

EHS PTO MEETING, February 4, 2016

Attendees: Vivien Talghader, Leslie Vaillancourt, Grace Li, Catherine Groat, Kim Sabow, Suzanne Klein, Leslie Nicholson, Heidi Burch, Sarah Hromada, Leny Wallen-Friedman, Kimberly Boisvert, Eric Bjelland, Peter Kelley, Bruce Locklear

Guest Speakers: Noah Franske/Math Dept, Bill Hicks, Lisa Burnham & Angela Keefner/Counseling Department

Minutes from January 7, 2016 PTO meeting were approved.

School Board Update:

Leny will continue as the high school liaison to the School Board. Leny is also the new School Board Chair. This past month, the School Board spent a lot of time on budget and personalized learning. The teacher contract was approved.

President's Report:

The PTO calendar was reviewed. March Board meeting may include DECA and May Term guest speakers. April Board meeting will be devoted predominately to Strategic Planning for next year. May Board meeting will be a recap of the year. January PLC meeting had social workers and administrators from different schools talking about the increase in scholarship needs. There is more need than most parents are aware of. Question was posed whether PTO should help in the form of school lunches, school supplies, snacks, etc. The district is holding a Legislative Forum on February 18th from 7:30-8:30am with our current legislators.

Principal's Report:

EHS continues to bring home accolades. Academic WorldQuest won the state championship, beating thirty-three other schools. Science Bowl also won state. Boys downhill skiing qualified for state. Model UN is currently in Chicago. Academically, we are trying to close the academic gap. There is a district level meeting to examine what we're doing and why we're doing it. Core Planning Team hopes to have renderings in by March. Two items are being intensely examined: Schedules (zero hour...trying to fit more into a day) and Personalized Learning, what is it and how does it fit into our school? Surveys of students and parents are trying to get at the non-negotiables for Edina Public Schools.

Treasurer's Report:

\$160 was spent on the teacher appreciation brunch. We still have \$4,000 left for mini-grants. Bruce will get the word out and see what teacher needs are.

Hospitality Report:

Sigrid Redpath was gone. However, the Teacher Appreciation brunch in January went well.

Volunteer Report:

Peter discussed the Sweethearts Dance. There were five parent volunteers. We need to figure out a way to get more parents to sign up when volunteers are needed for these events.

Marketing & Communication:

Newsletter went out at end of January and Michelle said they received positive responses. DECA was approached about developing a marketing plan for the PTO and DECA teacher Alicia Halker may come as guest speaker in March.

March 8th is the EHS PTO sponsored "Coffee with the Principal" from 8-9:30am. Michele and Janet will promote. Punchbowl invitations requesting RSVP will be sent to all EHS PTO members.

Go Green:

Melissa was in Chicago.

Mini-Grants Report:

No mini-grants were up for discussion. It was mentioned that not all teachers may be aware of min-grants. We will try to promote awareness.

Guest speakers: Noah Franske/Math Department and Bill Hicks, Lisa Burnham & Angela Keefer/Counseling Department

Noah's grant request for materials to be used with the EHS 3D printer was approved at the last PTO meeting. He was grateful for the grant and explained in person how this would benefit the students. He brought examples of what could be built with the grant.

Bill explained that the Counseling Department is going through a study to review personalized learning and figure out where we've been, where we are going, and how we compare to other schools. They recently visited Palo Alto High School in California and spent time examining how their program compares to EHS. They have specialists: two college counselors who only do college counseling, one counselor per grade who only deal with academics, and a three-tier program (1st tier is a teacher, 2nd tier is a counselor, 3rd tier is outside the school). Counselors do not stay with students all three years whereas at EHS our counselors all do academic, social and post secondary counseling and our students have the same counselor all through high school. Both programs have their pros and cons. But, as Bill, Lisa and Angela pointed out, when comparing our school to others, we are doing a lot of things right at EHS.

Forum Planning & Discussion:

Dates for the remaining PTO forums still need to be set. The format for the Transition to High School forum for incoming 10th graders will be altered. Rather than having a powerpoint presentation by administration for half of the time, a small number of teachers will be invited to kick off the forum with an overview of their classrooms and the clubs that they advise. A small subset of the powerpoint slides shown last year will then be presented (all of the slides will be updated and made available to parents prior). The forum will conclude with the usual student panel Q&A. Vivien requested that folks email her with suggestions for teachers to ask to talk.

Submitted by Kim Sabow-February 22, 2016