

Northern Highlands Regional High School Home and School Association, Inc., (HASA) minutes of the general meeting held on September 26, 2018.

Present at Meeting: Maria DiMartino, Michele Madonna, Jane Bodnar, Jean Holden, Joy Wenberg, Cindy Spence, Dana Sileo, Tamara Doyle, Jean Onufrak, Lynelle Tedesco-Yu, Lisa Monard, Ellen Ven Graitis, Christine Kearney, Jennifer Moodie, Corrina Giakouminakis, Lisa Kulick, Felicia Bechtel, Tammy James, Kelli Moss, Cathy Squasoni, Christy Soell, Christine Ferrarie, Hatice Esra Kavurmaci, Lisa Knutzen, Pam Kadakia, Dipti Singh, Andrea Pennington, Linda O'Brien, Shelia Yallowitz, Mei Ding, Kathy Travers, Renee Lardieri, Haneeta Tobaccowalla, Julie Cornacchia, Lisa Ceccon, Chris Haemmerle, Linda Tu, Amy Liu, Joan Clifford, Jess Carlin, Nancy Burr, Kathy Deja, Denise Branca, Katy Smiechowski,

Staff Present at Meeting: Dr. Scot Beckerman, Mr. Joe Occhino, Mr. Mike Koth and Ms. Kelly Peterfriend

HASA President Maria DiMartino: Maria called the meeting to order at 9:07am and welcomed everyone to the first HASA meeting of the 2018-2019 year. Maria then introduced the Board Members: Joy Wenberg; Treasurer, Lisa Kulick; Secretary, Felicia Bechtel; VP Fundraising, Linda O'Brien; Membership, Jean Onufrak; Newsletter, Kelli Moss and Tammy James; Raffle Co-Chairs, Katherine Lynch; Raffle Committee.

Maria then thanked Christy Soell for the directory; Cathy Squasoni; Grocery Cards Fundraiser; Michele Madonna; TD Bank Affinity Program; Dana Sileo, refreshments; Christine Ferrarie and Kathy Travers for staying on as advisors.

Superintendent's Report- Dr. Scot Beckerman: Dr. Beckerman introduced BOE members at the meeting Christine Ferrarie and Shelia Yallowitz. He then spoke about the construction that's been going on at the school over the summer. The new light fixture that was donated and the goal to put up two more light poles next year. They are going live on solar next week, as it has finally been completed. Estimated provision of \$1.5 million in savings in electricity bills can now be used to replace windows. Retro fitted windows will accommodate for much needed air-conditioning units for many more classrooms. It is our hope that within the next 2 1/2 years all class rooms will have A/C.

The tech role-out for freshman this year was a success. Demo was video taped for Genesis, so freshman could watch the video online and then confirm they had watched and understood the tech video. They decided to go with new HP computers as they are cheaper to fix and maintain than the Microsoft devices were.

After school pick up schedule has been modified where the buses use the side lot this makes more space and safer for everyone, with much less time to get off campus. The traffic light was more of the problem in the beginning of the year as it was changed over the summer to 15 seconds and it had not been put back to 45 seconds for arrival and dismissal for the first week of school. The school administration recognized this and it was changed by the town.

Someone asked a question: Why is the backlot closed? Answer: Back lot closed now for security and to eliminate traffic for safety reasons, especially now that buses park on that side. Police have the key for the gate and will probably open it for games. The school and police want everyone to get used to not using the back gate.

Question asked: Are the buses supposed to be at front of school for drop off? Answer: We didn't want to eliminate that for ease at the moment and want to perfect the afternoon dismissal first before tackling the morning drop off. Taking it one step at a time. We have eliminated entrances and exits to try to ease flow. Always going to be a little difficult at first until everyone gets used to it, but working on it and moving forward. Dr. Beckerman also stressed it's better not to wait to drop off at the front door it causes more danger, back log and bottle neck.

We are having a QSAC Quality assessment audit of the district, which includes codes and regulations that have been changed like the PARCC testing. We are in the first grouping unfortunately, so we are being assessed on things that haven't even been decided on yet. But Dr. Beckerman is confident that whatever it is, Highlands always does well.

We also now have internships and community service projects for students included in our new Option II program. Ms Hayes, a former teacher, is now the full time Options II Coordinator. There will be a Parent Night planned so juniors who are interested can learn more about this new experiential learning alternative. Currently there are nineteen seniors participating, this year. They make sure all other class requirements are fulfilled. The internship is a half year experience, which can range from working in a hospital, engineering co., to a beauty salon, child care centers, among other internships. The internship usually occurs the second half of the day because of the rotating schedule, that's why it's half a day every day for half year. There are also Internship class requirements for them in school, which will help with resume writing, and help with things that they found difficult, to what they liked and learned about the experience.

A parent mentioned that her daughter is one of the seniors participating in this program. She is doing hers at a nursery school in Waldwick and loves it. Her daughter wants to be a Kindergarten teacher and felt this was a great program. Dr. Beckerman said we are continuing to modify and improve it. All these Independent studies, online opportunities, and community service will show on their report cards and college transcripts, starting in the Spring. Miss Hayes will send a notification to parents to present what has been done and what their student can do in the future program. The Community service is for any student. Internship just for seniors.

Mr. Occhino added the preparation starts with Juniors and leads to great opportunities for internships as a senior. He also added Miss Hayes with BOE approval was added into the budget. He projects that 40% of the senior student population, within 2 years, will be doing internship based programs.

A Question was asked: How does internship work with grading/credits? Answer: With site visits, being assessed and reports received from place of internship. Student will receive 15 credits for half day program. But it is also a pass/fail. It will still be necessary to meet certain elective requirements, but this replaces doing other school electives.

There is an ongoing independent study to improve wellness returning to the district. A study to increase the wellness goal alternative in the classroom. As well as Global Awareness activities and materials used in classrooms. We're also assessing summer readings and other things to increase the global awareness.

Principal's Report- Mr. Joe Occhino: Mr. Occhino & Dr. Scot Beckerman flipped pancakes for honor/high honor roll students the morning of Thursday, September 27. On Friday, September 28, there was an opportunity for freshmen where they visited tables displaying different school clubs and activities, to see if there was anything they would like to get involved. There are many clubs that they probably didn't even realize existed. Ice Cream was be served.

Once again, Northern Highlands will be participating in the NJ Dept. of Education State Seal of Bi-literacy program. It recognizes a student who can speak two or more languages. A junior will have to take an assessment test like the PARCC and can voluntarily opt to demonstrate proficiency. A bi-literacy diploma will include a certified special seal, which will be included on transcripts sent to colleges. Seniors can use AP scores only if they have taken the AP as a junior to be eligible. Approx 7-10 students took advantage of this program last year.

Northern Highlands been approved for a transformation project. A 3 year initiative sponsored by the NJ Dept. of Education in collaboration with Rutgers. Program goes much deeper into academics, social and anything that can impact your time at NHHS. Clinical Psychologist, will speak about the cause of bullying, phobias and anxiety of students in school, and what would prevent them coming to school. Will invite people to be part of the initiative. With hopes of an opportunity in the future to participate with other schools to compare the root of the problems with other school's students.

Question asked: Are you going to consider summer reading next year, as there wasn't one this past summer? Answer: Yes we are going to bring it back. AP and some honors courses did have assignments, but Mr Occhino said it was his decision this year that the book assigned for freshman wasn't appropriate and they didn't replace it. Mr. Koth reiterated that they want to incorporate Global awareness reading and living outside the Highlands 'bubble' and considering a school-wide reading book.

Vice Principal's Report- Mr. Mike Koth: Mr. Koth said they've had a busy beginning of the year. He started by saying Highlands has modified the attendance policy. Trying to combat chronic absenteeism. Now students will be given individual credits in each class. Which means 17 absences allowed in a full year, Gym 13, Health 4. Only

excused absence is religious observation and 3 college visits for Juniors and Seniors, all other misses are not excused. There will be an automatically generated letter for absences. He mentioned they understand if there is a sickness, but said you must call and provide a doctor note whenever possible. Warning letters will also go out if the student is getting close to allowed absences. School activities and field trips are also excused.

A question was asked about the excused absences on the website. This will be rectified and updated shortly.

New security measures have been taken at the school. All locks on classroom doors have been replaced and modified for ease of access or exit and security. A new visitor vestibule has been delayed, but will be in place within the next few months, this is for new entry security. Students dropped off late will report and sign in at the front desk, but visitors will not be able to enter without an appointment. HASA officers will get school ID to enter without appointment. The front entrance will be only point of entrance during the school day. The Staff have received a lot of training to prepare for lock downs. A threat assessment was done to see what we are doing well and what still needs work. On top of these things we work constantly with law enforcements. Part of the teacher training is recognizing signs of violence and the “see something, say something” approach. We need to know what to look for. Unfortunately this now needs to be a life skill.

Question: Is the vestibule going to be bullet proof glass? The answer was yes.

Question: Do Police officers walk the school grounds? Answer: Highlands has an Open door policy to local police. However, there is no police officer assigned to the school.

Question: Is there anyone armed at the moment and if not is this something you’re thinking about. Answer: Yes we are thinking about it.

HASA donated several trauma/bleed kits which will be placed around the school for trauma victims. Staff have started to train in applying tourniquets and attending a victim.

Mr Occhino said, that NHHS and the BOE feel we are right on target in our approach to keeping students and staff safe. We have hired retired county sheriff for security officer. Thanked the BOE that they recognized someone should be paid to do this.

Lastly, Wednesday, September 26, NHHS is hosting an Athletic Injury in young adults program for parents and students. Dr Doug Holden, Ron Krych from Valley Hospital and Nick Barra, a recovery specialist, are talking about addiction to post surgery prescriptions and alternative non opioid treatments.

Friday Night Lights out. Operation take back at Friday’s game. There will be a place where people can safely dispose of their unwanted opioid medications.

Tuesday USR and Allendale school coalition hosting Mental Health Matters,

End week of Josh Gottheimer will be on campus. There are also, confidential hotline flyers are posted around the school for bullying and abuse

School violence awareness week local Officer coming in.

School Counseling Report- Ms. Kelly Peterfriend:

Successful night for parents who attended the Parent College Night program held last night in the auditorium. They touched upon the financial aid process as well.

College Night For Juniors will be November 1.

Standardized Testing Night for 9-11 graders will be Oct 18.

Counselor's are meeting with all new freshman to make sure transition to High School is going well. And guidance counselors are meeting with seniors to make sure they're prepared for college applications. All program information will be online tonight.

Ms. Peterfriend reiterated that it's very important for the student to report to class first before leaving for an in-school college visit.

HASA President- Maria DiMartino:

The Holiday Raffle Luncheon will be on Thursday, December 6, 2018 at 11:00am in the Cultural Arts Room. If anyone has any baskets to donate, they are much appreciated. Also, if anyone has any connections for raffle prizes, we are appreciative of anything you can solicit. Chairs are Kelli and Tammy. Kelli mentioned that there is a sign up sheet for volunteers to stuff envelopes with raffle tickets October 23 and a google doc has been set up for donations, so people don't duplicate. Felicia mentioned raffle tickets that get mailed to each family are 10 tickets for \$10 each. Prizes are 1. Louis Vuitton Bag, 2. F Silverman donated Diamond Studs, 3. Broadway show and dinner, 4. Apple Watch and 5. Cloud 9 (Live Experience) gift card \$500. Lots more prizes at luncheon, baskets and school donated prizes like parking spaces. Tax ID letters can be provided if needed. Nothing is too small. But please check spread sheet to avoid duplications and add your donation.

Maria also mentioned that Jean Onufrak works very hard on newsletter. PLEASE READ IT. It contains all the HASA information plus a lot of other school information. Constant contact provides a "click rate" percentage and it is disappointingly low. Also, Very Important, Do Not unsubscribe from constant contact. When you unsubscribe from one group ie: Sports Association, MPAA, you unsubscribe from everything from Constant Contact, including school provided information.

Treasurer's Report- Joy Wenberg: As of June 5, 2018 the Money Market Account balance is \$21,823.26 and Checking Account balance is \$40,833.97.

Secretary- Lisa Kulick: Motioned to approve the minutes from the last meeting, June, 2018. It was motioned to approve by Maria DiMartino, and seconded by Cathy Squasoni.

Membership- Linda O'Brien and Christy Soell: Membership for 2018-2019 is ongoing \$35 each. Extra books are an additional \$6.

We have 373 members so far. Looking for more ways to gather more memberships. Last year, at this time, we were around 400 members. Email confirmation will be sent from Linda O'Brien to confirm receipt of your membership check.

Grocery Cards- Cathy Squasoni: The grocery store fundraiser is on going and cards are available for sale. The Shoprite and Stop and Shop cards are available for sale. Cards are in denominations of \$50 or \$100. HASA members are encouraged to buy these cards; they cost you nothing, but add up to a nice amount for Northern Highlands. Uncle Guissepes and Wegman's don't have a program and we do not participate with ACME. Thanks for supporting this fundraiser.

REFRESHMENTS: Thanks to Dana Sileo for refreshments. Volunteers are needed for future meetings. Please see sign up sheet.

BOE Report- Christine Ferrarie: Christine thanked everyone for coming today. It's a great place to get all your information from the school at these meetings. Encouraged everyone to keep coming and to encourage friends to come. New parent breakfast last week had a good turn out. Thanks to Tracy Platt who hosted it. Mentioned that mailing raffle tickets is a great time to get together to stuff envelopes, sign up to help on October 23.

Sports Association (SA)- Andrea Pennington:

Busy group of parents and Bob Williams Athletic Director are fundraising to augment athletic programs. Over the summer we did a fundraiser with PGA golf tournament at Ridgewood Golf Club. We sold tickets to go and watch. We were very proud to represent NHHS and we made \$3700 on ticket sales and we qualified for an additional bonus of approximately \$3000 from Ridgewood Country Club, which was a great amount to make on such short notice. Next year, the tournament will be in Jersey City and they have been asked too participate again. Kids under 18 go free! Great experience.

With membership to Sports Association you get Free entry into the following games, Football, Basketball and Wrestling. We also fund the Welcome Back Luncheon for staff in Fall. HASA does theirs in the Spring. We also participate in the Amazon Smile program where a percentage of all shopping goes to Sports Association at no expense to you. So please link your shopping and holiday shopping to NH Sports Association.

We are now on Twitter and Facebook to get out all the information. Football games have seen increased attendance which is exciting. Pep rally sponsored on August 30 was super hot, but fun. Food trucks were there, the cheerleaders were amazing.

We've seen a big increase in the amount of Cheerleaders this year. Encourage everyone to watch half time show too, cheerleaders and band are really good.

Beefsteak Fundraiser October 13, 7-11pm at Guardian Angel (see flyer). Also have sponsorship opportunities available. Dr. Beckerman mentioned the light and I'm so happy we have another light on the field. Our fundraising help the wrestling and cheerleading teams, we're purchasing new mats. It helped the girls soccer team, now #1 team in the country, with funds for the trip to Memphis. We helped the football team to go to Canton, OH and Lacrosse players got state rings; this is all listed on the website. We are currently working on new dugouts for softball team. Girl Power is great, all girls teams on fire at the moment.

MPAA- Lisa Monard: Announced, September 29 at 4pm Marching Band Competition - Ceilidh. Please come it's a lot of fun. There are bake sales and great atmosphere. Funds raised go to support band and acting and music groups with professional coaches, instruments, lighting equipment all the things not in school budget. 'Fools' is the play this year. Casting complete. Will perform for public on November 15-17. A cappella tryouts going on at the moment. We have a new band director who is fun and brings a lot of energy.

PROJECT GRADUATION: Payment due by September 30. Get your check to to Jen Marconi as soon as possible, for your senior to be able to participate.

TD BANK FUNDRAISER: TD Bank presented a check for \$3371 to HASA at the New parents breakfast on September 21. The Fundraising program with TD Bank, if you have an account, you can link it to Northern Highlands as part of the TD Bank Affinity Program. No cost to you. (See flyer).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- . Athletic Injuries Presentation - September 26 at 7:30pm
- . Week of Respect - Week of October 1-5
- . Columbus Day, No School October 8

Maria DiMartino Adjourned the meeting at 10:38am