building. Flyers will be mailed by the district. Huntington's session is scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 5:00-6:30 p.m. Kindergarten and pre-K teachers will be there. PTO will provide refreshments. Meghan asked if families should bring kids; Selina will check on this and report back.

Report cards due out February 1. PBIS assemblies are coming up.

CTE Expo will be held January 17 and 18.

January 26 is a Superintendent's Conference Day, so there is no school for students that day. However, 8th grade NJHS students are invited to come to a Project Adventure event at school that day with Mr. Keiffer and Mr. Curinga. This is intended to help build community among the 8th grade students.

After school program will be doing a musical performance February 1 and 2. Meghan expressed, again, frustration that there is no musical production at Huntington that is open to ALL students. Most of the other middle schools in the district put on a musical (as well as some of the elementary schools), and the district heavily-promotes the arts opportunities in our schools, but those opportunities are not available equally. Meghan noted that this issue was raised at the November Superintendent's Parent Council meeting, and a suggestion was made for Huntington to partner with Lincoln. Mrs. Harlow said that is something that could be investigated.

Mrs. Harlow is looking for a few parents to serve on a committee to discuss the logistics of arrival and dismissal with the new site plan that will exist after the renovations. The committee will consist of both

parents and teachers. Meghan, Jenn Barr, and Erin Mallory volunteered; Mrs. Harlow will seek out a few additional parents.

Added agenda items

No added agenda items.

Selina noted that there is a PEN meeting on January 30.