

New Hope-Solebury Elementary Schools
Home and School Association
General Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 20, 2016
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
Deborah Peckman, Secretary

Parent Members:

Dawn René Sandy, Trish DiZio and Kathy Feehan

I. President's Report

A. Welcome/Approval of December Meeting Minutes. Beth began by welcoming everyone. The minutes from the December 2nd General Meeting were reviewed and approved.

B. NHS Cares Presentation (Barbara Gross) - NHS Cares is an organization whose ultimate goal is to reduce substance abuse in our community and is currently funded under a Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant. Barbara, along with Carrie Kaiser and JoAnne Reszka thanked everyone for allowing them to speak, brought brochures and said that anyone could email her. NHS Cares works with all schools in Solebury Township and New Hope Borough. The grant goes for 5 years beginning 9/15 and they can apply for 5 more years in the last year. The Government expects them to work with 12 different sectors within the community including parents, youth, school, media, youth-serving organizations, law enforcement, civil/volunteer organizations., religious organizations, healthcare professionals, mental health, and county-state-wide organizations. They collaborate with these partners to reduce the use of drugs/ alcohol in our community. They also coordinate a Take Back date for disposing of prescription drugs. Alcohol is #1 drug of choice and marijuana is #2 in our community, but they also discuss heroin. Some of the 7 different strategies they use include changing ordinances/ policies, policy change, providing alternative activities/support, PSIC (positive student interactions and choices) created by a sophomore at high school with 10-20 high school students creating positive alternative activities and they are currently trying to create a similar program on the middle school level. Other communities with DFC programs have found significant reductions in alcohol, drug and tobacco usage with results seen through focus groups, surveys and interviews with police and key leaders. The government created a "Talk; They Hear You" program for kids from 9-15 and has many other available resources.

One possible suggestion for next year is to bring in speakers during Movie Night to talk to the parents. They tried a daytime Lunch and Learn at the UES a few years ago but got a very

small turnout. They could possibly do a Lunch and Learn again or work with youth groups at synagogues, churches or scouts, etc. She also invites parents to come to their coalition meetings (second Wed of every month held in the high school library). Barbara has been talking to Dr. Yanni about including some programs in the curriculum.

Mr. Silver talked about other area schools and their drug problems and that one strategy some places have used is to bring in a recovering addict to talk to students. He also talked about the elementary schools' great health program and how important it is to get students involved in sports/performing arts, etc. Barbara reiterated that all of these things help, but the #1 most important thing that can keep children away from drugs and alcohol is parents. One speaker they previously used was Dr. Matt Bellace, a neuropsych/comedian who talked to high/middle school students about how to get a natural high in your life. Beth suggested possibly having a speaker come to the UES Glow Dance to talk to parents with the PSIC girls willing to provide childcare. Or they could possibly have a Lunch and Learn at the LES during the school day. Barbara reiterated the need for a parent liaison from kids in the elementary age range.

C. Movie Night follow-up (Deborah Peckman) - Jan. 15, 2016 - Deborah reported that Movie Night had a good turnout and all went well except for software problems on the laptop used to play the movie. Deborah informed Mr. Sasala of the problem which will hopefully be fixed before next year. Suggestions for next year include putting the concession table next to the door so that latecomers know we are selling popcorn and water and also to include a donation jar, and to mention on the flyer that donations are appreciated. This event is not one in which the HSA makes money, but it would be helpful to recoup the expense of the movie license.

D. Pizza Bingo -Feb. 5, 2016. Amy, Trish and Deborah reported that we are on track with all planning for the event. Mr. Marrone and Mr. O'Leary are confirmed, the flyer went out with people starting to RSVP, and supplies have been bought. We have most volunteer slots filled (we still need verifiers) and we still need to buy prizes. Most slots for people donating baked items have been filled as well. The event fills up quickly and we have a cut off on maximum number of people allowed to attend due to space restrictions/fire codes.

E. Cultural Heritage Night - Feb. 19, 2016 - Kim Madarasz and Nan Nagg are heading up this event and are securing parent volunteers to head up tables for different countries. They will send out a volunteer request for additional help at the event.

F. Future HSA Events:

UES Glow Dance - Mar. 11th -(Tracy Keyes) - We should have someone shadow Tracy so that a new person can head up this event next year.

LES Spring Dance - Apr. 1st

Trenton Thunder baseball game - May 13th

5th Grade Promotion - Amy Gretchen and Beth - maybe 6/10

II. **Principals' Report**

Dr. McKenna passed out a Principal's Report and discussed the new car dismissal procedure whereby students being picked up stay in the LGI area during cold weather and then specific students are asked to come out when their parents arrive. He also mentioned that Friday is the end of the 2nd marking period and is a half day. The school is

now involved in a program called Google Cardboard and is asking families to bring in old cell phones with 5 to 6 inch touchscreen to support this initiative. Google Cardboard requires a specific app and wifi and puts viewers in an almost virtual world when they look into the cardboard—look into Pioneer Expeditions program with Google—another way to integrate technology into our programs. He announced an after-school science program called “Science Explorers” which begins 2/2 on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 (taught by Mrs. Riggs)—see flyer on the school’s website. Dr. McKenna started a Twitter account @UESPrincipal and parents can see a video of the BMX presentation there. He also wanted to thank all volunteers and reminded parents of important upcoming dates.

Mr. Silver reported that the Artist in Residence program was in jeopardy, but thanks to the HSA’s one-time donation of additional funds, the program is continuing this year. He reported that the LES’s lower level playground equipment requires repair work and he is hoping that the school district may be able to help. The LES is now involved with the MLK service project and families are starting to contribute/donate items. He will have Honors students from the high school help sort items and some items may be donated in-house through our counselors to our local families that require help. Stacy Buck brought up the issue of not offering device day as a reward for kids’ good behavior.

III. VP Report - UES (Amy Hoffman) - Amy reported that lunch/recess volunteering has slumped so she will send a new request. Dawn René needs more volunteers for her Hospitality committee so Amy will send a general listserv in a bit over a week.

IV. VP Report - LES (Stacy Buck) - Stacy reported that the big playground is broken. Repairs have been ordered but no one is sure yet who will repair it. Beth reported for Gretchen Reilly that Holiday shop was a big success—it was very organized and Gretchen is happy to reuse the same vendor. We’re assuming that we will make money for Holiday shop. Possibly we can use some of that money to help with ladder repair on playground.

V. Treasurer Report (Roxanne Apparies) - The Treasurer’s report was handed out. Some items are not updated such as LES Holiday Shop in which we are still awaiting the bill, although we are thinking that we will make money on this event. Kathy Freehan reported that we did well on Kidstuff books.

VI. New Business - Beth reported that we are donating additional funds for the AIR program, but likely less than we originally thought and Mr. Mannion is donating too. We’re not sure what will happen with the district budget for this program next year. We also donated \$100 in honor of Dr. Boccuti’s retirement—Beth read a thank you letter from the Ed fund. Dr. Yanni is very supportive of our organization. Stacy Buck brought up the food restrictions for parties. For after school events, we are not bound by the new rules.

VII. Old Business - No old business was discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Peckman, Secretary

The HSA’s next meeting will be on February 17, 2016 at 9:30am at the UES.