**Booth Hill School PTA General Meeting Minutes**

**9/28/2016 at 7:00pm; Media Center, Booth Hill School**

**Attendance:**

* Board Members: Lisa Commisky, Emily Voss, Amelia Audette, Lara Walden, Katie Miller-Creagh, Alison McCann, Heather Barnett (Absent – Heidi Jacobi)
* Staff: Nina Merkin, Alison Cotter, Dana Pierce
* Parents: Jennifer Ruth, Patty Le Gault, Michele Recupero, Jen Baglio, Kim Greco, Kim Shake

**Proceedings:**

* Meeting called to order at 7:10pm by Lisa Commisky.
* **President’s Report:** presented by Lisa Commisky, PTA President.

**-**Lisa spoke about following Roberts Rules of Order when running a meeting as well as her expectations for how meetings should be conducted. Handouts were provided.

**-**She updated us on Facilities, referring to Mark Deming’s long-term plan to install cooling zones in all schools over the next three years. The plan for the cooling zones would be to have two classrooms per grade as cooling zones through which students would rotate. Window units would be switched out as well. As schools save money from other energy saving measures, Deming’s fund grows and more can be done. Solar panels will be installed in the future to save more money. BHS would need a new roof before solar panels would be installed.

**-**Lisa discussed Lisa Hefele’s plan for Digital Learning district-wide. This plan includes coding, accessibility to the parent portal for data and news, providing 1-1 access to Chromebooks for all students in 3rd-8th grade. THS is currently a Bring Your Own Device school.

**-**The PTA will be using My School Anywhere for an online directory. Katie Miller-Creagh e-mailed all teachers to request room mom information, birthdays, etc.

**-**The PTA is researching the use of Square Up in order to take payments online.

**-**Four delegates are needed to attend the PTSA meetings as representatives of BHS. Dana Pierce and Lisa Commisky will attend, but four others are needed to attend three meetings with representatives from all schools district-wide. Meetings are October 17, January 30, and April 24.

**-**Lisa and Heather Barnett spoke about the benefits offered to those who chair a PTA committee. These would include reserved seating at a BHS event. The parameters still need to be established and Dana Pierce would have to approve each benefit offered. This perk is hoped to encourage parent involvement.

**-**This year’s goals of the PTA president are to listen to teachers, students, staff, and Mr. Pierce in order to gather information and in order to see what kind of impact the PTA can have this year.

**-**Read Aloud Day is set for October 27th. It is run by the Trumbull Rotary. Volunteers will be needed. Mrs. George organizes the readers for BHS.

**-**There will be a School Election held during school lunch to encourage students to participate and understand the voting process.

**-**Lisa spoke to the teachers present about the Discovery Museum and their programs, including the Challenger Mission. The museum is willing to host an event to show teachers what the museum offers and to see if it fits into their curriculum.

**-**There remain many open volunteer positions, including a Board position: the VP of Volunteers. Emily Voss spoke about the ASE program, and Lisa mentioned the need for rules that would be set by the teachers whose rooms would be used. Mr. Pierce said it would be shame to lose ASE. There is also a FLEX program, an outside agency that sets up and offers after school classes. However, the class prices would be higher. (See handout.)

**-**This is a year of transition. There is no Treasurer’s Report to approve. Alison McCann will have one at the next meeting. Forms for reimbursement are online. Alison McCann said she has only received six teacher grant requests so far this year.

* **Principal’s Update:** presented by Dana Pierce, Principal of BHS.

-He thanked the PTA for the welcome back luncheon.

-Mr. Pierce updated us about facilities and the committee formed by Dr. Cialfi that will look at permanent solutions to the overcrowding at BHS. Areas that will be considered are a need for storage and the use of the TLC room or expanding the footprint of the school building itself. He did not think redistricting will be the final solution. However, it may be the most cost effective solution.

-His budget requests for 2017-2018 include storage, fencing (between the parking lot and the playground), shade solutions on the playground (oak tree, an awning), etc.

-He mentioned that the Media Center’s new furniture is due to be delivered tomorrow.

-SBAC scores will be mailed home to parents in 4th and 5th grades. In November, there will be a presentation about the scores. Scores at BHS were fantastic.

-A district goal for K-5 will continue to be writing. Columbia offered a week-long writer’s workshop institute to teachers. Teachers will be implementing a new unit of study from the Teacher’s College. And there will be a follow-up visit with the Tri-State committee that visited last year in March.

-Mr. Pierce would like the PTA to consider reinstituting the Secret Angel Fund, which offers monetary help to families who cannot pay for a field trip, etc. He would also like the PTA to consider funding part of or half of the One Book One School Program. In past years it has cost $1,800, which has been funded by the school.

-Last year, BHS missed out on being a School of Distinction by .57. This year, BHS is ranked 24 out of 536 elementary schools. This year, there is sure to be a push towards being credited as a School of Distinction.

* **Media Center Update:** presented by Kristin Finnegan.

-Mrs. Finnegan discussed how the library is a “Learning Commons” where space is flexible for independent or group work. She ordered modular furniture that can be moved and used in many ways.

-In her PowerPoint presentation, Mrs. Finnegan discussed her background, how she would like to create a Makerspace, what she would like to add to the library (seating, robotics programs like Sphero, Code & Go), Makerspace furniture, IPod Touches, a Lego Wall, Puzzle Area, Creation stations, etc.

-Mrs. Finnegan discussed how a library has changed into a creative space where process is valued over product. Her goal is to build excitement about learning.

* **Technology Update:** presented by Kim Greco, Technology Integration Specialist.

**-**Ms. Greco would like to make technology a part of students’ everyday learning.

**-**Her job includes supporting teachers, co-teaching with teachers, focusing on computer skill development, collaborating at the district level, troubleshooting. She would also like to push into the classrooms.

**-**Ms. Greco will be attending a workshop at Columbia: Digital Toolbox Workshop.

-Heather Barnett asked if keyboarding skills would be taught.

-3rd-5th graders can access their Google Chrome account at home.

-A future goal includes creating a webpage for each grade level where information could be posted, etc.

* **Teacher Representative Updates:** presented by Mrs. Cotter and Mrs. Merkin.

-Thank you to the PTA for the luncheon at the beginning of the school year.

-Thank you also for the recess bins. It was discussed how we could monitor the contents and keep the bins full.

-The main concern of teachers is the lack of shade on the playground. Teachers would also like coat hooks for the students. Many have broken off. An “S” hook was suggested. Mrs. Cotter will ask teachers what type of hooks would work best.

* **VP of Programs Report:** presented by Lara Walden.

**-**Lara plans to bring back Hollyrock Entertainment with Brain Challenge with 2 separate shows, one for K-2 and another for 3-5.

**-**If we have time to add a second program, we will discuss our options at a later date.

**-**Lisa Commisky mentioned having Hollyrock come for a Family Fun Night.

* **Spooktacular Update:** presented by Heather Barnett.

**-**There will be a Trunk or Treat, a Halloween carnival, and a DJ.

**-**It was discussed whether there will be a Bake Sale. Mr. Pierce okayed the Bake Sale.

**-**Teacher representatives were asked what incentives could be offered to teachers to do a trunk.

* **Membership Update:** presented by Katie Miller-Creagh

**-**The PTA would like to use the room moms to help communicate information and get more members.

**-**Eblasts are not going out to the entire school.

**-**At teacher conferences, there should be a membership table.

* **Ways & Means Update:** presented by Emily Voss.

**-**The School Supplies orders earned the PTA $200.

-The Charleston Wrap Fundraiser is underway. As of 9/28, there have been $1,039 in online sales and $400 in paper sales. There was also a $30 donation opting out of the fundraiser. The fundraiser runs through October 6th.

-It was discussed whether there should be an incentive for Charleston Wrap. It was decided to have Barbara Peterson Eblast the fundraiser information instead.

* **Additional Comments:**

-The Book Fair will run from October 25-27. The PTA earns Scholastic Dollars that will be directed to the Media Center. There will be a coloring page of a pirate ship sent home with each child. Lisa Commisky discussed how teacher’s best communicate their Wish Lists.

-Amelia Audette asked about Box Tops incentives. It was discussed whether monthly drawings as have been done in the past few years are the best way to encourage Box Tops participation. It was also discussed whether there should there be an incentive that would excite the students, such as extra recess, a no HW night, etc. Mrs. Cotter will ask fellow teachers at the next staff meeting.

-Alison McCann asked about bringing an Internet Safety program to BHS. She knows a police officer who will talk with parents. This could be an evening event or part of a PTA meeting.

-Lisa Commisky and Heather Barnett discussed the new BHS logo. New car magnets and window clings will be on sale.

-Amelia Audette made a motion to conclude this meeting. Mrs. Cotter seconded this motion. Lisa Commisky ended the meeting at 9:11pm.