

## **Huntington School Parent-Teacher Organization**

Meeting Summary

November 14, 2019

**Board members in attendance:** Meghan Vitale, President; Ann Yarka, Vice-President

**Administrators:** Joanne Harlow, Principal

**Office of Family Engagement:** Melissa Hidek

**Others:** Dan Romeo, Board of Education; 2 staff members; 4 parents

### **I. Welcome**

Meghan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **II. Approval of previous minutes**

Minutes from October 10 are available on the website.

### **III. Board member reports**

Meghan reported on the raffle. Tickets were due today (although they can still be turned in on Friday). Drawing will be at Family Dance on Friday night. So far, we have only profited about \$300, which is about \$400 less than last year. However, we expect that some tickets and money will be returned on Friday and we will sell tickets at the door to Family Dance. Overall, we expect the two fall fundraisers (Yankee Candle plus raffle) to add up to about the same as the wrapping paper sale and the raffle from last year. We did better on Yankee Candle than wrapping paper, but the timing of the Yankee Candle sale may have impacted our raffle ticket sales. We would like to do Yankee Candle again, but will try to get a later start date and delivery closer to the holiday break next year. Ann also noted that the Yankee Candle online store is still open through January 8, so we could still make additional profit on this sale.

School photo retakes and group photos are Friday, November 15.

Meghan indicated that the November financial report was available in hard-copy for review. All Yankee Candle profits have been distributed to classes. Final balance in the overall PTO account as of November 9, 2019 was \$19,724.04, which did not account for final payment to Yankee Candle (this payment was processed on November 12). After payment of the Yankee Candle invoice, general fund balance will be under \$900. Mr. Romeo pointed out an error in the "total in" calculation; Meghan will correct this error and redistribute the report (total end balance was correct).

Karate continues to go well.

Ann offered to contact Moe's and 5 Below about doing fundraising nights at those businesses. All agreed this is worth looking in to; although the profit in past years was relatively small, it doesn't cost us anything. Ann will try for a date before Christmas, but if that's not feasible, probably in January.

Meghan noted that if we want to do Gertrude Hawk again this year, we'll need to set that up soon in order to assure a delivery date before Easter. Mrs. Harlow asked if this sale generally makes a large profit. Meghan confirmed that this is a typically a large sale for us; retail sales last year were about

\$10,000 and the profit is 50 percent. All agreed that we should do Gertrude Hawk again; Meghan will contact the company.

**IV. Old business**

There was no old business.

**V. New business**

*Fund requests:* There were no fund requests.

*Election of new officers:* Meghan reiterated (as was discussed at the October meeting) that the Secretary and Treasurer positions are vacant due to resignations since last May. Since the bylaws require that the positions of President and Treasurer be filled by candidates that have already served on the Board for at least one year, the proposal is for Ann to fill the President position and for Meghan to fill the Treasurer position. We solicited nominations for Vice-President and Secretary; only one nomination was received for each position. The two candidates briefly introduced themselves to all present: Ramie Miller for Secretary and Maureen McCarthy for Vice-President.

Meghan made a motion to elect Ann Yarka to fill the position of President and Meghan Vitale to fill the position of Treasurer. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed and no abstentions. The motion passed.

Meghan made a motion to elect Maureen McCarthy to fill the position of Vice-President and Ramie Miller to fill the position of Secretary. Ann seconded the motion. All were in favor; none opposed and no abstentions. The motion passed.

**VI. Administrative report**

Mrs. Harlow reported on parent-teacher conferences and end-of-marking period awards ceremonies/celebrations. Evening parent-teacher conferences were much more well-attended than the daytime conferences. Next year, administration will consider holding conferences on two evenings, with fewer timeslots during the day. Elementary grades have had awards ceremonies for the end of the marking period. Middle school is planning a field trip for students that made honor roll. Changes in the building this year include a focus on reading instruction in the new Reading Room.

Meghan asked about the concept of student-led conferences that was implemented this year – was this a building-level decision or a district initiative? Mrs. Harlow responded that this was a suggestion from the building Parent Engagement Leadership Team. There was some discussion about the effectiveness of this approach. Meghan indicated that she felt that the student-led discussion should not replace traditional parent-teacher conferences; there were conversations that she would have preferred to have directly with teachers without her child present. Maureen indicated that she thought both approaches had value; her child did not attend the conference and there were some items discussed that she thought would have been difficult with her child present. Ms. Brown indicated that she really liked the student-led concept – as a teacher, she thought this portrayed a stronger partnership between teachers and parents. Mr. Curinga said that middle school teachers and students really needed more time to prepare for this change; they expect it to be more successful next year.

## **VII. Other discussion**

Mr. Curinga asked if it would be possible to get a fund request approved prior to the next meeting (which is in January). The middle school is planning a field trip to WonderWorks for students that made honor roll this marking period – about 118 students total in grades 6-8. Last year, PTO contributed money to buy lunch (pizza). Students will be asked to contribute to the overall cost of the trip. They are hoping that administrative funds can be used for the buses. Meghan and Ann confirmed that the bylaws allow for the Executive Board to approve up to \$200 from the general PTO account outside of a regular meeting. Mr. Curinga indicated that he does not anticipate requesting more than \$100. Once he has confirmed details, he will submit a request and the Board will review.

**Next meeting: January 9**