

New Hope-Solebury Elementary Schools
Home and School Association
General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 21, 2015
LES Conference Room

CALL to ORDER

President, Beth Houlton called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

IN ATTENDANCE

HSA Board Members:

Beth Houlton, President
Amy Hoffman, Vice President, UES
Stacy Buck, Vice President, LES
Roxanne Apparies, Treasurer
Gretchen Reilly, Assistant Treasurer
Deborah Peckman, Secretary

Parent Members:

Lori Staples, Ellen Marciano, Jenn Nuzzolo, Nancy Aguilar, Patti Lund, Jim Joshi, Trish DiZio, Dawn René Sandy, Ellie Kelley, Andrea Kearney

I. President's Report

A. Welcome/Introduction of HSA board/Approval of September Meeting Minutes.

Beth welcomed everyone and the Board introduced themselves. Mark, the custodian, stopped in to thank everyone for the paver we bought for him. The minutes from the September 16 General Meeting were reviewed and approved.

B. Square 1 (Card) Art (Lori Zaro) - Beth explained Square 1 Art and said that all artwork/stickers had gone home to students so that parents could order items with the children's artwork in time for holiday gifts. Recommendations were made for Lori to share with Mr. Mannion next year that he tell students to fill the whole box with color and that each child should include his/her name. Total orders to date are over \$900 with more expected.

C. Kidstuff Coupon Books (Kathy Feehan) - Roxanne reported that 427 books went out (one per family). We sold 67 so far, 113 were returned and we are now waiting on 246 books. So far, we received \$1800 and we keep 50% (\$900 profit). Last year we made \$3200. The due date to return books or checks is the end of October.

D. UES Trunk-or-Treat (Ellie Kelley/Patti Lund) -Patti reported that we have 16 trunks so far, plus one Solebury Parks & Rec table and one basketball game and we are still trying to recruit more volunteers. That is a total of 18 stations for children to visit within their allotted 45 minutes. Patti reminded everyone to give out non-food prizes (trinkets). Some parents have conflicts if they have 4th graders and are helping at the LES. Suggestions for next year include scheduling the UES and LES events on different days or scheduling the UES event even earlier to avoid the time conflict. This year, some parents may be able to cover

shifts, and one parent recommended having a slot on next year's Sign Up Genius to cover a shift. Parents volunteering will have name tags in advance. Other parents can choose to let the office know of their attendance ahead of time, but most don't. Also, we've only received one parent donation of trinkets, so Beth reminded everyone that those who are not hosting trunks could donate. Headcount of UES students is close to 300 so we need to make sure that we have enough trinkets. We also discussed what would happen in the event of rain. Patti mentioned that some parents suggested scheduling this event on an evening next year similar to the Bonfire. Beth recognized that suggestion as a valid point, and said that we would have to see if that conflicted with other school events such as the High School's Fall Fest or Haunted Woods event meant for older kids. Traditionally, we hold Trunk or Treat in lieu of having a party so if we move it, we would have to consider bringing in Halloween parties at the UES.

E. Teacher Appreciation Lunch (Adrienne Deussing) - This event will take place at the UES cafeteria on Nov. 6th which is a half day (last day of the marking period) at 12:30pm. Adrienne requested that people donating bring their food items between 11 - 11:30am. Beth mentioned that parents who are not available to bring food items could bring non-perishable items to the office that morning. Adrienne sent out a Sign-Up Genius and is requesting more hot dishes so that there will be enough for all teachers. If volunteers are interested in staying to help at the event (instead of just dropping off items), parents will need to provide childcare. Stacy Buck mentioned that Mathnasium expressed an interest in donating cupcakes. Beth said that we would allow the donation if the company included a tent card saying that cupcakes donated by Mathnasium, but as with a similar request by another company last year, we wouldn't allow donated items that included specific ads such as water bottles with a company's logo.

F. LES Holiday Shop (Gretchen Reilly) - This event will take place on November 30 - Dec. 4 at the LES. Each class comes in and gets to shop for their family members. Many volunteers are needed to help the children shop and to wrap presents. We also need people to donate wrapping paper and some items will be wrapped in advance. Items will be received on Monday, Nov. 23.

2. Principals' Report

Dr. McKenna reported that they are using the PowerPaws incentive program. Students can win prizes such as using his chair, time in the library, buying something at the Roar Store on Thursdays, etc. Principal for the Day costs 200 PowerPaws.

The Student Council Assembly will take place tomorrow, Thursday, 10/22 at 2:30pm on. All students will watch the candidates' speeches in the LGI.

Red Ribbon week will be October 26-29 with a different theme each day (students wear hats, crazy socks, etc.).

On 10/26, 27 and 28, students will watch grade-level movies to support National Bullying Prevention Month - Students can bring an extra snack to watch during the movie. Mrs. Loving will also read books about this topic.

Trunk or Treat is coming up on Thursday, Oct. 29th with times moved earlier. Dr. McKenna is flexible and open to suggestions to modify day/time to help with conflicts next year.

Students now have 60 minutes for lunch/recess and the new times are working well.

Professional Development day will be on 10/30 for staff. There will be no school for students that day.

The two school Counselors are running a bookclub on Nov. 13th and Dec. 4th on the book "Mindset" which is open to parents. Dr. McKenna highly recommends the book written by Carol Dweck as it helps parents learn how to promote a growth mindset to kids.

UES Lunch/Recess volunteering is going well and Dr. McKenna thanks all volunteers.

The end of the 1st marking period is November 6th with early dismissal for students.

Book Fair is coming up on Nov. 9th-13th with a family Book Fair night on Nov. 13th from 5:30-8pm.

Picture retake day will be on Nov. 12th.

Mr. Silver reported that at the LES, they are aiming for consistency. The LES's Paws program has been relatively successful and they have had huge participation. They are now trying to pull back so that kids learn that PAWS are to be earned over time. They are trying to deliver messages that PAWS are rewards to be learned along with attitudes that are internalized. So Paw Points will be reduced, but they will hopefully take on greater meaning.

For the LES Halloween celebration, Mr. Silver reported that he has to be aware of security. Everyone with or without clearances can attend the parade, but parent attendance at classroom parties is limited to 4-5 parents. In the future, he hopes that security in the school will be improved to include cameras and other ideas.

He also stated the need to be alert to security issues at recess because Suga Road is easily accessible to everybody. Parents, students and teachers/staff all need to be aware of Stranger Danger. Parents' participation is very important and recess shouldn't be regarded as just social time. Everyone has to be vigilant and keep kids safe on our playgrounds. Sometimes parents may have to tell students that they aren't allowed to play on certain equipment if they're not doing it safely. The kids need to be out of the classroom playing and being active because it shows positive results back in the classroom. They've had a great start to the school year. Conferences are coming up and they're in great shape.

3. VP Report - UES (Amy Hoffman)

A. UES Lunch/Recess - Amy reported that Donna Burns has done a great job checking clearances of all parents who have volunteered (Amy has been sending her names every 2 weeks). Trunk or Treat is on track. The HSA ordered playground equipment for UES using mini-grant funds. The equipment arrived on a day when school was closed, got shipped

back and is now back at the school. Students have been using the new equipment and recess has been going well.

The Guidance Counselors book discussion club is available for UES and LES parents. The book cost is \$10 on Amazon. If interested, contact Pam Lang by Nov. 6th. If these types of book clubs continue, the counselors could possibly apply for a mini-grant in the future.

Mini Grants are provided to staff/faculty. Amy sent out a letter to staff in September. The deadline to apply for a grant is Nov. 6th. Amy has received 2 requests so far. Beth mentioned that a mini grant was requested by a parent last year to watch educational shows like Brain Games (20 min video) instead of kids watching a small amount of a Disney movie during indoor recess. Grants are primarily for teachers for items that affect as many kids broadly as possible (not really for just one class), but parents can partner with teachers.

4. VP Report - LES (Stacy Buck)

A. Stacy reported that picture day was last week and that it went well but very quickly. There will be retakes if necessary. If parents don't like the pictures, they should send back the whole package minus the class picture. Parents should also be able to view the pictures online.

Stacy has started taking group yearbook pictures. She is also meeting with our yearbook Rep. For anyone taking pictures of the Halloween parade, Stacy suggests that you bring a real camera to Halloween or when attending other events at the school, and to please pass along the photos to the Yearbook committee.

Lunch/Recess Volunteering has been going well with most volunteers getting coverage when missing a shift. At recess, playground equipment is still being left outside so volunteers should make sure that balls get returned. Gretchen said there was a mini-grant for LES playground equipment (jump ropes and other toys that kids can use on their own). In terms of how to play with the equipment, parents can give suggestions, but it's not their job to discipline students. Stacy reported that Mrs. Taylor and a Reading Specialist now work as lunch/recess helpers. Beth suggested that Stacy talk to the office with her suggestion to hire someone to be outside or to provide training/guidance.

5. Treasurer Report (Roxanne Apparies)

Roxanne discussed the budget and explained programs in which we have already paid out money or taken in money. She explained the Helping Hands program where we give money to the Guidance Counselors to help families participate in field trips, Holiday Shop, etc. The Counselor gives Roxanne a report at the end of the year (names not included) totaling up the amount used. The line item for Mr. Mannion (he already bought mini iPads, clay, etc.) has \$5000 remaining to be used for the Art program. The 5th grade promotion line item will not be on the budget by the next meeting. Funds for the 5th grade party will be distributed to Mary Dupont, who is Treasurer for the middle school to use for their 8th grade promotion party, so the money stays with the class.

6. New Business

Proposed Hospitality Committee - Amy reported that Dawn René Sandy has offered to head up a committee run by parent volunteers to help families in need (sick, car accident, baby, etc.). In explaining the program, Dawn René said that the committee finds out about families through teachers, guidance counselors, other parents, etc.). The head of the committee contacts the family directly to find out their needs (food allergies, preferences, transportation needs, childcare, etc.). The family receiving the help puts a cooler outside their door so food can be dropped off. Items should be in disposable containers. Dawn René is actively looking for volunteers and will send out a listserv for people to sign up. She will then use VolunteerSpot or PotLuck online tools. The HSA should add this program to the list of the committees/events that we run/sponsor. This program doesn't require any funding from the HSA.

7. Old Business

Storage Shed - Our current shed was built by and for the HSA 30+ years ago. When Mr. Mark started then, he said the shed was already there. The District office is trying to figure out what to do with the shed since it is in disrepair. Options include tearing it down, repairing it or replacing it. We don't have space inside the school available for storage purposes and need some place that is accessible even when the schools are closed. Gretchen got estimates from 3 different people to demolish the shed and prep for a new shed with estimates ranging from \$2900 to \$8000. Some estimates included leveling the ground, putting down dirt and grass seed to prep for a new shed. Home Depot offers a service where they build a 10'x12' shed with nothing added for \$2400, with a higher price at Lowes. Smaller rubbermaid sheds have a lower cost. Beth mentioned that she shared with the LES and UES that we currently have \$5000-7000 extra in our budget and asked if they had projects that needed funding. Neither school had an immediate need for the funds.

The meeting adjourned at 11:13 am.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Peckman, Secretary