

## **RHS PTO General Meeting Minutes**

**October 3, 2023**

**RHS Auditorium, 5:30pm**

*In Attendance:* Sara Whitehead, Eileen Fonseca, Aracelis Pèrez, Deb Mitra, Stacey Gray, Anna Smallwood, Keturah Duncan, Tamara Balabanyan, Kate Quinn, Joseph MacNamara, Hallie Ambler, Roopa Anantareddy, Gretchen Gerrow, Julie Brennan

Sara Whitehead, PTO President, called the meeting to order at 5:40pm.

SW welcomed everyone to the first PTO meeting of the school year and those present introduced themselves.

### Budget/ Family Sponsorship Program – Eileen Fonseca, PTO Treasurer

Eileen Fonseca reviewed the Proposed Budget handout. See attached budget. She highlighted the Family Sponsorship Program (FSP) which is the PTO's largest fundraiser but, to date, is behind the pace at which the money was raised last year, both in terms of number of families participating and gross amount. She welcomed ideas on how to get the word out to encourage more families to donate. Joseph MacNamara, RHS Principal, said that a physical mailing would be going out to all families regarding Parent-Teacher Conferences and he could include a paper about the FSP. SW will get those flyers to him.

There was a question about a recognition process for FSP donors and EF explained that PayPal (through which all but 2-3 donations have come) makes it difficult to track donations so, at this point, recognition is complicated. But the PTO can take a look at better tracking donors for recognition in the future.

EF mentioned that last year, 69 families donated to the FSP, but only 2 companies matched. She wants to find a way to remind donors about companies matching charitable donations, as it is an easy way to double donations, and welcomes any ideas as to ways to get that word out.

EF also explained that she had taken some of the PTO funds and placed them in a 6 month CD to earn a higher rate of interest on the money. It will come due in January.

When EF mentioned the \$100 budget for Extended Learning Program Snacks, a brief discussion about storage ensued concluding with the decision that those snacks would be stored in the Black Box to be available to the ELP when needed.

EF mentioned that she is working to get the PTO's PayPal account re-classified as a charity account to reduce the fees. She is also working to reduce the fees the PTO pays for software.

### Fundraising – Anna Smallwood, PTO Fundraising

Anna Smallwood reported that there would be a fundraiser at So Fun Yogurt on Friday, October 6. The RHS PTO will receive 25% of sales if patrons mention the RHS PTO at purchase. She is working to get the word out and has a flyer that she's shared with RMS. Dr. Mac said he will post something on Schoology and add to the morning announcements.

AS said that there would be a fundraiser at Vic & Dean's on Election Day and she's working on partnering with Christopher's in the future. She's also working on a pizza-related fundraiser on Halloween.

There was a question about selling food at school. Dr. Mac said there are no food sales in school during school hours, but selling food before and after school is permitted. He mentioned that all schools now have a sodium content limit on food sold during school, and one consequence of that was no more Chick-fil-A.

### Grants – Julie Brennan, PTO Grants

Julie Brennan explained that the PTO offers a grant program to RHS teachers and staff. Interested persons can complete an online form to request funds to support projects/ideas that are not provided for in the department budget, and which will support the school community. The PTO will evaluate the requests twice a year. The PTO Executive Board votes on grant requests.

Sra. Pérez submitted an application for funding for her idea for a project for National Unplugging Day in March. She presented her idea at the meeting: students will create large posters with inspirational quotes in Spanish with English translations. She requests \$108.63 for poster board and Sharpies. There was a discussion about sharing the idea with other languages in the department but concluded that it was not necessary as she could do her project and others could do what they chose on that day. SW thanked Sra. Pérez and said she would facilitate the Executive Board vote later that night and contact Sra. Pérez with the result on Wednesday. [Note: the Executive Board voted in favor of the grant request.]

### ASK Meeting

SW announced the first ASK meeting would be immediately after the PTO meeting at 7:00. The PTO partnered with Embark Mental Health to discuss identifying signs that your student is overwhelmed, and area resources for parents and families. The emphasis is on spotting issues early and finding support in order to avoid crisis.

EF mentioned that the school partners with SpeakUp! and that organization also offers mental health first aid training which she recommends if one is interested.

Sra. Pérez reported that a SpeakUp! event is planned at RHS on November 9, 7-9pm regarding stress, relationships, and the impact of social media. SW said information on the event will be in the next PTO electronic newsletter.

### Radnor Committee for Special Education

SW informed the group that RCSE is having its first meeting on Wednesday, October 11 at 9:30am in the Windsor Room at the Radnor Memorial Library. Kathy Mair is the president of RCSE.

### New Family Welcome Gathering

SW reported that the new families welcome gathering will be on October 19 at 7:00pm in The Nest (rain location: RHS Auditorium). All 9<sup>th</sup> grade families and new-to-RHS families are invited.

### Ideas for the School Year

SW asked for any ideas for the school year. Many ideas were volunteered including:

- \*Bringing in speakers to whom the students can relate
- \*Being creative, helping find things the kids don't yet know they need
- \*Inciting passion for new things
- \*Opportunities for kids to find their "superpower"
- \*Helping kids understand why they need school – not just education, also community, relationships
- \*Bring recent grads back, especially those who take a non-college path (Señora Pérez said The Forum does address some of this)

Dr. Mac emphasized that he wants all students to have equitable opportunities and if a student doesn't have the funds to participate in a particular activity, the school bears those costs. A discussion ensued regarding (ideally) parents reining in some of the excessive supplemental spending in sports and activities, and sports and activities (and their booster clubs) finding ways to support those students. SW also mentioned that the PTOs jointly raise \$48,000 each year to support families in need in Radnor.

Meeting adjourned 6:55pm

Respectfully submitted,

Hallie Ambler, RHS PTO Secretary