

**New Hope-Solebury Elementary School  
Home and School Association  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 17, 2009**

Call to order:

President Beth Keating called to order the regular meeting of the New Hope-Solebury Elementary School Home and School Association on Tuesday, November 17th at 9:32 a.m.

Approval of September Minutes.

Liz Kistler motioned for approval of the minutes. Brenda seconded the motion. It was approved.

Holiday Shoppe

*LES Holiday Shoppe*

Tracey, LES Holiday Shoppe chair, wasn't at the meeting, but we had an update. The Shoppe will be held at the LGI, eliminating the previous concerns about access. It will be held from 12/8 to 12/11. A ListServ announcement will be going out soon, asking for volunteers. In response to a question, it was announced that there will be vouchers for those children who don't have money for the Shoppe. There will also be IOUs.

*UES Holiday Shoppe*

The UES Holiday Shoppe will be held on 11/24 and 11/25, during conferences. It's the first year it's returned to the UES, so the HSA strongly requests that parents support it if they want to have the Shoppe at the UES again next year. The UES Shoppe chair is desperate for help, even for an hour. She is also still looking for wrapping donations.

Spirit Wear

The Spirit Wear sales are ongoing, and we've had a good response so far. The sale ends on Friday. Volunteers to help sort the clothing when it arrives are requested to email Gerriann Tealer or Paula Pala. Clothing will probably be received during the second week of December. Samples were available at Pizza Bingo, and a lot of people looked at them. It was announced that the pants run somewhat small at the waist, and that the Fleece PJ pants have been very popular.

There is a problem with the samples for American Visitation Week at the LES, which takes place over three days, instead of one day. Some volunteers stepped forward at the meeting, and an email will be going out. It was announced that the translucent bottle will be blue, not gold as shown in the Spirit Wear order form.

Communication

An attendee suggested that the HSA should explore alternative methods of communication, ones that aren't limited as ListServ communications or the HSA website are. Some suggestions were a Facebook page or a Yahoo group, to facilitate communication with parents. It was noted that all ListServ subscriptions will be wiped in January and all lists will require re-subscription.

Erika, chair of the Communications Committee, will hold a meeting to discuss possibilities.

It was noted that communications are better this year than they were last year, and also noted that this last year we had several issues with the web site which have since been resolved.

### School Board

Susan Atkinson, school board liaison, reported the following:

The Communications Committee announced that the district directory will be out soon. The results of the survey regarding computer access were announced – fourteen people reported not having access.

The middle school PTG will be paying to install hand sanitizers throughout the middle school. Dr. Boccutti will be seeing if the school board will be able to provide sanitizers at the other schools in the district.

The Special Ed survey, it was shared, revealed two areas of need. First, process communication and paperwork need smoothing and streamlining. Second, service delivery with regards to integration in the regular classroom. The new Director of Pupil Services was introduced.

There was a discussion of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade PSSA results from last year. The high school is working to prepare the students better for future tests. The main issue seems to be that some students are basically blowing the test off. It was noted that the school report with all the test scores is available on the website.

There was a discussion about the impact of family financial restrictions upon students who would like to pay sports, as participation in district sports can be very expensive. The school board has been asked to assess the needs of those who don't have money and how the district can reach out to them.

It was announced that there is a new school board opening, and applications are needed. There are currently people who don't necessarily support the school interested in the position. The board would like to see applications from anyone interested in the position.

HSA President Keating announced that the school board application request will be in the next HSA newsletter. It was clarified that interested applicants do have to live in New Hope or Solebury.

### LES Vice President's Report

LES Vice President Mary Dupont was unable to attend, so Vice President Donna Zalewski reported.

#### *Assemblies*

Two assemblies have already occurred, and another is scheduled. The upcoming assembly is a book signing. There was some discussion about the arrangements for the author signing, HSA President Keating said that there will be some board discussion to clarify arrangements, and there will be accountability to parents.

#### *Book Fair*

The vouchers have worked well, and received a positive response.

#### *Staff Appreciation*

Jen Primavera did a great job!

### *Yearbook*

Early orders are due by 12/15. Everything's going well. Backpack Mail will be going out soon, and a reminder will go out in December.

### UES Vice President's Report

Vice President Michelle Summerson reported.

### *Assemblies*

Two assemblies will be held on November 23<sup>rd</sup> and November 24<sup>th</sup>. The first will be a game show and human board game. The second will be "Duet Prose", about the Oregon Trail and King Tut. The show is educational and entertaining. President Keating asked if parents want to be informed more about assemblies. Vice President Summerson said that she'll talk to Principal Mangano about more information in the Friday Flyer.

### *Trunk or Treat*

The HSA extends thanks to Chair Chris Antell for her hard work on the Trunk or Treat event. The kids loved it! The donations were wonderful. The event was a great size, even though a few volunteers and attendees were lost due to illness and other issues.

### *Teacher Grants*

Two applications have been received. For the UES we've received a request for recess equipments, from the LES a request for funds for ELMO devices. Grant requests are due December 1<sup>st</sup>. Reminders will be sent to teachers. We have available a total of \$2500 per school. It was suggested that some HSA members could go down to the Kindergarten area and look at the existing ELMO devices. The systems are very expensive, and are used a lot. The LES currently has two systems. The Teacher Grant committee will meet and discuss grant applications, and there will be feedback at the December meeting, then a vote in January.

### Treasurer's Report

We currently have a balance of \$31,362.62. Income sources include HSA family donations, KidStuff books, and Pizza Bingo. Bills include KidStuff books and Pizza Bingo. To date we've gotten \$5,768 from family donations, and it is anticipated that we'll end up just under \$6,000. KidStuff had brought in approximately \$3,000, so combined, we'll reach our goal of \$7,000.

There is \$20,500 going out, so we need to bring in that much from sales and events.

We currently have a sizeable cushion, and the board will be discussing the future of that cushion. Treasurer Reszka commented that the subject will be discussed once we see how the spring events progress

The spring will have family events to bring in funds, not product fundraisers.

### Committee Reports

#### *Pizza Bingo*

Committee chair Jennifer did a wonderful job pulling off the event after the women we'd employed as bingo caller/entertainer cancelled at the last minute due to personal issues. A comedian was found and, though some found his act somewhat controversial, overall it was well received by event

participants. Bringing him back for the UES Pizza Bingo event may be a consideration. A good profit was made, and attendance was excellent. There was a wait list for the event.

### *Science Fair*

This committee was on the agenda in case Committee Chair Amishi had an update, but she wasn't in attendance at the meeting. Arrangements for the event are ongoing.

### New Business

#### *Family Fun Day*

This event has been requested by LES counselor Pam Lang. It would be held during a weekend afternoon, for LES families. The event would involve the Peaceful Playground system. While Peaceful Playground is currently being taught in gym classes, and all teachers are aware of the procedures. Playground volunteers have access the Peaceful Playground instructions. The event would be to reinforce the system, and to introduce it to families so that they can incorporate it elsewhere. LES Principal Silver noted that the LES has held a weekend family event in the past.

HSA President Keating noted that LES Vice President Mary Dupont has been attending LES Counselor Pam Lang's citizenship meetings, held at 8 AM Friday mornings. She needs someone to volunteer to be a permanent part of the committee. She does have some current prospects.

#### LES Principal's Report

LES Principal Silver commended all parents who attended the School Board meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup>. He reminded attendees that participation in and understanding of school governance are important, and reminded parents that there's an opening on the school board, particularly during these difficult times where states have limited the raising of school taxes. Parental involvement can ensure good programming and good stuff, etc. He noted that broad community involvement is important, and that if you want to have a voice, you need to attend the meetings.

#### *Turkey Trot*

This walk for charity event will be held on Thursday. This year's charity is the March of Dimes. We did March of Dimes last year as well, and the organization liked it so much that they requested that the district get involved again – every school in the district is participating this year in events to help the March of Dimes.

#### *Flu Update*

Flu absences at the LES haven't been that bad. They're encouraging kids to be as germ-free as possible and to avoid contact, and hoping for the best.

#### *American Education Week*

The 17<sup>th</sup> is the Kindergarten event, the 18<sup>th</sup> is the 1<sup>st</sup> grade event, and the 19<sup>th</sup> is the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade event.

### New Business

#### *Family Portrait Fundraiser*

This was a write-in event of the survey last year. It is popular in other districts. Services/photography is donated by a parent (photographer) volunteer. Sitting fees are donated. Some suggestions were made during the meeting, and HSA President Keating requested that anyone who had suggestions for event specifics or photographers to email her.

### *LES Family Fun Weekend Event Update*

Principal Silver returned with LES Counselor Pam Lang to discuss her ideas for the proposed Family Fun Weekend Event at the LES. Counselor Lang explained that she's thinking of having the event on the first Saturday of May. She proposes a fun, multi-hour day event, possibly something involving a passport of Peaceful Playground events and stamps, etc. Some parents have concerns about fitting the events in around sports, etc., and some suggested that the event be held on a weekday evening instead of during a weekend. She'd love to receive emails with any suggestions or concerns. She's looking for a parent to spearhead the event. Ideally, the principles from the games will be learned and carried off into other parts of life.

### *Parent Invitations*

LES Principal Silver invites parents to come participate in the Turkey Trot and Book Fair events.

### *Parent Gala*

This event is being held in conjunction with the middle school PTG. They have an excellent coordinator in charge, and Erika has volunteered from the HSA. The event will be held in March. Holly Hedge is already booked, and the Silent Auction is being developed. HSA President Keating asked meeting attendees to share their concerns about the event. Concerns boiled down to food – too small, not enough of it, and a lack of consideration for vegetarian/vegan participants, participants with special dietary needs, and participants who were participating in lent. All attendees agreed that, despite the food foibles, it was a very fun event.

### *Kids Cleanup for Charity*

Elementary School parent Lori has approached the HSA with a request for the HSA to pass information on her business along to members/parents. Lori's service works with children to learn to clear out their rooms and develop organizational skills. Toys and items that are no longer useful are donated to charity. Lori will be providing a discount to HSA members. The premise is to empower kids for personal organization. HSA President Keating noted that while the service cannot be officially sanctioned by the HSA, it's an interesting service that helps parents and teaches kids good values. The HSA board will be discussing the service and HSA's support of it.

### *Lunch and Recess Volunteers*

Paula Saxton noted that she needs lunch volunteers for the holidays. All volunteers do need all three of their clearances. Substitute volunteers don't need clearances. She noted that Principal Silver does appreciate all parents who volunteer for recess and lunch duty. There was some discussion about visually differentiating substitute volunteers from regular volunteers, who wear dedicated lanyards. It was noted that Principal Silver does know who's cleared and who's not.

It was noted that there are no recess volunteers at the UES.

### *Holiday Shoppe Redux*

Chair Sue Siano spoke a bit about the UES Holiday Shoppe. Volunteers are needed. Supplies are needed. Gift bags, tags, bows, etc. Sue will be talking to Tracy, who chairs the LES Holiday Shoppe, about sharing leftover supplies from last year's Shoppe. Principal Mangano will be asked to send another ListServ. HSA President Keating reminded attendees that the Holiday Shoppe is not a fundraiser.

### *LES Shed Cleaning*

The HSA has been asked to help clean out the HSA shed at the LES.

#### Public Discussion

An attendee asked about the Father/Daughter Dance and the Mother/Son Bowling – will the event occur again next year? HSA President Keating assured everyone that there will be more family fun events to raise funds. The focus may be different. A ListServ will be sent out in January to form a committee to put together more family fun events.

#### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 am.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ann Leveille, Secretary