

# Hillside Elementary School

## PTO BOARD MEETING

Minutes

September 14, 2016

9:15 am

HES Teacher's Lounge

<b>Meeting called by</b>	Tracy Johnson
<b>Type of meeting</b>	PTO Board Meeting
<b>Facilitator</b>	Tracy Johnson
<b>Meeting Minutes by</b>	Kathleen Gribb
<b>Attendees</b>	Kristin Becket, Jeanette Brown, Mrs. Diane Cohle, Kathleen Gribb, Maura Harley, Tracy Johnson, Kate Kilgarriff, Jessica Littleton, Laura Mills, Miss Kelly Payne, Maria Rick, Nicole Scherer, Xiaomei Shao, Jessica Tinneney, Krasimira Velikova-Blagoeva, Yanping Xing, Dana Zdancewicz

## Agenda Topics

### Call to Order/Welcome

Tracy Johnson

<b>Discussion</b>	Tracy Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:15 am and called for a vote to approve the June 2016 meeting minutes. The board approved. She also called for a vote to approve the 2016-2017 PTO Budget. The board approved this as well.
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### Principal's Report

Mrs. Diane Cohle

<b>Discussion</b>	Mrs. Cohle presented the Principal's Report.
<p>Mrs. Cohle welcomed everyone to the first PTO Meeting of the new school year. She stated that the first few weeks at school have gone smoothly and she was amazed that we're already into our second cycle!</p> <p><b>Upcoming Events:</b>  <b>Wednesday, September 14</b> - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Curriculum Night  <b>Thursday, September 22</b> - 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Curriculum Night  <b>Wednesday, September 28</b> - Picture Day  <b>Thursday, September 29</b> - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip to Longwood Gardens; NOTE: Parents chaperones will need to have their clearances in order to attend. There will be a "visitor" vs "volunteer" distinction indicating whether a parent has their certification.  <b>Monday, October 3</b> - No School  <b>October 4-7</b> - ERB Testing for grades 2-4  <b>Thursday, October 13</b> - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Field Trip to Milky Way Farms  <b>Friday, October 14</b> - Pride Day</p> <p><b>Back to School</b> - Mrs. Cohle thanked the PTO for all their help in putting the back-to-school packets together and for another successful Open House. During the Open House Mrs. Cohle made sure to direct traffic to the cafeteria first so that parents could see all that the PTO has to offer.</p> <p><b>Word of the Week</b> - Mrs. Cohle said that she followed up on the suggestion from the June PTO meeting that the Word of the Week be incorporated into the Spelling Test. She said that this needs to be a standalone item.</p>	

**Halloween Parade** – At the request of the Police Department, last year there were two separate Halloween parades (one AM and one PM) to try to improve the parking situation. This worked well, so this will continue again this year. The Halloween parades will be held on Monday, October 31.

**Constitution Day** – Nicole Scherer asked Mrs. Cohle to explain Constitution Day. Mrs. Cohle said that she makes an announcement in an effort to help the students remember this historic event.

**President's Report**

**Tracy Johnson**

<b>Discussion</b>	Tracy Johnson presented the President's Report.
<p><b>Sunshine Fund Committee</b> – Tracy Johnson shared the guidelines for the Sunshine Fund with the group. Larissa Leon will stay on as Chair for the committee and Tracy will represent the Board. Larissa has a detailed spreadsheet that captures all that the committee has done for the past few years. Tracy will make sure to mention the committee at all the Curriculum nights and encourage parents and teachers/staff alike to make sure they inform the PTO of anyone who might be a candidate. Please don't assume that the PTO already knows about a situation as we want to reach as many families as possible.</p>	
<p><b>Lobby Renovation</b> – The goal for this year is to update the main lobby. White Horse Fabrics in Berwyn has generously donated their time to helping with this effort. Tracy will meet with a representative from White Horse Fabric on Friday, September 23, 2016 and have them view the area. Jessica Tinneney asked if we could include the Teacher's Lounge curtains as part of the project. Everyone was in agreement! Mrs. Cohle stated that any major change to the lobby (i.e. painting) would need District approval first. Kristin Becket also mentioned that there is a District approval process for all new vendors and recommended that we do this before signing any contracts.</p>	
<p><b>Hawky Campaign</b> – Tracy informed the group that although she had anticipated doing a Hawky "push" for the lobby renovation, that may not be needed since the PTO was able to earmark the excess funds from last year. We will table that decision until after we receive the estimate from White Horse some time in October.</p>	
<p><b>KidStuff Coupon Books</b> – The KidStuff Coupon Books will be distributed via backpacks on Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup>. The fundraiser will run through September 30<sup>th</sup>.</p>	
<p><b>Open Positions</b> – Tracy stated that most of the current PTO positions have been filled. The few remaining open positions include Parent Social/Auction chair and some of the clubs. If you know anyone that might be interested, please let Tracy know. Next year a few key positions will be opening up: Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Nicole Scherer will be staying on as Cultural Arts Chair for the 2017-2018 school year, but that position will need to be filled after that. It would be great if someone could "shadow" Nicole next so they can be part of the contract signing process. Maura Harley suggested that we make certain positions a firm 2-year term to avoid burnout (i.e. Treasurer and Directory Chair). Maura asked if the by-laws would have to be amended if we adopted this change. Maria Rick stated that with almost 450 students, the Directory process is very taxing. It was suggested that maybe the job be broken down into different tasks with different people responsible for each individual task. Kathy Gribb mentioned that Valley Forge Middle School solicits volunteers to proof read the directory before publishing. Another suggestion was to have a table at Back to School Night/Open House for parents to review their information. The file is in excel so WiFi is not necessary. It was also suggested that maybe we could include on the website for people to submit their information similar to the Volunteer Signups, however, Tracy didn't think the PTO website could handle this type of form. Tracy will ask the other PTO presidents how they handle this at the next Presidents Meeting.</p>	
<p><b>Parking Map</b> – Tracy has a graphic designer working on both a color and black and white version of the parking map. They have included wording from the TE Police. Once completed, Tracy will distribute to all the Chairs to share with their committees and copies will also be posted to the PTO website.</p>	

**Vice President of Cultural Arts**

**Nicole Scherer**

<b>Discussion</b>	Nicole Scherer presented the Cultural Arts Report
<p><b>Enchantment Theater</b> – The first Cultural Arts activity this year is a production by Enchantment Theater on Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. They will be doing "The Beast in the Bayou" which is modeled after Beauty and the Beast and set in New Orleans. It touches on environmental themes.</p>	
<p><b>Crime Scene Science</b> – This school-wide assembly will be held on Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> and will showcase CSI tools and methods to solve a crime.</p>	
<p><b>Author Visit</b> – Jerry Pinkney will be visiting Hillside on Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>. Jerry is originally from the Philadelphia area and even has a day in his honor – July 19<sup>th</sup>. He has won numerous awards including the Laura Ingles Wilder Award.</p>	

**Chinese New Year** - Nicole is still working on alternatives for this year's Chinese New Year celebration in order to accommodate the new food policy guidelines. Any ideas are welcome. She will focus more on this after the Fun Run.

**Constitution Center** – Nicole has been looking into the assemblies offered by the Constitution Center for next year. They are reasonably priced and include titles such as: Being an Active Citizen, Independence Day and Growing up in America. She will share her findings with the teachers to see if they have any interest in adding these programs.

**Theme Week** – This year's theme is Art. The committee has planned a fused glass mosaic activity for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade which will be hung in the atrium by the Art Room. Other activities will be used for the lower grades.

**Fun Run** – Shannon David will meet with the teachers to review the specifics and their involvement. Activities will start on October 18<sup>th</sup>. The initial parent letter went out on Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. Additional information will follow. Christine Carberry is the chair of this event. All events will be held during school hours and can be held indoors if needed.

**DELTA** – The Allegany River Dancers will be performing next year. Nicole is exploring having them come to Hillside since the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade has asked about having a Native American assembly.

**Treasurer**

**Maura Harley**

<b>Discussion</b>	Maura Harley presented the Treasurer's Report
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Maura Harley presented the budget. We had a surplus last year of approximately \$13,000 which will be dedicated to the lobby renovations. As Tracy mentioned, both Maura and Maria Rick (Assistant Treasurer) will be rotating out at the end of the school year so we should be looking for replacements.

Maura passed around a letter from Main Line Animal Rescue thanking the PTO for the donation we gave on behalf of the Fourth Grade with the proceeds from the School Store. She asked if they might like to display the certificate at the Store.

**Vice President of Fundraising**

**Kate Kilgarriff**

<b>Discussion</b>	Kate Kilgarriff presented the Fundraising Report.
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**KidStuff Coupon Books** – The coupon books will be distributed on Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Fun Run** – Christine Carberry has agreed to be the chair for this event to be held in mid-October.

**Book Fair** – The date of the Book Fair had to be adjusted because it was too close to the Fun Run and would have interfered with the bookkeeping for the run.

**Barnes and Noble Day** – Mrs. Cohle, on behalf of Mr. Haines, asked if a date had been chosen. Kate will have Beth Lee, the Chair, work with Mr. Haines and Barnes and Noble to select a date. This will be communicated as soon as it is decided.

**Vice President of Social Functions**

**Jessica Littleton**

<b>Discussion</b>	Tracy Johnson presented the Social Functions Report.
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**Pizza Bingo** – Lordes Campos-Cruz has offered to help Jessica Tinneney run Pizza Bingo. Volunteers will be needed to help set up, check-in, sell food, announce bingo (this might already be filled) and clean up. Responses have been good so far. The theme this year is "A Warm Welcome".

**Walk to School Day** – Beth Giuliani has the signs from last year that can be re-used. There are also extra prizes remaining from last year. Volunteers will be needed to man the front and back doors.

**Parent Social/Auction** – There is currently a committee of three working on this event. It may be held in the new brew house in Berwyn.

**Vice President of Membership & Services**

**Laura Mills**

<b>Discussion</b>	Laura Mills presented the Membership & Services Report.
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**Classroom Coordinator** – Shannon David is the chair for the Classroom Coordinators. Shannon has scheduled a meeting to review the duties of the classroom coordinators and all the important dates/events for the school year.

**Water Ice Social** – Kate Nelson has agreed to chair this new event. The Social will be held on Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 7:00 PM. It is not a fundraiser, just a fun (free!) event to get the students and their families together. Laura has a big banner that she will hang on the bus ramp. The committee is still looking for additional volunteers to fill half-hour shifts.

**Outside Clubs** – Laura stated that some of the outside clubs did not have a parent representative and she asked if it was necessary to fill these spots. The outside clubs used to be run by the parents, however, these are not PTO sponsored clubs. They are run by outside vendors so Mrs. Cohle thought it was important to have a parent overseeing the clubs due to the safety of the students. Tracy Johnson obtained copies of all the vendor clearances over the summer to keep on file. Jessica Tinneney asked if families could receive a discount for children participating in the club as an incentive for volunteering. This is up to the individual vendor. Kathy Gribb mentioned that in previous years Bricks4Kidz had a rotation and each parent signed up for a specific day so that one person didn't have to cover the entire session.

**Welcoming Committee** – Kate Nelson is the chair for the Welcoming Committee. Currently there is a budget of \$100 which Laura thought was on the low side. Maura Harley said that since the budget wasn't really used in the past they had lowered it. If needed, that amount can be increased this year. Laura mentioned that new families typically received a coupon for the School Store but thought it might be nice to do something for families new to the area. Beaumont Elementary School has a dinner to welcome the new families but this might be funded from within the PTO with someone hosting in their home and other PTO members supplying the food. The Fall Coffees have not been well attended.

**Yearbook** – We will be using the same vendor for yearbook this year, however, we were able to get a new representative who has worked with Hillside in the past and seems "on the ball". Carolyn Noll is the chair again this year and Shannon David is on the committee so she can inform Carolyn of all the issues we had last year and troubleshoot if need be. iPhone pictures will be accepted this year. It is unclear if it is OK to use other phones. Carolyn has requested only about 6 pictures per classroom be submitted to keep it more manageable. She may not be soliciting Shutterbugs this year. Tracy Johnson suggested that the supplemental be included in the pricing this year. She suggested a price of \$23. Last year the yearbook cost \$22 + \$4 for the supplements. It was \$25 two years ago. She reminded everyone that this was a service not a fundraiser so we're not looking to make a lot of money on sales. Other suggestions included having a discount for families ordering multiple copies or having two sales "pushes" with an early order discount available. Tracy wasn't sure if the vendor website was capable of either option. Tracy thought that if we sold the yearbook for \$23 including the supplemental and sold the same amount as last year we'd make about \$1,500. The board approved.

## Committee Report - ARCH

Kristin Becket

### Discussion

**ARCH** - Kristin Becket is the ARCH representative for Hillside Elementary School. She explained that ARCH was created in 1980 by concerned parents and stands for "Area Residents Caring and Helping. The main focus has been on drugs and alcohol but now includes many more topics. There are two upcoming events: (1) Movie "If Only" a short film (by Mark Wahlberg Foundation) intended to raise awareness about drug abuse will be shown at 7:00 PM, November 9<sup>th</sup> at TE Middle School and (2) Dr. Ken Ginsburg be giving a talk about "grit" – "Building Resilience in Children and Adolescents" on December 12, 7:00 PM at TE Middle School. A PA Use Study has been completed at the High School level. Results will be out soon. A "topic night" will be scheduled to discuss the results. Kristin worked on a technology piece called "Screenagers" which will be presented to Malvern Prep. If all goes well, it will also be shown in the TE School district.

She encouraged everyone to check out the ARCH website (<http://www.archcares.org/>) to view lots of helpful information and to check for new posts. Kristin encouraged anyone with questions to contact her.

**Father Daughter Dance** – Kristin suggested Hillside host a Father Daughter Dance for the entire community. The Girl Scouts already host one, but girls who are not participating in Girl Scouts are not invited. Beaumont Elementary hosts a similar dance and has had great success. Kristin volunteered to chair the event. She expected costs to include DJ, photo booth and water ice and anticipated having all other needs donated. She will keep costs down and anticipates at least breaking even. Regan Kreszwick and Lauren Allred (Theme Week Chairs) agreed to be part of the planning committee. Laura Mills asked if a Mother Son event could be held at the same time. A vote was taken during "New Business" and the dance was approved.

**Committee Report – Communications Committee****Jeannette Brown**

<b>Discussion</b>	Jeannette Brown introduced herself as the new Communications Chair. She is also new to Hillside and new to the area. She is excited to be involved with such a great team. Tracy Johnson thanked Jeanette for taking on the Communications Committee and offered her assistance, if needed, as she has extensive experience with WebPress. Krashmira Velikova works on the Newsletter and informed the group that she is working on increasing the font size. She also stated the our "open" rate for emails is around 40-50%. Jeanette has emailed instructions on how to submit items for the Blast Newsletter and encouraged everyone to share their chairs. They will be sticking with the Friday deadline for submissions.
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**Committee Report – InterSchool Council (ISC)****Dana Zdancewicz**

<b>Discussion</b>	<p>Dana Zdancewicz is the liaison for the InterSchool Council (ISC). The ISC serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among parent/teacher organizations in the District. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at the school district building on West Valley Road. All five elementary schools will be represented to discuss what is going on in the district. Every month a different school is invited to present.</p> <p>Dana asked the group for ideas for her presentation. She has discussed the green roof and the new waterfall in previous presentations. Jessica Tinneney suggested we highlight all the work the PTO Communications Committee does to keep the Hillside families informed. She particularly likes how the PTO website is constantly changing. Another suggestion was to mention how we will be utilizing the Classroom Coordinators to share Hillside information with the families this year. Mrs. Cohle thought that while the curriculum is consistent among all the elementary schools, Hillside has a very powerful Bucketfiller program and really works hard to give the students the proper tools to become good citizens. Special programs include monthly Spirit Days and Pride Day which devotes a full day to this effort. The focus this year will be on "mindfulness." Nicole Scherer stated that she has brought this up at past DELTA meetings and this seems to be a program unique to Hillside and she thought it would be a great thing to showcase at the ISC meeting. Miss Payne also said that she has worked in other schools and that Pride Day and the Bucketfiller program really stood out to her when she first came to Hillside. Dana asked if Mrs. Cohle could send her verbiage to use when presenting to the ISC.</p>
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**New Business**

<b>Discussion</b>	<p><b>Father Daughter Dance</b> – Tracy Johnson called for a vote to be taken to approve the Father Daughter Dance. The board unanimously approved. Tracy will let Kristin Becket know we approved this and ask if she's willing to take on the Mother Son event as well. Possibly a bowling event on Sunday the same weekend as the dance.</p> <p><b>SignUp</b> – Kathy Gribb distributed instructions on how to create volunteer signups using the new Signup website. The PTO has purchased a membership that will allow 150 users to create signups, distribute via email/link/social media and run reports. We will try this out for a year to see if it is worth purchasing in the future. Kathy will distribute a soft copy of the instructions for all the chairs to share with their teams. The instructions will also be posted to the PTO website.</p> <p><b>PTO Mailbox</b> – Kathy Gribb informed the new members of the board that the PTO Mailbox can be found in the main office where the teacher mailboxes are. The PTO slot is in the middle of the bottom row. All chairs are encouraged to check the mailbox often and claim anything that is there's. Kathy will also check and send reminder emails as needed.</p>
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**Adjournment****Tracy Johnson**

<b>Discussion</b>	The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 am.
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