

## HPTO General Meeting Minutes - Tuesday, September 5, 2017 at 7pm

**Attendees:** Kristen Gulakowski, Bill Sparks, Amanda Kovach, Kristin Matthews, Carolyn Chiquelin, Dana Fortun, Rachel Fischbaugh, Danielle Bradley, Deepika Devarajan, McKay Shelkey-Bray, Nikki Rosswog, Alison Wegley, Amanda Loludice, Alison Persichetti, Melissa Jones, Andrea Krushinski, Michelle Cook, Jaime Zuri, Shannon Schaffer, Gwenn Gdovichin, Emily Cook, Jen Banachoski, Lisa McGough, John McGough, Lauren Wirt, Melinda Guinn, Terri Keiffer, Beth Vukmir, Melissa Kwiatkowski, Amy Seymour, Danielle Kratsa, Jaime Melocchi, Liz Stanley, Lynne Shurina, Sara McMahan, Megan Carson, Amy Johnston-Allen, Susan Stokis, Tony Miga, Toni Hughes, Aniko Nalevanko, Elizabeth Stanley

I. Welcome-

Kristen Gulakowski welcomed all in attendance. She began the meeting by encouraging everyone to get involved and to attend future meetings.

II. Opening comments-

All board members and those in attendance introduced themselves. Kristen Gulakowski gave an overview of every HPTO fundraiser and event so that new members would understand upcoming HPTO programs.

III. Treasurer's report-

Carolyn Chiquelin distributed and reviewed the HPTO Financial Statement for 2016-2017 fiscal year as well as the proposed budget for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Kristen made a motion to approve the proposed budget. The membership voted on and approved the proposed budget with a unanimous vote.

IV. Events and activities-

*Recaps:*

- **Staff Welcome Gifts:** Dana Fortun shared that the board distributed welcome gifts to all 62 staff members from the HPTO. Staff members were very appreciative and have sent numerous notes of gratitude.
- **First Day of School Decorations:** Nikki Rosswog shared that the first day of school decorations were well received by students and staff. The students and staff arrived to a festive entrance, including signs and balloon decorations, which added to the excitement on the first day of school. Pam Miele, our talented balloon vendor, created balloon towers, clusters, pillars, and an arch for the entrance.

Members discussed the idea of taking pictures of the students on the first day of school near the decorations, however Dr. Fischbaugh reminded the group that by law the school cannot take pictures of students without parental consent.

- **Apparel Raffle:** At the welcome table during the back-to-school evening events, the HPTO offered a raffle in order to encourage families to visit and join the HPTO and to

gather info on the upcoming year. Our three raffle winners will receive a \$50 gift certificate to the Hartwood Apparel Sale.

*Upcoming:*

- **Teacher Assistance Program:** Amanda Kovach reported that the program will begin next week and was started due to a request from some staff members last year. An email asking for volunteers was sent out. So far, 18-20 volunteers have signed up. In addition, Nikki Rosswog created a survey for the staff members to fill out so that we are better able to meet their needs. All staff members will be given a master list with volunteer names, contact info and availability. Amanda reported that several staff members consistently contact and use helpers from the program, while other staff members prefer to do their own clerical work. The most common jobs are in-school tasks like copying handouts, laminating, assembling projects, and hanging projects on walls to display. It was reported that there will be times throughout the year when staff members will use parent helpers more, as certain times are busier (i.e. October for Open House, November and December for Holiday projects, March for Art Show, etc.). Teachers who have not utilized helpers yet will eventually get used to the program and they know they need to plan ahead if they want parental assistance. However, it can be difficult since lesson plans are always changing to meet the needs of students and sometimes things need to be done last minute.
- **Fall Festival:** Alison Wegley and Amanda Loludice will chair this committee for the first time this year on Friday, October 20th. Alison met with the previous chair to gather information, and she reported that she currently has 6 committee members. They are open to new ideas and suggestions.
- **Homeroom Parent/Helper Sign-ups and Parameters:** Deepika Devarajan reminded members to sign up to become homeroom parents and helpers by September 15th. The board has provided more structure this year by giving general guidelines so that new families know what is expected of them if they choose to sign up for one of the positions. Deepika reported that 75 people have signed up so far, with 10 days remaining. Deepika will collect the information and give the board her suggestions so that the board can approve the assignments. The board will announce the HRP and HRH assignments by October 1. Dee also shared that younger classes need more help and are more of a time commitment but that all grade levels are in need of help. She reminded those in attendance of some of the duties of a Homeroom Parent (e.g. coordinate events such as holiday parties, classroom baskets, teacher gifts, and TAG).
- **Committee Chair Form and Parameters:** Kristen briefly discussed the committee chair parameters. She asked that all committee chairs send their contact information and committee information to Deepika to post on the HPTO website. As of tonight, all committees have chairs, however we are still looking volunteers to participate on the committees. See the PTO website if you are interested.

V. Fundraising-

*Recaps:*

- **PTO Membership Drive:** Kristin Matthews informed everyone that for the first time this year we are using an online submission form for both the HPTO Membership and Directory. Gwen Gdovichin will be the chair of the directory this year. Kristin reported that as of today, there are more than 40 members of the HPTO. Families have until October 1 to sign up to become an HPTO member and to fill out their information for the directory or to opt out of the directory.
- **KidStuff Coupon Books:** Dana Fortun shared that we have sold 6 books so far. The coupon books will still be on sale through September 15<sup>th</sup>. Flyers were sent home during the first week of school. The coupon books are \$25. The HPTO receives 50% of the proceeds for this sale.

*Upcoming:*

- **Field Day:** This all day event will be held on June 7<sup>th</sup>. This year's new chairs will be Carolyn Chiquelin and Dana Fortun. Kristen reported that we will be unable to use the DMS track and field this year. We will relocate some activities by using Hartwood's upper field and other outdoor areas at Hartwood.

*On Going:*

- **Box Tops** – Danielle Bradley shared that the money from Box Tops comes in three times a year and goes straight to items for the classrooms. She reported that our goal for the school year is \$1,500 but we could make much more if more families participated. Danielle also shared that there will be prizes at the end of each collection period for the grade level that collects the most Box Tops. She will also update the PTO bulletin board in the entrance after each collection. The money collected from Box Tops goes directly to the school. Mrs. Connolly was able to buy reading materials for the entire school with the money earned.
- **Shoparoo** - Danielle shared that Shoparoo is a free app on cell phones that allows you to scan receipts. The school gets a small percentage from those receipts.
- **Amazon Smile** - Danielle also shared that Amazon Smile allows you to pick your non-profit (Hartwood is listed) in order to benefit our school.
- **Giant Eagle Apples for Students** - Danielle shared the website and school code so that members and families can register their advantage cards: [www.schools.gianteagle.com](http://www.schools.gianteagle.com) and 0432 (code). She reminded the membership that they only have to sign up once. A suggestion was given to have a computer available at Open House so that people can register their Advantage Cards. Another suggestion was given to look into Schwann's program for schools.

VI. Board Information-

- Kristen reminded everyone that they must have their clearances if they want to volunteer in the school or with school events- must have clearances. Once you have your clearances, they will not expire for 5 years.
- **District Forum:** Danielle Bradley discussed District Forum with the group and how to get involved. District Forum informs and updates families about construction, testing, legislation, technology, etc. in the district. If you would like to receive emails, let Danielle know. The first meeting is on Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 9am at DMS Auditorium for those who would like to attend. Danielle will be at most of the HPTO meetings to update us on District Forum meetings.
- **PTO Communication:** Kristen Gulakowski reminded those in attendance to view our HPTO Facebook page, monthly email blasts, and website.
- Dr. Fischbaugh reported that Hartwood is now the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest elementary school in the district. She shared with the group how proud she is of Hartwood's sense of community and accountability. She informed those in attendance of our overall PSSA scores. For ELA in Grades 3-5, Hartwood received 87.8%. In math, for Grades 3-5, Hartwood received 86%. Our scores continue to steadily increase year after year, and we scored extremely high across the district and the state. Families will be receiving test scores by mail at the end of September or early October.
- Bill Sparks thanked Dr. Fischbaugh for her involvement with the HPTO. He also reported that we had a record number of attendees, with 44 people in attendance.
- **HPTO Open Board Positions 2018-2019:** Bill reported that the following positions will be open as of next school year: President-Elect, General Director, Secretary, and Webmaster. He informed the group that our nominating committee consists of one general PTO member (Alison Persichetti), Dr. Fischbaugh, Ms. Inglis, Kristen Gulakowski, and himself.

*Thank you for taking the time out of your busy lives to attend and contribute to our meeting that benefits the amazing children and staff at Hartwood Elementary. Our programs would not be possible without your support and involvement. Please visit our website [www.hartwoodpto.org](http://www.hartwoodpto.org) and our Facebook page @fchartwoodpto throughout the year for more information.*

*Minutes prepared by Amanda Kovach - HPTO Secretary*