

Minutes from the EHS PTO General Meeting
Sept. 29, 2015, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Attendees: Vivien Talghader, Sigrid Redpath, Michele Gatien, Janet Ha, Erin Zamoff, Leslye Emptage, Molly Rice, Judy Brenner, Leny Wallen-Friedman, Heidi Burch, Grace Li, Catherine Groat, Kim Boisvert, Cathy Winter, Eric Bjelland, Tara Johnson, David Hernandez, Diana Hernandez, Jenn Carter, Gavin McLean, Leanne Montgomery, Jody Ramirez, Sara Hromada

Minutes from the September 3rd PTO meeting were approved.

Principal's Report: Bruce Locklear was out of town. Jenn Carter presented a video he had made for the group and then answered questions. The video touched on the "Big 3" at Edina High School this year.

1. Construction - An exciting time involving planning with user groups and getting student/staff input
2. Instruction – Looking at:
 - Power Standard Development
 - Competency Based Instruction - moving from theoretical education model to demonstration education model – visiting other schools to learn from them
 - Pedagogical Changes

"We are looking for the "sweet spot" between technology, the physical plant of the school, and method of instruction."
3. Testing – This section was presented by Jenn Carter
 - MCAs count towards demonstrating Annual Yearly Progress: Math MCA is taken in 11th grade and Reading MCA is taken in 10th grade.
 - The ACT was given to all juniors last year with funding provided by the State. This year the State is again mandating that districts provide the ACT to all juniors but is not providing funding. At \$54.50 per student, this would be a significant additional expense for the district. Luckily, Pearson Co. has agreed to cover the cost of this year's testing statewide to make amends for a snafu in testing last year. This year's mandated test will be on April 19 for all EHS 11th graders.
 - The PLAN test, which is a preliminary ACT test, will be given to all 10th graders on Nov. 4, and all juniors will take a practice ACT test that same day. There will also be ACT prep opportunities provided at school.

School Board Update presented by Leny Wallen-Friedman

- The Board approved the schematic drawings of the High School remodel, and will now review the schematics for the elementary and middle schools.
- School Board Member Wallen-Friedman then went over some slides of what the high school remodel will look like. These can be found on the district website.

Project Lead the Way Grant Use presented by PLTW teacher Jodi Ramirez
Ms. Ramirez thanked the PTO for funding her mini-grant last year for ventilation equipment for an already existing laser engraver. She showed photos and explained that the ventilation equipment makes the laser engraver not only safer for students to use, but also makes the entire system portable so that it can be shared with other Edina classes. The laser engraver allows students to create models of different architectural styles with significantly better precision than making cuts by hand and can also engrave names on metal, such as phones and laptops, to deter thieves.

PTO President's Report presented by Vivien Talghader
The current PTO calendar and roster were reviewed. The PTO marched in the Homecoming Parade, and to foster positive connections, Vivien attended a Student Council meeting, and she and Suzanne Klein attended the September all-faculty meeting. In addition, she highlighted two points from the September Parent Leadership Council (PLC) meeting: first, that the district intends to roll-out new technology next year that will combine the functionalities of disparate software packages including Moodle and Schoolview into one all-inclusive software package, and second, that the next PLC meeting on Oct. 12 from 9:30am-12pm at the Edina Community Center will be a school board candidate forum that is open to the general public.

Parent Communication Network Update presented by PCN Liaison Erin Zamoff
PCN provides forums of district-wide relevance. The first PCN forum of the school year was held last night and covered the topic of "High Tech Kids". Erin encouraged attendance at the next PCN forum on October 26 in EPAC, where the authors of the book "GIST: The essence of raising life-worthy kids" will talk. The forum will touch on how not to over-parent and how to allow some painful decisions to happen, which actually promotes growth.

Membership Report presented by Heidi Burch
The PTO currently has 508 members this year vs. 789 last year. 28% of EHS families belong to the PTO and \$2471 in donations has been received so far this year.

Treasurer Report presented by Kim Boisvert
This year's budget was reviewed. Kim highlighted the following:

- Last month a line item was added for \$5000 for May Term Grants and which the PTO decided to cover by drawing down on reserves.
- The PTO asked and received \$700 from Student Council to partially defray planner costs. This means that rather than splitting planner costs 50/50 as has been done in the past, this year the PTO is only covering about 1/3 of the total cost.
- There is a mini-grant budget of \$6,000 for teachers in the current budget.

Hospitality presented by Sigrid Redpath

A baked potato bar meal is planned for the teachers and staff during the October 8 conferences. This will be available 3:30-5:30 PM. Two shifts of helpers are needed for this and volunteer slots will be put onto the sign-up genius via Peter Kelly.

EHS PTO Forum presented by Vivien Talghader on behalf of Rashi Mittal

The PTO has four forums throughout the year on topics specifically targeting high school parents and students. These forums are distinct from PCN forums which have topics relevant to a broader audience including elementary and middle school parents/students. The first PTO Forum of the school year will be on October 27 from 7-9pm at the high school's Fick Auditorium. The topic is High School Management 101. Guest specialist Dr. JoAnn Hannon along with EHS staff and a student panel will discuss time management, stress management, and peer pressure.

Directory Update presented by Sara Hromada and Tara Johnson

Pam Berling is making last adjustments to the student list. All else is ready and the directory should go to the printer next week. Currently delivery is anticipated by the October 8 conferences.

Go Green Report

No update at this time.

Mini Grants

There have been no submissions yet.

Volunteer Update presented by Vivien Talghader on behalf of Peter Kelly

Ten people signed up to chaperone the High School Homecoming Dance through the sign-up genius website.

Marketing and Communications Update presented by Michele Gatién and Janet Ha

The first PTO Newsletter of the school year went out via Pam Berling on Sept. 16. It contained an invitation to this meeting and advertised the Oct PTO forum. Marketing is always looking for new ideas. Facebook / Twitter were suggested as possibilities.

PTO as a Parent Resource

Gavin McLean, an EHS science teacher, is piloting a new semester course – Forensics. The course is popular and has 3 sections per semester totaling about 150 kids. He gave an overview of the class content and asked for parent feedback as to when a case study would be inappropriate for high school kids. He has no textbook but has created his own curriculum on the cutting edge topic. Parents agreed with him that cases involving school shootings, extreme violence, child-on-child violence and sexual content should not be used. They offered a few suggestions, encouraged him to continue to solicit feedback from the parents of students in his classes, and thought the class sounded very interesting.

Submitted by Sigrid Redpath