

Huntington School PTO

Meeting Summary

March 8, 2018

Board members in attendance:

Meghan Vitale

Leeann Wiess

Emily Pascale

Angie Vigliotti-Martinez

Administrators: Dr. Watts, vice-principal

District staff: Ms. Hallinan

Others: 2 parents

Board member reports

Leeann reported on karate. Students had their second test of the year on Monday.

Leeann also reported that we still haven't heard anything from 5 Below on the profits from that fundraiser.

Yearbook group photos were taken on Wednesday, February 28. This year we had all the middle school students stay in the cafeteria in the morning and had all photos done right away. Overall, this took less time than in past years. We have received the digital photos from Best Eye.

Emily reported on the recent Gertrude Hawk fundraiser. Total sold was \$10,027, of which half will pay the company and half will go directly to grade-level accounts. None of the profit goes to the general PTO account. Online sales totaled \$873. Online sales involve substantially less paperwork for us and we don't have to handle the money. As usual, the deadline is a problem. Numerous late orders were received. We were supposed to send the order in on Friday, but held until Tuesday because of snow day; Gertrude Hawk has said they can still delivery on-time, though (week of March 19). Online orders had a later deadline. We should think about ways to encourage more online orders next year.

New Business

Family Bingo night is April 6. We still need prizes for bingo. Leeann will reach out to Black Mamba, zoo, MOST.

Family Dance is March 9.

Next meeting is April 12.

Fund requests

Mr. Curinga submitted a request for NJHS, but he was not able to attend tonight's meeting. He said he can come next month if we would like him to present more information on the request. Request is for \$20 per student for 13 students to pay for lunch on NYC trip (\$260). Students are required to pay \$525 for trip, and they have opportunities to fundraise. Emily stated that, even with anticipated bills for NYC and the ropes course in the spring, there will still be nearly \$10,000 in the NJHS account. There were questions about why general PTO funds should be used for lunch if there is such a significant balance remaining in NJHS's own account. Meghan also stated that she feels that general PTO funds should be used for activities that benefit the whole school community or at least an entire class, and that other parents that participate in fundraisers may make a similar assumption about the use of funds. Also, since NJHS students have not

been required to accrue volunteer hours through activities like providing childcare at PTO meetings this year, there is less justification for providing the funds for lunch. After discussion, the decision was made to table the vote until the next meeting. We will ask Mr. Curinga to use the NJHS funds, or, if he would still like to ask for general PTO funds, he should attend the next meeting to make that request in-person.

Added agenda items

There was a question about safety procedures. Can students hear the announcements in all areas of the school? This is a concern, because students at Henninger have said they cannot hear announcements in the locker rooms – what is the situation at Huntington? Also, there is some confusion about the differences between the “lockdown” and the “stay in place” procedure. This provided a good segue to the administrative report, which included some safety-related items.

Administrative report

Dr. Watts gave the administrative report. March 14 will be a half day for students; staff will receive active shooter training. Principals had a meeting today to discuss the training. Everyone should have received a robocall and letter about the half day. Also on March 14 at 10 a.m. there will be a show of support for the students in Florida; we’re not sure yet what that will involve for our building. At the training, staff will have a presentation from Syracuse Police Department and watch a video, followed by Q & A. Mr. Evans has experience as a fire chief, Dr. Watts has experience in a sheriff’s office, so they will share their experiences and strategies with the staff. We should think about whether we might want to show the video to other community groups, such as at a PTO meeting. Leeann noted that there was a suggestion that building volunteers should also participate in that training.

A parent voiced a concern that there really isn’t a single point of entry for the school, since middle school students have open access at the rear door in the morning. Emily also voiced concern that the staff that answer the buzzer at the front door don’t always ask who you are or why you are visiting.

Meghan noted that her child had asked about the emergency procedures during transitions or if they are in the hallway (delivering a note to the office, for example), as well as in specials classrooms. Meghan also asked if the recent events will result in any changes to what’s proposed for building renovations.

Parents were concerned that there isn’t always an adult present at the rear entry door during middle school arrival. Dr. Watts stated that the sentry should be watching both the door and cafeteria – “straddling” the area. Emily also suggested that Ms. Thomas’ desk should have a view of the front door.

Dr. Watts also asked a number of questions about school climate and student support for the upcoming school review.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.