

Northern Highlands Regional High School Home and School Association, Inc., (HASA)
minutes of the general meeting held on February 11, 2020.

Present at Meeting: Joy Wenberg, Lisa Kulick, Tamara James, Felicia Bechtel, Christine Ferrarie, Linda O'Brien, Jane Bodnar, Audrey Flynn, Naomi Ono, Grace Perruzzi, Andrea Pennington, Kathy Travers, Jess Carlin, Lynn Tullett, Christy Soell, Christa Paolillo, Joann Meyer.

Staff Present at Meeting: Mr. Joe Occhino, Mr. Mike Koth, Kelly Peterfriend

HASA President - Joy Wenberg: Joy called the meeting to order at 9:05am. Welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Principal's Report - Mr. Occhino: -

NJSLA, formerly PARCC - we now require a third day of testing. This is because we were selected as a school to do an extra day. It will be relatively the same, but ours will be longer with extra questions embedded in the test. This is a graduation requirement for students. We will run a delayed opening for seniors those days. First and second day of testing will be unit 1 & 2 of Math and ELA the second and third day. The third day will only be one unit. A letter will go out in early March to explain all the testing information. Seniors are the only ones that don't test and a small number of Juniors. Test dates are April 21 & 22, the extra day is 23rd. Algebra 1 & 2 and Geometry are required to graduate.

SCTP Wellness Committee Update - We have been trying to come up with certain ideas for the students to reduce anxiety and help get extra sleep. We are looking into having a few more enrichment days for teachers and let the students sleep in. But we need to work out where it looks best in the calendar. We have 25 members on the committee and will send 3 panels out to the district Middle Schools to discuss different ways to destress. We feel it starts there and need to help change their way of thinking before they come to us and also get the message out to parents on the stressors that trigger some students. We need to make them have Grit! A couple of other things we are considering - A Highlands period - not a zero period, because they would have to come to school earlier. So we want to embed another period in the day structured with a purpose. Maybe collaborate with friends or go to advisor for help with homework or take a test, just to get caught up to relieve some pressure off the student. This is still a work in progress. Committee members are looking to design a day which is best for students. Students will also be involved in structuring the period. We are going to try it out as a pilot at end of the school year. We are interviewing someone for the Supervisor of Wellness position. Important to have a person to oversee our wellness projects and our Student Assistant Counselor. Mindfulness room is an area of the building where our students can go if they're feeling stressed and need help or someone to talk too.

Question: How do you encourage students to go to the Wellness Center if they need help? Answer: It's definitely important for them to know they can go and we are hoping that new hire will help with that and also remove the stigma of it. We try to get our students and teachers to understand it's about relationships, and people to connect with. Felicia suggested a waterfall or water feature where someone can go to switch off. Water is very soothing. Mr Occhino said, we have a fountain which was an Eagle Scout project.

National Honor Society GPA Requirements - we are proposing a change from 3.8 gpa to a 3.95 gpa to qualify for National Honor Society. It has grown substantially since 2001. Many high schools have increased their GPA requirement.

Question: Has it ever been discussed what classes should be taken to be in National Honor Society - and not to include something like cooking? I don't think it's an equal playing field. Answer: Weighting balances it out, it also requires leadership.

Question: Some teachers collect phones at the beginning of class, can we get all teachers to do it? Also, any chance of bringing the concept of bringing reading a book back into their lives? Answer: At the end of the class, if there is spare time, they can read a book, or prepare for next class, but some prefer to destress with the phone. We will look into it further.

Assistant Principal's Report - Mr Koth: -

Behavioral Threat Assessment: Knowing the Signs & Developing a Process. Mr. Koth then showed the full presentation of Behavioral Threat Assessment: Knowing the Signs. It was well received - The full presentation is on the BOE section of Northern Highlands website. Mr. Koth added we do have a Threat Assessment Team.

Director of Guidance Report - Kelly Peterfriend: -

Currently meeting with sophomores and juniors for course selection. Should be done by end of March. Mid-years were all sent out last Monday. We are currently doing post-secondary planning meetings. 97% of seniors have sent out their applications.

Kelly thanked Dr. Beckerman, Joe Occhino and the BOE for sending her on the MHFA instructor training course. It was a five day intensive program. It's an 8 hour course that teaches you to help someone who maybe experiencing a mental health or substance abuse challenge. This training helps identify, understand and respond to signs of addictions and mental illness. It gives you the tools to help the student/person and get them to the next level (a professional). The goal now is to train our staff prior to the start of the new school year.

It was suggested that this should be put it in the Spring Newsletter, that Kelly attended this course and received the training and is certified to teach others.

We had three students mentioned and printed in the Farleigh Dickinson University Creative Writing Contest book. We were the only school that has 3 students mentioned. Magdalena Deniz, Honorable Mention for her Poem, Lindsey Caruso, 2nd place for Flash Fiction and Lekhana Gogineni also Honorable mention for Flash Fiction.

President - Joy Wenberg: -

We will be looking for people to join the 2020-21 HASA leadership team soon. Please consider lending your talent to the group. If you have an area of interest, let me know.

Vice President- Felicia Bechtel: -

Joanne Minichetti Mayor from USR reached out to us about coming to one of our meetings to tell us what the USRA coalition does. She is a great educator and will be able to come next month.

Treasurer - Linda O'Brien: -

As of February 11, 2020, the Money Market Account balance is \$21,997.83 and Operating Account balance is \$67,898.20. We moved money from our HASA checking account to our money market account to take advantage of the interest earned in the MM account which adds up over time. We can move money back to checking as needed.

Secretary - Lisa Kulick: -

Motioned to approve the minutes from the last meeting, in January, 2020. It was motioned to approve by Audrey Flynn and seconded by Joann Meyer.

Membership - Linda O'Brien and Christy Soell: -

No new members. Still have 413 members. Looking into digital directory for next year. Issue brought up by parent is that you do not have access to prior year information like you do with a paper directory.

Grocery Cards - Audrey Flynn & Naomi Ono: -

We have sold \$32,000 worth of gift cards which is \$1,600 profit for HASA. ShopRite gift cards available in increments of \$50 and \$100. Checks or cash to buy them only. Checks made payable to NH HASA. Only ShopRite being sold. GOAL \$40,000.

TD Bank Fundraiser - Jane Bodnar: -

TD representative really helpful with our treasurer Linda.

HASA Newsletter - Jean Onufrak: -

Newsletters from 2019-2020 are now archived on HASA website. Next Newsletter will be published at the end of March.

Refreshments - Dana Sileo: -

Thank you to Felicia Bechtel for bringing the refreshments for today.

Board of Education - Christine Ferrarie: -

Mr. Michael Koth presented the board with the Semi-Annual School Safety Data System District Report. The presentation slides can be viewed on the BOE website. Next BOE meeting - Monday, February 24, at 7:30pm. I love hearing the questions people bring to the meeting. It's always helpful for me to bring back to the BOE.

MPAA: -

Food and Wine Pairing was Friday, February 7, 7-10pm.

Musical: How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying is March 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Spring Band Concert is April 1.

A Cappella Mid-Atlantic Championships are April 4.

Free A Cappella Friends and Family this Friday at 7:30pm here at Northern Highlands Auditorium.

National Jazz Festival in Philadelphia this Saturday.

Sports Association - Kathy Travers: -

Pasta Mania was a huge success. Thank you to everyone that came out and supported our athletes and the NH Sports Association. Please look for information on our next Fundraiser, which is our golf/tennis outing in May.

HASA President - Joy Wenberg: - adjourned meeting at 10:50am.

