

Minutes

Howe Elementary PTA 2024-2025

Date September 11, 2024

Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm by Greg Engle

1. Greg Engle
2. Matt Rizzutto
3. Aimee Danley
4. Roxana Colaiaco
5. Emily Balestreire
6. Tim Kellman
7. Katy Thomas
8. Liz Longo
9. Jessica Robertson
10. Debra Byrnes
11. Jordan Backstrom
12. Kalie Tomiczek
13. Ertugrul Kilic
14. Rachel Peabody
15. Marissa Johnston
16. Michele Rowland
17. Amy Grella
18. Katie Worthy
19. Janet Slagel
20. Kari Maloney
21. Alison McKown
22. Chenell Donadee
23. Aida Caluk
24. Jess Spitznagel
25. Jen Webler

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the May 1, 2024 meeting were reviewed and approved. Motion to approve was made by Amy Grella and seconded by Liz Longo. All in attendance voted in favor.

MINUTES APPROVED.

Old Business:

- Tim Kellner presented a comparison form of the proposed budget for 2024-25 v last year's budget, as well as the PTA budget for the 24/25 fiscal year.

- Question from Jen Webler regarding the proposed budget. Jen had previously requested to double the Read-a-thon budget to accommodate more prizes and medals. Current budget is \$1000, she has requested \$2,000. This money would come directly from the "School Enrichment" budget line.
- A motion to approve the budget pending the above change was made by Greg Engle and was seconded by Kalie Tomiczek. All in attendance voted in favor. APPROVED.

New Business:

- A motion was made tonight to vote on Mr. Steve Ditommaso to complete a financial audit. Motion by Jen Webler, seconded by Katy Thomas. APPROVED.
- There was a discussion about the need to potentially adjust the PTA meeting schedule to accommodate others' schedules. Greg Engle will be conducting a survey to assess the school community's interest in different meeting times and formats, such as: morning or lunchtime meetings, earlier in the evening meetings and the ability to join via internet or phone when you're unable to attend in person.
- Membership drive: Liz Longo gave report. Currently there are 114 memberships, which encompasses 225 students and 24 faculty members. It should be clearly mentioned to the school community that PTA memberships do need to be renewed every year.
- The new Executive Board members are confirmed and approved to have signing rights to the PTA accounts at FNB: President, Greg Engle is replacing Amy Grella and First VP, Emily Balestreire is replacing Marissa Johnston.
- Mrs. Michelle Hughes submitted a reimbursement request for planners she purchased for 4th and 5th grade students after the district decided to not purchase them as they have in the years past. Invoice provided for \$403.60 total. In discussions it is discovered that there is a line item in the 24-25 budget for 3rd-5th grade planners/agendas which negates the need for a motion and vote as the money is earmarked for this need. The budget for this is \$550. Please also note that we can remove 3rd grade from this line item as 3rd grade does not use planners anymore.
- We are currently in need of 3 committee chairs/co-chairs for various committees. Spirit wear needs a chairperson and Howe's Got Talent and Spirit Center need co-chairs.
- Howe PTA Member, owner of Pizza Bellagio, has offered to donate 20+ pizzas to Howe for the Sunny Funny Fair!

Chair Reports and Recent Activities:

- Spirit Center: Report read by Marissa Johnston. Currently looking for a co-chair to assist this year. Orientation is scheduled for the students on September 26th and they will open on October 10th.
- Sunny Funny Fair: Report read by Amy Grella. The SFF planning is in full swing and is approaching fast! The target is spend less than \$3,500 and bring in between \$9-10,000. 7 new games will be added this year, 5 of which Howe will own outright. The MakerSpace will be in effect. There will be Henna tattoos, face paint, a splash booth (instead of a dunk tank). They are currently looking for teachers and community leaders and coaches to participate in the splash booth. Volunteers are still needed for the event.

Jordan Backstrom, the chair for the raffle baskets, will be assembling the baskets by herself this year instead of leaving this to classroom coordinators. In addition to food provided by school and pizza, there will be a grill as well. New this year is a sensory area with 8 available kits to borrow from the volunteer table. Sensory area will take place in room 104. Jen Webler is in the process of making buttons for PTA board members and volunteers.

- Hospitality/Staff Appreciation: report given by Allison McKown and Kari Maloney. The back to school event for the teachers was a successful coffee bar. Next year they think they will focus more on a September luncheon so teachers have more time to get their classrooms ready. This year, they would like to spread out teacher appreciation events so the teachers can be covered all year. Starting in January they will do a school supply drive for teachers and their classrooms. In February they will do a snack cart to visit each classroom. They did a questionnaire with the teachers to get ideas with what they would like most. From that questionnaire, ideas are to stock the staff lounge and have volunteers go around and sanitize desks and door knobs during flu season. Immediate needs identified were balls, chalk, outdoor/indoor games for recess. A request was made for additional funds of \$350 to purchase these items. Tim Kellner motioned this request, Katy Thomas seconded it. All in attendance approved. Request APPROVED. It is noted that Mason McBride, Cub Scout, who fundraised for Howe and the blacktop previously made mention of supplying Howe recess with needed equipment. Greg will reach out to him regarding that donation.
- Spelling Bee. Report read by Sally Pratt. Enrollment is now open. Sally and Tim will stay after meeting today to logon and enroll. The dates this year are scheduled for January 22 and 23.
- Fifth Grade Committee report read by Marissa Johnston. They are in the process of finalizing their t-shirt order and will also be ordering hoodies as well. Their bake sale this year will be held indoors in the hallway of Howe. On Halloween they will be offering a Moe's dinner box meal for pick-up. Proceeds expect to be \$10 a box. Lastly, they've decided to only do one Meadowcroft field trip this year and are exploring other options.
- Environmental Committee/Garden report sent via email from Ashley Flavin, read by Greg Engle. "The garden has been doing well for its first summer at Howe! Thank you to those who have helped along the way! Contact if you would like to be in the know or help out: garden@howepta.org. The watering schedule that was set up over the summer seemed to work successfully (Thanks Amy), I'm hoping we can set this up again in the spring. There have been lots of tomatoes growing, I have been sending them in for some of the teachers to enjoy, as well as Mr. Bob the crossing guard (who was very excited). I'll continue to send them in as we get more. I want to confirm the \$500 yearly allotted budget for the garden (fresh mulch, dirt, and supplies.) More ideas for environmental initiatives at Howe are in the works."
- Scholastic Book Fair report read by Jen Webler. The book fair made \$4,700 during conference week so as a result each teacher will have \$100 each in scholastic bucks to spend on books for their classroom.

- Howe's About a Gift report read by Jen Webler. Jen has been crafting all summer! She will begin crafting nights again and will be sending out emails shortly recruiting for volunteers and crafters.
- Yearbook report read by Katy Thomas. Yearbook sales have begun and Mr. Rizzutto sent out order forms last week. 61 yearbooks have been sold to this point. Katy requested using a QR code at the SFF for families to share photos from the event for the yearbook.

Next meeting will be on October 9, 2024. Time is still TBD.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:20pm.