

June HKIMS PTO Meeting

On 6/8/23, meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Lisa Carlson

Attending:

Joyce Waterbury, PTO President
Lisa Carlson, PTO Vice President
Jen Voegtli, PTO Treasurer
Nicole Harlow, PTO Secretary
Eric Larson, IS Principal
Dorothy Ventura, MS Principal
Abby Albrecht
Jen LoGuidice
Melissa Lupi
Elysia Piscatelli
Jen Banaletti

Online attendees:

Heather Persson, MS Vice Principal
Heather Rigatti, Curriculum Coordinator for Math, Science & Technology
BJ Noonan
Julie Peryga

Unfinished Business:

- Motion to approve last meeting's minutes made by Jen V., seconded by BJ N.; approved

Treasurer's Report (Jen Voegtli):

- \$33,406.53 current total balance
- Paid out \$1659.49 for staff appreciation lunch; some attendees thought that was a lot; Nicole H. mentioned that grocery costs are very high right now and Lisa C. pointed out that it was significantly less expensive than two other quotes we received; Jen V. said the caterer went above and beyond and next year we should consider having less food, but doing a fall and spring luncheon
- Paid out the rest of the expense for the golf equipment and for Poetry Coffee House
- Jen V. said the board would like to meet with the principals to get desired items in the budget plan this summer so we know what to expect for '23-'24 school year; Eric L. gave a reminder that he'd like the PTO to provide lunch for career fair presenters in the Fall; Jen L. asked what the 8th Grade Class Night line item is in the budget and requested having 2 middle school dances next year, one in the fall and one in the spring

President's Report (Joyce Waterbury):

- Heather Persson requested that the PTO provide drinks for the night of the 8th grade promotion ceremony

New Business:

- Open position for PTO Board '23-'24: Vice President; Julie P. was the only interested candidate; motion to approve appointment of Julie P. to VP made by Joyce W. and seconded by Jen V.; no objections
- Joyce thanked Lisa for her service and for agreeing to stay on as Fundraising Committee Chair

Vice President's Report (Lisa Carlson):

- Nothing to report

MS Principal's Report (Dorothy Ventura):

- Has plans to greatly improve communication
- Will highlight changes to the student handbook in the fall
- Leftover 2020 yearbooks (about 20-25 available); will be given away for free to anyone interested; Will reach out to Donna and Adam at the high school
- Idea for fundraiser: school spirit Chromebook cover and/or carrying bag to help protect them better; would like to roll it out as a fundraiser initially but ensure that every student eventually has one
- Where to get spirit wear? Jen L. and Melissa L. suggested buying from the high school website (there's a link to BSN sports on the high school page of rsd17.org; the current spirit wear provider doesn't ship to home or offer an online store; Melissa L. may be interested in being the Spirit Wear Chair
- Meet and Greet? Dorothy will be at the 5th grade step up ceremony and will send a letter in Heather's final Cougar Catch Up newsletter (will make sure incoming 6th grader families receive it too); Elysia P. question: Will there be a parent advisory board like there used to be? Dorothy said the PTO will be her advisory board and that she may offer monthly town halls that are topic based (parents could submit questions/concerns in advance) and will make herself available over the summer if parents want to meet her in person or by phone
- IXL for math and language arts will be available for ALL students next school year
- Schedule: Will not move to block scheduling at this time; Will continue with an 8 period day, there will be extra math with the students usual math class one time per week during flex, and there will be a math AAFA

that each student will have every other day for one trimester per year; this is to address the fact that math achievement for grades 6-8 drops each year

HEATHER RIGATTI: Most math programs recommend 60 mins of instruction/day; kids at HKMS get only 43 mins/day; the AAFA will cover the parts of the curriculum that most frequently get skipped (statistics, probability and geometry); the AAFA will be tiered for individual programming; this plan was a more desirable alternative to block scheduling (90 min periods) and will allow for more spiral learning (cycling back to learned topics so kids remember the skills); Leveling of math is going to the Board of Ed curriculum sub-committee to address the request that we delay separating students into regular and advanced math by one year; the reasons for the request/recommendation are the following: separation affects student mindset negatively (kids in regular math believe they're not smart enough), kids in grade 6 are not yet used to having letter grades and need time to adjust, and there should be more transparency for kids and parents about the criteria which are being considered for 7th grade math placement and to have that placement decision be more collaborative between teachers, kids and parents

- Lisa C. asked if there will be a MS intro night for parents to address how MS is different from IS, policies about cell phones, etc. and she praised how the IS intro night included student perspectives and student-led tours; Dorothy said this will happen towards the end of summer

MS Principal's Report (continued by Heather Persson, MS VP):

- Completed SBAC and iReady testing
- Had a nice Memorial Day assembly with veterans, distinguished guests and essays/poems read by students
- Scholastic Book Fair, a great AAFA show, skateboarding assembly, and popsicle day were enjoyed by the students
- Staff and student volleyball game coming up, along with many field trips, and 8th grade promotion ceremony
- Honors Choir and Jazz Band adjudication and Six Flags celebration
- Thank you to the PTO for helping make so many fun opportunities possible!

IS Principal's Report (Eric Larson):

- 5th grade transition: MS kids talked to each IS class and answered kids questions about MS; Step Up day on Monday where the kids will run up the steps to meet Dorothy and Heather, tours the MS side of the building and meet MS teachers
- Had 273 club participants this year

- Field Day and Skateboarding assembly went well despite the air quality problems from Canadian wildfires
- Popsicles next Tues. or Wed. if PTO can provide them (MS ordered theirs from Instacart)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Cultural Arts (Julie Peryga)

- Julie P. said both skateboarding performances went well; the performer talked about nutrition and the history of skateboarding, and jumped over several teachers; has pictures that can post on PTO Facebook page if allowed

Book Fair (BJ Noonan)

- Thank you to BJ for a great job chairing this committee; Nicole H. will head the committee next year
- \$9000 in sales at spring fair (did well at AAFA night); PTO earns 25% of that if taken as cash or 50% if taken as Scholastic dollars; BJ recommends taking it as Scholastic dollars and no one objected
- BJ suggested saving the non-book items until AAFA night next year
- Parents didn't have to put in their own money to cover overages this year; used Scholastic dollars at the register with discretion

Yearbook (Nicole Harlow)

- Yearbook club had their yearbook reveal party earlier today; kids were very excited and proud; discussed ideas for how to spend the money that was set aside this year (possibly to purchase a camera and press badges)
- Nicole H. will step down as committee chair and incoming parent Jocelyn Proto will take over; Nicole will stay on with the yearbook club

Leadership (Lisa Carlson)

- Security was the main topic; parents and seniors in the district have expressed concern about the safety of our school children; district considered having a resource officer, but cost was way too high (\$170k/year); Superintendent Wihbey expects to increase security funding in the next budget; putting protective film on windows at BES
- Block scheduling may be considered for '24-'25 school year

Meeting adjourned at 8:37pm by Joyce W.