

**New Hope-Solebury Elementary School
Home and School Association
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 11, 2010**

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, May 11th at 9:33 a.m.

Roll Call

Present at the meeting were the following attendees: Erika Peterson, Donna Zalewski, Jennifer Primavera, Chris Antell, Mary Amaya-Luciani, Joanne Reszka. Also attending were Ann Leveille, Amishi Castelli, Beth Keating, and LES Principal Ken Silver.

Approval of March Minutes

Erika Peterson and Donna Zalewski motioned to approve the March minutes.

HSA President's Report

President Keating presented the nominated slate for 2010/11 HSA Officers. The slate reads as follows:

President: Beth Keating
Vice President LES: Mary Dupont
Vice President UES: Donna Zalewski
Secretary: Jennifer Primavera
Treasurer: Chris Antell

The slate was duly voted upon, and approved unanimously.

President Keating announced that two new positions were being formed, though they are not formal board positions.

The new Volunteer Coordinator will be Karen Giller-Stanell.
The new Communications officer will be Erika Peterson.

Treasurer Joanne Reszka suggested that starting next year general meetings only be held every other month. President Keating said she was also considering night meetings, where children are welcome, as HSA is families.

President Keating announced that the June General Meeting, scheduled for the 8th, will be a Volunteer Thank-You event, and not a formal meeting. Right now it is scheduled to be held at the UES, but the event may be moved to Donna Zalewski's house. Chairpersons for events held during the year will be specifically invited to attend, and board members will be providing food. RSVPs will be requested because there is food involved in the event.

LES Vice President's Report

It was reported that the picnic previously scheduled was rumored to be on hold, though most of the work for the event seemed to have been completed. It was also noted that there has been an

additional Kindergarten Registration day added on Wednesday, June 2nd from 9:30 - 10:30 because kindergarten registration is low this year.

UES Vice President's Report

It was reported that the preparations for the UES end of the year picnic are ongoing, and that Rita's Water Ice has been okayed for the event. It was reported that the movie night that had been considered has been cancelled. It was reported that preparations for the 5th grade promotion event are ongoing.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Reszka reported that there is an unofficial (not official because the May bank statement won't arrive until later in the week) total in the account of \$29,945.96. Of that money, \$906.04 is Band Booster money, and \$1961.94 is Art Booster money. A more accurate total would be \$27,077.98.

Treasurer Reszka further reported that there are still the following outgoing funds for the school year:

Field Day: \$1,000.00

UES Principal Amy Mangano/Discretionary: \$600.00

Playground monies: \$125.00

Teacher Grants: \$2500.00

Science Fair: \$1000.00

Pizza Bingo (pizza): \$500.00

Treasurer Reszka estimated that as the school year closes, the bank balance will be around \$20,000.00. She did comment that she felt that the amount in the account was too high, that most organizations had between \$10,000 and \$12,000 at the end of each school year, and that neither the middle school nor high school had such high balances. The situation will be discussed at the next board meeting.

LES Education Fund Requests

President Keating discussed the three fund requests that the Education Fund had received from the LES. The requests were for an Outdoor Habitat, a Friendship Reading Garden, and an Outside Classroom. All three would be worked into the LES curriculum. The Outdoor Habitat would be a trail through, primarily, township property, but would start on district property. President Keating suggested that the HSA could consider partial or full funding of one of these requests as a Gift to the School, though it may have to be discussed during the 2010/11 school year.

UES Principal's Report

UES Principal Amy Mangano wasn't in attendance at the meeting.

LES Principal's Report

LES Principal Ken Silver discussed the teacher grants and Education Fund requests with the meeting attendees. He shared that he found the requests exciting and agreed that they would fit into the curriculum and learning structure of the school, but that he had some concerns about sustainability, particularly during the summer months.

Principal Silver praised the generosity of LES parents regarding LES fundraising functions through the school year, but cautioned that he didn't want people to feel obligated to participate. He discussed the benefits to the students that fundraising and service events held, and commented that he felt the LES students were learning kindness, selflessness and empathy for others.

Principal Silver commented that Peaceful Playground sometimes isn't active enough for some students, and that those students like to play basketball with the established hoops at the LES, but that it had become apparent that the basketball sets need to be replaced, preferably with a set of permanent hoops like the UES has. The current set will be removed over the summer. President Keating commented that maybe the HSA could do something about that request.

Principal Silver reiterated that he's very happy about the requests, but that many of the requests need sustained parent involvement. Projects typically take three to four years to complete, and though LES parents are very enthusiastic, by the time they acclimate to the school and become involved, all too often their children are ready to move to the UES.

President Keating asked if Principal Silver had any priorities for the grants that had been submitted to the Education Fund. Principal Silver responded that all the grant requests were good, including aspects of science, environmentalism, appreciation of nature, etc.

President Keating asked about the rumored on-hold LES picnic. Principal Silver responded that the picnic had been postponed 'til the fall because parents were too busy at this time of year. President Keating informed Principal Silver that the HSA is also planning several fall events, and commented that they should work together on planning to ensure attendance at all events.

Principal Silver was asked about the situation with the Second Grade teachers. He responded that a lot depends on the final kindergarten enrollment numbers, which are slightly low for the year, but far from final. If the numbers remain low then teachers may move to different classes. Several HSA members commented on possible causes on the low enrollment, including holding kids back an extra year so that they're ready for kindergarten. Principal Silver reported that some kids do need an extra year, but sometimes not, that it's very individual. Principal Silver urged parents who are concerned about class size and teacher reassignment to attend the School Board meetings and to make their thoughts known, particularly those parents who are willing to see the taxes go up somewhat to ensure that the school functions to the best of its ability. He further commented that he finds a lack of elementary parents participating in the School Board and school politics, and that he felt like it often took until children were in middle school for parents to really understand how the district works.

Committee Reports

Trenton Thunder: This event is going to have a good turnout. It was commented that the Naturals will sing the national anthem, and that we were asked which person was going to give the first throw. Donna Zalewski commented that several people were usually chosen to give a throw, so it really wasn't a first throw. It was suggested that Ms. VanPraag could give the first throw, or a name could be drawn from a hat. It was reported that 521 tickets were sold. That evening will be bobblehead night, so the first 2000 attendees (over 6 years old) will receive bobbleheads. The park has been paid for the tickets, and HSA profit from the event will be \$2056.00.

Card Art: Initial art has been received, but the final orders haven't gone out yet, so we have no idea about the final participation or what HSA may earn from the fundraiser. The fundraiser will be scheduled for next year, with some more time for kids to work on their art.

Dance-A-Thon: This event, not an HSA event, was briefly discussed. They raised \$3700 for the Education Fund via this event, though there were some comments regarding the disparity of ages at the event.

Pizza Bingo: President Keating thanked Tom Marrone and Sue Bowers for helping out with Pizza Bingo. She commented that the kids do look up to the teachers as public figures, and that she didn't know if the teachers were aware of this phenomenon.

Spirit Wear: President Keating commented that the Spring spirit wear sale had been cancelled.

Budget

Treasurer Joanne Reszka presented the proposed 2010/11 budget for voting upon. She commented that some changes had been made since its initial presentation at the April meeting, in part because the middle school parent group has decided that the Parent Gala will not be held next year. Treasurer Reszka went through the budget quickly. K-5 events will be expected to bring in more money, and the Family Donation expectation is going up, but most of the budget is as was presented at the April general meeting. For expenses, AIR and Assemblies will remain the same. The Newcomers budget went down, as did the Printing budget. The Playground monies were reduced, and Staff Appreciation will depend on parent donation for paper products in the future. Teacher Grants have been reduced to \$4000 total. Science Fair has been reduced to \$750.

It was asked if the LES had the HSA-supported \$1 vouchers at the Spring book fair, and commented that they didn't have vouchers but they did have \$1/free books available, possibly leftovers from the Fall book sale.

President Keating called a vote on the budget, and the proposed 2010/11 budget was unanimously approved by meeting attendees.

Kindergarten Events

It was commented that there are two upcoming kindergarten events -- on the 11th, but also on the 18th. Volunteers are being arranged by Donna Zalewski.

New Business

NHS Cares: Erika Peterson spoke about the NHS Cares organization, an organization working to eliminate alcohol and drug use in the schools and community. The organization would like more exposure in the elementary community, as it's been functioning in the middle school and high school environments. The next meeting will be held on 5/12, from 7 - 8 pm, and all parents are encouraged to attend. Erika noted that Bill Peterson would like to speak about the organization in front of the HSA. President Keating noted that she'd like to have him at the meeting, probably in the fall.

Science Club: Amishi Castelli reported that this is going well, that ten UES students have signed up to participate. There will be a presentation evening on June 8th. The children have been told attendance will be small, but are excited about the event.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ann Leveille, Secretary