PTA Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2025
Howe Auditorium 7:00
Google Meet concurrent

Present: Emily Balestreire, Matt Rizzutto, Greg Engle, Roxana Colaiaco, Katy Thomas, Liz Longo, Jennifer Feyrer, Katie Worth, Amy Zierath, Mason McBride, Nikki McBride, Kari Maloney, Chenell Donadee, Jennie Rahimzadeh, Isabelle Tomassoli, Jordan Backstrom, Alison McKown, Kalie Tomiczek, Kelsey Zehmisch, Amy Grella, Margeaux Everhart, Kelli Ventura, Bethany Repcheck, Claudia Caruso, Cecilia Satovich, Debra Byrnes, Jen Webler, Jamie Demis

Virtually Present: Cara Nash Snyder, Lauren Suess, Lisa Christy, Nicole Falk

Called to order at 7:03 by PTA President, Emily Balestriere.

The minutes from the May 7th, 2025 meeting were reviewed and approved. Amy Grella moved to approve; Katie Worth seconded. All present voted in favor. **APPROVED.**

President Emily Balestreire began the meeting with brief introductions of each board member, new and returning. Mason McBride attended and announced the competition of his blacktop project. He kindly presented the PTA with hopscotch stencils to maintain them in the future. Thank you to Mason for his hard work and dedication toward making Howe more enjoyable for all. Jen Webler made and shared cookies for all in attendance to share. Thank you, Mrs. Webler!

PTA OFFICER REPORTS

Treasurer's Report from Amy Zierath:

- The PTA is planning on opening a Venmo account to be able to use for payments at events such as the Sunny Funny Fair.
- Total beginning cash balance (net of carryover) for the 2025-2026 school year is $15,681.02.
- There are no new funding requests at the time of this meeting.

Third VP Report from Principal, Mr. Rizzutto:

- Mr. Rizzutto welcomes all attendees and thanks our new members and families. Any announcements from him during the school will come via the Newsletter sent on Sunday afternoons.

President's Report from Emily Balestreire:

- Paper Plate Awards were presented. Jen Feyrer received the "Money Saver Award" for her tedious work to lower costs associated with the SFF. Liz Longo was awarded the "Best Council Meeting Note Taker Award" for the detailed information she brought back from the district PTA council meeting earlier this month.
- Faculty PTA memberships:
    - $15 families memberships, $10 faculty memberships (non voting). Teachers who join will receive a $75 stipend, staff members, such as PCA's, will receive a $40 stipend for their supplies.
- Caitlin Armbruster, Howe Instructional Clerk, will serve as PTA Liaison between the PTA and teachers.
- FAQ Document on Google Drive:
    - This document is especially important for any chairperson.
    - Custodial Request Google Form is available here to request any items needed to be set up for events.
- All PTA meetings will be held on Tuesday evenings, except May 4th, which is on a Monday.
- Orientation buddies: A big thank you for your hospitality and showing around Sunset Hills' new families!
- PTA bylaws will be reviewed this year, every 5 years. Bethany Repcheck offered to help as well as Greg Engle.
- Liz Longo, corresponding secretary, attended the district PTA Council meeting. Those minutes can be located on the district's PTA website.
- Emily asks that any leftover snacks, supplies left over from events be left in the auditorium on the PTA shelves for other events to use.
- The PTA now has a debit card available! Invoices can be paid by Amy Z, and Amazon purchases can be made from Emily. To make a purchase please reach out to Emily for help.

Other Officer Reports:

- Correspondence the PTA received was presented by Liz Longo, Howe PTA Corresponding Secretary.
    - Mrs Lombardo, 2nd grade teacher, sent a card to say thank you for the teacher appreciation lunch that occurred a few weeks ago.
    - A card signed by "Howe Teachers" was also presented as a thank you.
- Historian, Amy Grella, shares that the Superintendent will be offering coffee events to get to meet and interact with her. There are 4 currently scheduled. Look for upcoming advertisements in the District Newsletter.

Presentation of Audit Report from Bethany Repcheck:

Refer to their report for more detailed information

- The committee found no major concerns and no indications of misappropriation or fraud.
- Recommendations include basic practices such as: collecting documentation, having 2 signers, and record retention.

CHAIR REPORTS:

- **Newsletter from Megan DiTommaso via Emily:** Feedback has been great and the newsletter has been much easier to read and also to share necessary notices. Reminder to please send all correspondence you would like to go out on Schoology to Megan instead of Mrs. DiNardo. Also, if you would like Megan to share a QR code, please also send a hyperlink.

- **Membership from Liz Longo:** Reminder that committee members need to join the PTA to remain active. She has seen a great turnout from teachers and staff joining the PTA - 100% membership from classroom teachers!

- **Sunny Funny Fair from Kelsey Zehmisch, Amy Grella, and Jen Feyrer:** They are asking to get the word out as there have been some technical troubles and communication difficulties. Planning is going smoothly however!

- **Hospitality from Alison McKown and Kari Maloney**: The back to school luncheon went really well. Catering from Panera did a fantastic job and was a big success. They have also offered their Howe notebook sign to other committees for Howe events.

- **Fifth Grade Committee from Margeaux Everhart**: The committee is made up of Margeaux, Lindsey Brine, Julie Petrie, and Megan DiTommaso. Have had lots of offers of help from other parents as well. There is a Totopo fundraiser on September 17th. There will be a bake sale on election day like usual. The fifth grade shirts have been ordered and should be in soon.

- **Howe's About a Gift from Jen Webler:** Crafting! Sessions are scheduled for the fall am/pm and Jen has already been hard at work creating new items.

- **Scholastic Book Fair from Jen Webler**: This has been scheduled, not much to report at this point.

- **Spirit Wear from Jennie Rahimzadeh**: The sale from the beginning of school sold 75 items, which is great. Jennie will be selling backstock items she still has at the Sunny Funny Fair, as well as magnets made from Mr. Hain's design.

Jennie received feedback from several families that the shipping fee is high. As a result, Jennie will pick up and deliver upcoming orders to Howe resulting in no fees.

- **Spirit Center from Marissa Johnson via Emily**: They are currently accepting applications from 5th graders, with the first sale in October ending in May.

- **Reflections from Roxana Colaiaco**: This is a national contest focusing on the arts. The deadline to submit work is November 1st this year and the theme is "I belong".

- **Yearbook from Katy Thomas**: Purchase flyers will go home this week.

- **Family Fun Night from Emily Balestriere**: Will take place on October 9th. Please drop off books at Jordan's or night of event, preferably before the night of. Will be looking for older students to volunteer that evening. There will be 3 yoga sessions, board games, snacks, and a book exchange.

- **Kindergarten Orientation/Playdate from Michelle Duffy through Emily:** New students were given little bags with a keychain amongst other little items. The playdate was a success and had good attendance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Budget Changes from Amy Zierath, Treasurer:

- Added $75 and $40 for teacher stipend from PTA Membership drive.
- Field Day was raised to accommodate inflatable rentals.
- Kindergarten orientation budget raised slightly.
- $350 for stocking sensory inclusivity kits.
- The International Committee is receiving funding for Bite of the World.
- The Yearbook Committee's budget has also been raised to cover costs of purchasing yearbooks for each classroom teacher.
- A Family Fun Night budget was added ($700 for Bingo & $200 for another Family Fun Event).
- Note: The School Enrichment Expenses item line on the budget is where we pay funding requests from.

2025/2026 budget was presented and a vote was taken.

- Motion to approve by Jen Webler and seconded by Greg Engle. **APPROVED**.

Meeting adjourned by Emily Balestriere at 8:29pm.