Hillside Elementary School

### **PTO Board Meeting**

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| Minutes | March 9, 2016 | 9:15 am | HES Teacher’s Lounge |
| Meeting called by | Jessica Littleton |
| Type of meeting | PTO Board Meeting |
| Facilitator | Maura Harley |
| Meeting Minutes by | Kathleen Gribb |
| Attendees | Lauren Allred, Jeanne Braun, Mrs. Diane Cohle, Kathy Gribb, Jamie Hagan, Maura Harley, Tracy Johnson, Laura Mills, Nicole Scherer |

Agenda Topics

**Call to Order/Welcome Jessica Littleton**

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| **Discussion** | Maura Harley called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m. She motioned for the February meeting minutes to be approved, this was seconded and the Board approved the minutes. |

**Principal’s Report Mrs. Diane Cohle**

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| **Discussion** | Mrs. Cohle presented the Principal’s Report. |
| **Volunteer Clearances –** Mrs. Cohle handed out the new Volunteer Clearance Policy and introduced Jeanne Braun who reviewed the policy in more detail. (See New Business.)**Upcoming Events:** **March 9 –** 4th grade vist to Valley Forge Middle School to see “Seussical the Musical” **March 7-11 -** Book Fair **March 10 –** Book Fair – Donuts for Dad (K-2) PAL fair – 2:00-3:00 for school students; 6:30 pm for family and friends **March 11 –** Book Fair – Donuts for Dad (3rd and 4th grade) **March 28** – Staff In-Service Day; no classes **March 30** – Author Visit – David Wiesner **April 1** – Spirit Day **April 7** – Class pictures **April 12-15** – PSSAs – Language Arts (grades 3-4)  **April 19-21** – PSSAs - Math (grades 3-4)  **April 26** - Staff In-service Day; no classes **April 27-28** – PSSAs – Science (grade 4); April 28th is “Take your child to work day”, this will be excused and PSSAs will be  rescheduled as needed.  |

**President’s Report Jessica Littleton**

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| **Discussion** | Maura Harley presented the President’s Report. |
| **Opening Day Packet Flyers -** Please submit all Opening Day Packet flyers directly to Jessica by the May meeting. She will then give them to Beata. Hopefully this process will help avoid any confusion. **2016-2017 Open Positions –** Any open board/volunteer positions for next year should be submit to Jessica. |

**Vice President of Cultural Arts Nicole Scherer**

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| **Discussion** | Nicole Scherer presented the Cultural Arts Report |
| **Theme Week –** Next year’s focus will be “Art”. Nicole is starting to look at artists to assist with a mosaic or glass project that can be used to update the lobby.**Step Afrika! –** The Friday night performance at Radnor High School was a tremendous success. The Elementary and Middle School students attended performances during the week.**Author Visit –** David Wiesner will be visiting at the end of March. Book Orders have been good.**Upcoming Events:** **Art Goes to School** – March 14-18 – school-wide event **Franklin Institute –**  May 3 -Flight presentation for2nd Graders **The Bee Man –** June 3 **-** 3rd GradeNicole is starting to plan for the 2016-2017 school year. Some ideas include: a poetry/percussion group to visit during National Poetry Month with a presentation based on the popular Broadway play “Hamilton”. There is also a new science presentation in the works.**APEX Fun Run –** Nicole has tentatively booked October 17-28 for the Fun Run. Shannon, the APEX representative, is scheduled to call Mrs. Cohle next week to review all the details. Laura Mills, acknowledged that this type of event was a good fit for Hillside, however, she was a little concerned with the percentage that APEX takes of the proceeds. She stated that the Fun Run Lisa Nishikawa runs in the fall might have lost money and suggested that similar events be researched to see how profitable this event would be for Hillside. In additional, if this is to be the main fundraiser Laura stressed that motivating the students and encouraging family participation would be key. One thought was to have special bracelets that the children would receive for completing each lesson. Maura Harley will look at the budget to see what fundraisers can be eliminated so we don’t overburden the families with too many fundraisers throughout the year. Tracy Johnson mentioned that her niece’s school recently held a similar event. She thought it was a wonderful experience for her niece, who is typically shy, as it really seemed to boost her confidence. Tracy was really impressed with her enthusiasm for the event and how well she “pitched” the event when soliciting donations.Mrs. Carreon has booked Wilson Farm Park for The Rachel Paster 5K the week after this two-week event. The general thought was that this might serve as a motivator for the students and might encourage them to participate in both events. Nicole also reminded the group that all the APEX Fun Run activities would be held during school hours so they won’t conflict with any outside activities which will help boost participation.  |

**Treasurer Maura Harley J**

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| **Discussion** | Maura Harley presented the Treasurer’s Report. |
| Maura Harley informed the board that expenses are currently under budget and fundraising is ahead of budget. She felt that we would have funds available to donate to “sprucing up” the lobby this year. As discussed at previous meetings, this will be a two year project. In addition, next year’s Theme Week will focus on Art and will involve a project to help with this effort. Proceeds from the Parent Social exceeded our budget, even with the smaller turnout (about 100 people). Tracy Johnson reiterated that we need to clearly communicate to the parents where all fundraising proceeds go and to highlight the great programs the PTO sponsors. Kathy Gribb suggested a “buddy program” where 3rd or 4th grade parents mentor a new family, explaining the various school events, encouraging their participation, and inviting/taking them to PTO events. She also suggested a “New Family Ice Cream Social” or another similar event to be held at the beginning of school to welcome the new families and give them the opportunity to learn more about the PTO and the programs that they sponsor. Jeanne Braun also suggested alternating the type of event held for the Parent Social. She stated that other schools will hold a nicer event for a few years followed by a more casual/less expensive event that the entire family can attend.Maura also mentioned that the accountant fees were up this year; however, this is a one-time increase to cover the system upgrade. Maura stated that she recently received an invoice for last year’s Spring Fair. She was concerned about how this could have gone unpaid for so long and suggested making sure all invoices are mailed directly to the Hillside PTO and not a personal address to prevent this from happening in the future.  |

**Vice President of Fundraising Laura Mills J**

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| **Discussion** | Laura Mills presented the Fundraising Report. |
| **T/E Library Rental Cards –** Allison Sanka asked Laura if the PTO would be interested in selling library rental cards as a Hillside fundraiser. The rental cards will entitle the holder to rent 4 books/games or 3 audiobooks for $5 and 8 books/games or 6 audiobooks for $10 from either the Tredyffrin or Paoli Libraries. Hillside PTO will receive 30% of the sales. Maura Harley motioned to approve this fundraiser, Laura Mills seconded the motion. The board all voted in favor. **Museum Passes –** The Tredyffrin and Easttown libraries have passes to some of the area museums that can be “borrowed”. There is a late fee of $25 for any overdue items.**Pizza Book Bingo –** To celebrate National Library Week, the Tredyffrin Library will hold a Family Pizza Book Bingo night on Friday, April 8 from 6-8 PM.**Spring Fair –** Catherine Gauthier will be the chair for the Spring Fair this year. A call for volunteers will go out soon. **ARCH** – Laura and Jeanne Braun informed the group that ARCH will be hosting “T/E’s Got Talent” on Thursday, March 30 at 7:30 PM. Talent will include teachers/staff across all district schools. Some acts will include: a performance with Mr. Haines and all the other district music teachers, Rock Bands, comedy acts, VFMS’s rapping gym teacher, synchronized swimming, just to name a few. Tickets are available on the ARCH website. Flyers were also distributed at the DELTA Step Afrika! performance. |

**Vice President of Social Functions Maria Herr**

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| **Discussion** | Maria Herr presented the Social Functions Report. |
| Maria Herr was unable to attend the meeting so there was no update. |

**Vice President of Membership & Services Tracy Johnson**

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| **Discussion** | Tracy Johnson presented the Membership & Services Report. |
| **Communications Committee –** Tracy thanked the Board and all the committees on behalf of Allison Sanka for using the online submission system. Overall, the new system seems to be going well and has really streamlined everything for Allison’s team; however, some submissions are still being received late. Distribution is going back to weekly emails with “Blast” emails only as needed. The Communications Team will send an email detailing the new schedule. Ideally, submissions should be received 2-3 weeks prior to an event to give the team ample time include in emails and on the website. On average, emails have a 35% open rate, however this percentage is probably higher because families often have multiple emails listed.**Year Book –** Sales information will be distributed shortly. |

**Committee Report**

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| **Discussion** | **Theme Week –** Lauren Allred attended the meeting to give the board an update on this year’s Theme Week. The theme for this year is “Dance”. Contempra Dance will work with all students to teach them various dances throughout the week focusing on a different decade each day. There will also be a “dance party” at recess. Fourth Graders will learn specific dances and perform a show for the whole school at the end of the week. In pervious years the Fourth Graders received special t-shirts to commemorate the event. This year it was suggested that the money go towards props to be used during the dance routines (students would keep them as mementos) and a “time machine” tunnel which would “change” the decade each day. Theme week will culminate with a Family Dance Party on Friday night.Maura Harley questioned whether students might be disappointed not to receive a t-shirt as they have in previous years. The board was mixed on this. Lauren stated that most of their budget would be needed to fund the t-shirts and given the dance theme, the committee felt that it would be more fun for the students to have props and the Time Tunnel. Mrs. Cohle asked if the t-shirts might be a distraction during the performance. Maura Harley stated that Michelle Barton sold PAL boards at the school store and planned on donating the proceeds ($350) to be used for the Conestoga Relay t-shirts for the 4th grade. She also said that Fundraising is ahead of our original projection and maybe additional funds could be donated for the t-shirts. Tracy Johnson will follow up with Michelle to see what the overall satisfaction level was and determine whether or not the school store will continue to sell PAL boards next year. If they do, she suggested we allocate the proceeds to the 4th grade Theme Week t-shirts since sales come from the 4th grade students. Mrs. Cohle mentioned that she spoke with Mrs. Briggs-Blomer, the fourth grade coordinator, and she is fine with whatever the board decides. |

**Old Business**

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| **Discussion** | No old business to discuss. |

**New Business**

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| **Discussion** | **Volunteer Clearances –** The District has reviewed the Volunteer Clearance policy and came up with better guidelines. Clearances will be needed starting with the 2016-2017 school year. Volunteer positions that involve either (1) the welfare of a child or (2) an ongoing presence with regular and repeated contact with students will require clearances. This new policy will be enforced across all eight district schools. Clearances are now free (except fingerprinting which will cost $25) and will be good for five years and will be tracked via the Raptor system. The person at the front desk will have access to this system and will verify clearances when volunteers sign-in.Mrs. Cohle distributed a handout detailing the revised policy. The policy includes a grid to help determine what volunteer positions will require clearance. Some positions are still “at the principal’s discretion”. The policy may differ between Elementary School and High School (i.e. field trip volunteers for Elementary School may need clearances but they may not be needed at the High School level since High School students are more independent.)Tracy Johnson suggested that we have clearly defined requirements that can be shared with all parents. She will work with Jessica Littleton to draft an email and will review it with Mrs. Cohle and Jeanne for their approval. It was also suggested that we add “clearances required” to the Volunteer sheet included in the Welcome packets for any position that will need clearances. We will also need to remember to ask “Do you have clearances” on all sign-up forms (i.e. Field Trips, Classroom parties etc.) Last year it was suggested that all Board Members obtain their clearances. Since clearances are free, we should also encourage all parents interested in volunteering to get their clearances since there are a lot of grey areas. |

**Adjournment Maura Harley**

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| **Discussion** | The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM. |