

Huntington School PTO

April 14, 2016

Meeting Summary

Executive Board members present:

Leeann Wiess

Meghan Vitale

Keith Gatling

Emily Pascale

Four parents attended.

Welcome

Leeann welcomed everyone.

Board member reports

Karate is going well. Students that want to continue over the summer will be offered a discount (at the karate studio).

Box Tops prizes will be distributed on the same day in June. In the future, Mary Beth will buy ice cream on a monthly basis and PTO will reimburse her. Ms. Mayberry's class won for March. Emily found the Box Tops check; it had been deposited in the ECA account. Emily spoke to Mr. Woody, and will get the money transferred to PTO.

We received payment from Moe's. The total was \$56.34.

PTO profited \$40 from the March Family Dance, after paying the DJ.

Updates on old business

Leeann read thank you notes from Mr. Cohen (for stereo) and from Mrs. Devivo for the flowers in honor of Mr. Devivo.

Leeann asked if everyone received a flier about Bingo Night. Most people present had received one; however, there still seem to be some issues getting fliers home to some students, especially in middle school. Leeann and Meghan put the fliers in mailboxes on Friday, hoping they would go home Monday or Tuesday. Miranda asked if teachers could hand fliers directly to students rather than putting in students' mailboxes. Mrs. Harlow noted that teachers do hand them directly to students. Meghan said she can email teachers reminders about distributing fliers in the future.

New Business and upcoming events

Next PTO meeting is May 12. Elections will take place at this meeting. Leeann is working on nomination forms, which should go home late next week. We will also discuss updated bylaws and procedures at the next meeting.

Middle school semiformal is scheduled for Friday, June 3. We will need people to assist that evening. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 may attend. Permission slips will be sent home. Parents will be asked for donations of baked goods for refreshments at the dance.

Meghan said that she is starting to think about the back-to-school picnic for next year. She would like to recruit some volunteers to help plan the event. We'll also need volunteers on the day of the event to cook food and help with setup and clean-up. Miranda suggested that we get healthier or "lighter" food options for the picnic, given how hot the weather will likely be in late August.

Funding requests

Mr. Leonardo has put in a request for \$500 to fund two \$250 scholarships for former Huntington students who are now graduating from Henninger. Leeann noted that this is an annual request, and she asked if we want to make this a standing item so that we do not need to vote on it each year. Darcy noted that a lot of students are going to other high schools now since the district is encouraging high school choice, and asked if we should consider expanding eligibility to any former Huntington student regardless of which city high school they graduate from. Some discussion ensued. Leeann suggested tabling the discussion about making this a standing item until the Board can consider the opinions presented.

Leeann asked for a vote on the \$500 for this year's scholarships. There was no opposition. Funding request was approved.

Administrative reports

Mrs. Harlow gave the administrative report. She noted that Bingo Night is tomorrow, and we're hoping for good turnout. She said that we can't depend solely on fliers to advertise events. Meghan and Leeann responded that the event has been advertised via email to the listserv, Facebook, and the website. It was also mentioned in the recent robocall. Leeann provided additional details about Bingo Night. We are planning to sell popcorn. We will use crayons instead of dabbers and a computer program for calling. The games will start at 6:30, and we expect to be done by 8:00 (7 games total).

Mrs. Harlow has put in a request for funding (to the district) for a ceiling-mounted projector in the cafeteria.

Tomorrow is the last day of ELA and Math NYS assessments, although the NYSESLAT and Science tests coming up, and then Regents. Everyone is exhausted from testing. Mary Beth asked if there is any incentive for students to take tests, noting that Frazer School is offering raffle tickets for a cash prize to students that take the tests. Mrs. Harlow said this is not happening at Huntington, and she does not know how the prize is being funded at Frazer (but not from the district). Miranda noted that she is opposed to paying students to take tests. Keith noted it might be an incentive aimed at parents rather than students.

Mrs. Harlow stated that 147 Huntington students opted-out of tests, out of over 600 students that could take the tests. Administrators have been calling parents to verify opt-out letters, and have found some letters to be forgeries. Students are given two hours in their regular classroom to take the tests, but since there is no time limit imposed this year, the school is providing "continuation rooms" for those that need more than two hours (students continuing to work on the tests are consolidated into one

classroom per grade). Mrs. Harlow stated that this year's questions are more fair than in the past. Students that opt out sat in the gym, ISS, or BIC rooms. Many of the middle school students that opted out just came in late at the end of test at 10:30. Meghan asked the number of opt-outs will affect our "school in good standing" determination; Mrs. Harlow said that this is a possibility, but she is not sure what the impact will be.

There is no update on school renovations. There was a brief discussion about installing an electronic sign in front of the school. Mrs. Harlow stated that Roberts school paid \$20,000 for their electronic sign. Parents present expressed concerns about the cost, as well as the safety (distracting drivers) and aesthetics of an electronic sign. Emily asked if we could just replace the plexiglass cover and letters on our existing sign (they are old and look dirty). We will look into options for cleaning-up our current sign.

Mary Beth asked if any teachers are retiring this year. Mrs. Harlow said she is not aware of any retiring teachers.

Added agenda items

Emily noted that the Earth Day cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 23 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The Girl Scout troop is sponsoring. There were questions about whether the building will be open. Leeann thought the pool would be open that day, but probably not in the afternoon. We probably won't have access to the building. Emily suggested that people wear clothes that can get dirty, and bring gloves. She will try to get some gloves from the Dollar Store, and we'll get some refreshments. A flier will go home.

Miranda submitted a concern about transportation to PTO meetings, especially in winter, for parents that don't drive. She feels it is discriminatory to have meetings in the evening if no transportation is provided for parents. Emily volunteered to pick-up Miranda at McDonald's on Erie Boulevard in inclement weather. Leeann reminded Miranda to connect with someone again next winter on this issue.

After school program

No one from the after-school program was in attendance.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.