

# MINUTES

## Howe Elementary PTA 2023-2024

*Date February 7, 2024 | Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm by Amy Grella*

### In Attendance

Name	Email
Heather Hathy	Hhathy@gmail.com
Kassie Wadsworth	kassandra.wadsworth@gmail.com
Emily Balestreire	emilybal79@gmail.com
Katy Thomas	katrinapgh@gmail.com
Joanna Parekh	joannavcu@gmail.com
Liz Longo	elizabeth.m.longo@gmail.com
Margeaux Deverhart	margeaux_15@yahoo.com
Alison McKown	justaddconfetti@gmail.com
Kari Maloney	kari.l.maloney@gmail.com
Aimee Danley	aimeedanley@gmail.com
Maggie Peak	
Heather Moore	heathermsmoore@gmail.com
Matt Rizzutto	mrizzutto@mtlsd.net
Amy Grella	president@howepta.org
Greg Engle	recsecretary@howepta.org

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 8, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.

All present voted in favor. APPROVED

### PTA Officers Reports

- Treasurer - no report was presented. Report will be included in President newsletter.

- Funding request - Garden - request made for \$1000 for plants/seed and further equipment. Line items broken down - funds to be allocated from Enrichment fund - vote will be taken next month due to lack of specific numbers at this time
  - \$300 for plants, \$400 for supplies, \$50 for veggie garden, \$250 for soil
- Mr. Rizzutto -
  - Family Reading Night - planning underway - PTA to be involved
- President
  - Topics from the February PTA council meeting:
    - Dr. Frieze provided an update on the elementary curriculum work. The district is piloting two new ELA curriculum, final recommendation to be presented to the school board in April. Next up for replacement will be the science curriculum. This needs to be updated to align with the change in PA standards.
    - There is work to increase meetups and acclimating international families within the district, particularly as schools begin to plan for open houses and new student orientation. We will get Howe plugged in to volunteers leading this effort and ensure our newly-established DEI committee is aware and supports these efforts.
  - Mrs. Hagins is leaving(!) for district office. Her last day is 2/21. Thoughts & prayers for Mr. Rizzutto.
  - STEAM fair - a conflict has suddenly arisen as district scheduled 4th/5th gr orchestra mandatory rehearsal that conflicts. Likely to affect 4th graders more than 5th. Logistics to be considered

---

### Chair Reports/Recent Activities

---

- STEAM Fair (Kassie Wadsworth): 36 projects, ~62 kids currently registered. MAD Science booked to do 3x 15-min shows through the evening for attendees. Then breaking out flow by age - younger first, etc. \$\$ will be disbursed shortly. Tables and other logistics discussed.
- DEI (Belen Roberson-Cenzual)
  - Incorporated to Howe's About a Gift
  - STEAM - making social story and making sensory room available & quiet room for judging if desired; asking families
- Read-a-thon (Jen Webler)
  - 3/1-3/10. Attempting to revamp a little. Coordinating and getting ideas from other schools
  - Focusing on reading vs \$\$ -- very tough balance -- but can ramp up the fundraising. Found platform, same Washington uses, encourages users to spread word etc. Won't be tying prizes to fundraising, keeping the medals, etc. Move towards D&B/Chuck-E-Cheese tiered rewards angle as well.
  - Historical context given: prior administration made clear that fundraising was **not** the goal.

- Mitigating some of these concerns, mindful, tying rewards to time instead of \$\$ is a major factor
  - Nightly Zoom was a big hit, so will be doing that again
  - In-person activities? TBD.
    - Guest readers in classroom - teacher dependent
- Scholastic Book Fair (Jen Webler)
  - Earned over \$4k in Scholastic Dollars, 19 teachers took \$350 - their purchases were stellar and wishlists were checked off for over \$5k. Remaining balance of those funds ~\$4500
  - Future gifting
- Howe's About a Gift (Jen Webler)
  - 40 different handmade items, feedback very positive
  - Profit over \$1800, really good considering low prices
  - Online sale afterwards, about \$200 for 13 sales - can be emphasized in future
- Hospitality (Kari Maloney & Alison McKown)
  - Teacher appreciation - 5/6-10 "official" dates but often conflicts with PSSA. Dates still pending... Basically priority 1. Range + luncheon date for to coordinate with food services
  - Feedback from staff/teachers will be really important
  - Budget? NTE \$850 last year, can we do again? Line item as budgeted was \$500. Need additional \$350 as a result. Will be tabled until next month as a new funding request.
- Dudes on Move
  - Will run Tuesdays after school from 4/6-5/21
  - Can signups be done by 2/21? Will accommodate that timeframe.
  - Facility request will be done
- 5th grade activities (Margeaux Everhart)
  - Family social was done, well-received, at Pins Mechanical, will consider doing another one.
  - Totopo scheduled for **4/8**.
  - Party pending
  - Musical 5/16, 2:45(ish), during school day
  - Meadowcroft trip being planned, 5/20 likely
  - Idea for last day - food trucks! Not a fundraiser, per se, but have a hangout at school for the kids
- Yearbook (Joanna Parekh)
  - Finalizes on 4/30. Feb/Mar - as many photo uploads as possible. Again and again, banging the drum - it's SO EASY to upload pictures.
- Spelling Bee (Sally Berri-Pratt)
  - Splitting 4th & 5th grade nights was change, discussion over whether to split it up again or return to one school bee.
- Scholastic Classroom Orders (Liz Longo)

- Huge overhaul was made for their program. Even a larger flier, smoother branding, all online.
- Went great! Books were delivered to school today
- No teacher order on this round
- Two more (2/26 and 4/1) this year, hoping to do teacher requests with the points
- TAlent SHow!
  - 4/8 rehearsal, 4/12 event, at Mellon again
  - Subcommittee/co-chairs/etc will be more formally established this year

---

## Unfinished Business

---

n/a

---

## New Business

---

- Nominating Committee Presented the slate for new PTA board members for next year!. Per our bylaws, these names will sit for 30 days and membership will vote in March's meeting.
  - President: Greg Engle
  - 1st VP: Emily Balestreire
  - 2nd VP: Roxana Colaico
  - 3rd VP: Mr. Rizzutto
  - Treasurer: Tim Kellner
  - Recording Secretary: Katy Thomas
  - Corresponding Secretary: Liz Longo
  - Historian: Aimee Danley

---

## Announcements

---

## Next Meeting

---

March 13 7:00pm

Meeting Adjourned 8:20