**Arcola Intermediate School**

**Home & School Association**

**Monthly Meeting**

**September 13, 2016, 9:15 a.m.**

In Attendance:

Nicole Drake Sarah Spletzer Cindy Rhoads

Colleen Kutz Ryan Creeden Amy Mangano

Mary Hull Suzy Dowell Liz Drummond

Cathy Stewart Marie Kramer Mercy Varghese

Altaira Heiser Michelle Petko

1. Welcome (Call to order and Time)

Liz Drummond called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m., Nicole Drake welcomed everyone.

1. Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

1. Approval of [last month’s] minutes – n/a
2. Principal's Report – Amy Mangano

Mrs. Mangano shared that:

Arcola administration has tried over the first week of school to do some foundation, culture, routine and expectations building. They had a lot of meetings with the kids, such as the “All Arcola” meeting on the first day. She wanted to emphasize that she is putting a lot more information out, such as the Arcola in the Middle newsletter. Arcola administrators want parents in the loop, so they are making sure to keep the website current and send home newsletters.

Transportation was an issue the first week, but otherwise the week went very well. Arcola office staff did all it could during the first week to be the “middle man,” with transportation issues, and tried to intervene on behalf of parents. Arcola is watching and monitoring the situation and understands that it is bad for everyone when the kids arrive to school or home late. Frustrated parents are encouraged to call Mrs. Mangano, and email the transportation office, create a record of calls and complaints. Arcola is not documenting student lateness at this point while transportation gets straightened out. Teachers have been asked to keep kids caught up on morning announcements, etc. The Arcola News Journal is being emailed to the teachers, so students are able to view it that way. All in all, the students are handling it all well. Arcola will keep up the communication with parents and partnership with Home and School.

Mr. Creeden discussed:

This year’s Halloween event. He explained that he got mixed reviews about last year’s event, in part that the event might have caused more work for teachers (competitions for home rooms, winner of teacher teams got an ice cream party. Some teachers didn’t dress, some other frustrations). If they decide not to do an event this year, perhaps whatever is budgeted for that event can go into the Homecoming parade. Mrs. Mangano and Mr. Creeden will be meeting with the faculty advisory group and will get some feedback from the teachers. If Arcola does a Halloween thing, it will be geared toward channeling the students’ energy. Kids are likely to dress up, we hope to make it more exciting and more motivating with some unique prizes.

This year Red Ribbon Week is 10-24 – 10/28, and a theme is in the works.

1. Teacher’s Report – Mrs. Stewart

Mrs. Stewart shared with the group:

She is the Science Fair Sponsor for Arcola, and attended the meeting to seek help for this year’s Science Fair. Usually someone from H&S works with her to help recruit judges, bring dinner to the volunteer judges, set up, break down, etc. Volunteers may need to attend 1 or 2 meetings before the fair, which is November 18 and 19. The students already have the science fair information and she has handed out judge recruitment forms. Two-thirds of the judges she needs come from her existing contacts. This volunteer commitment is over by December 1. Potential volunteers can email her anytime with questions. Essentially, there are 35-40 judges who will need dinner on November 18, so 2-3 H&S volunteers starting from 3:00 p.m. are necessary at that time. On Saturday November 19, she will also need 2-3 H&S volunteers from 8:00 a.m. – 2:30/3:00 in the afternoon, to place metals on the top 24 submissions and break the place down while Mrs. Stewart meets with parents.

Exciting news with Science Fair: Arcola has placed in the top 3 in Montgomery County for the last 9 years running. We were first in the County for 3 years in a row, which earned us a place on the plaque.

We discussed the budget for the Science Fair (mainly judges’ dinners), when Cindy asked if H&S needs to give money for the event. Ms. Stewart described her budget with the District and would be asking H&S for $150.00 at the most.

Liz explained that last year we talked about having a teacher come every month and share out – maybe they would share anything big they have coming up. Mrs. Mangano and Mr. Creeden will bring this up at next staff meeting.

1. Officers' Reports
   1. Co-Presidents’ Report – Liz Drummond and Nicole Drake

Nicole discussed:

We have a lot going on with Konstella, our new communication system. An Arcola directory will be available through Konstella, there will not be a separate directory forthcoming.

Homecoming is coming up on October 8. We are posing some questions to administration about the parade float for this year, who we should expect to be working with to help put that together. The parade is at 9:00 a.m. on the 8th, staging will be at the Lower Providence Fire Hall on Ridge, the route is E. Mt. Kirk to the high school. Mr. Creeden discussed that last year NJHS and Arcola Connection handled the float, and put out notice to theatre and athletes for any help they wanted to offer. It has not yet been determined yet who is taking it on, if no one, we’ll reach out to parents for volunteers.

Nicole discussed that we’re working on planning our Activity Nights. We have permission from Mrs. Mangano to hold a dance, and we are also planning some movie nights, trivia nights, and open mic nights. We will be sending a poll out to the students to determine what they would enjoy. Our first activity night is scheduled for October 14.

We will also be working with Adam Chantry, who has taken over the planetarium, to bring some music-based laser shows to the planetarium for students and the community.

Liz explained that we are looking for committee members to work on activity night planning and chairing, Michelle Petko volunteered to co-chair Activity Night event planning.

* 1. Treasurer's Report – Cindy Rhoads

Cindy discussed

The budget for approval, with a couple of changes. She asked to add $150.00 for the Science Fair. Suzy mentioned that we have good lead time on that event to apply for donations from Wegmans.

Cindy was contacted by the school nurse, who is responsible for Red Ribbon Week. She is asking for $500.00, which is more than last year. We agreed to provide $200.00.

Liz brought up that we have $700 in for an Arcola Read-A-Thon (Arcola), which we will address with Ashley. We discussed that part of this could be custodian fees and the question came up whether there is a cost associated with custodial services for events after school hours.

We also discussed One Book One School – there was confusion over whether it is happening this year, and it is in the budget. Regarding MCC dues, Cindy explained that she was told to leave it on just in case. Suzy mentioned that Ashley said MCC is not collecting dues this year.

We discussed whether we would be doing some sort of Student Fun Day at the end of the school year. We do not have anything budgeted in for that. The suggestion was made to turn the last scheduled Activity Night (May 12, 2017) into a summer-themed event. Maybe make it a movie night, showing a beach movie.

Cindy moved to approve the budget as it is now, Liz seconded. The H&S board voted to approve the budget with discussed changes. The motion passed.

The first deposits were made for no frills, donations are currently up to $2,960.00.

Cindy brought up the building fund that we have not used. She suggested placing garbage cans and dog waste bags station to address the problem of people walking their dogs (and not cleaning up after them) on Arcola’s athletic fields. Suzy raised that we are not supposed to buy any physical plant items, as well as concern about encouraging dog walking. Now that we are a non-profit, spending is watched a lot more closely. There cannot be purchases like microwaves, or we could lose status. Aramark and the District should be covering something like microwaves. A discussion ensued about Aramark charging for plastic ware for non-lunch buyers.

We discussed Mini-Grant responses received from the distribution at the end of the 2015-2016 school year. Tara Cantello requested $200 for bulletin board paint, paint pens, etc., for touching up hallway paintings, bulletin boards, etc., around Arcola. Ms. Cantello also made a request for Veterans’ Day - $500 for tablecloths, table toppers, serving utensils, etc. The group discussed that this might be a good project for Girl Scout/Boy Scout involvement, and that we should have a H&S liason for this. Sarah volunteered for this role.

We did not vote on Ms. Cantello’s Mini-Grants. We will issue this year’s Mini-Grants in late October and February.

* 1. Corresponding Secretary's Report – Ashley Wilkerson

Ashley submitted a report as follows:

191 parents registered on Konstella which represents over 200 students. (Actual numbers are higher than this since not all users have added student information.) Probably reaching the same or larger audience as e-alerts since many of those subscribers are duplicates or are no longer Arcola parents on review of the subscription list.  
  
Emails with the Arcola Morning Announcements should be sent to me from the school starting Tuesday. A signup to receive the Announcements went out on Konstella and within half an hour 50 people have signed up,   
  
Calendar is updated through the first half of the year and is set to send email reminders one day before each event.  
  
If anyone needs anything sent out, please let me know.  
  
Need to discuss most efficient way to publicize and/or sign people up at Back to School Night. Maybe a table with 6 iPads- 2 for each team? Could Arcola provide those? We could use this Back to School Night app to rapidly sign people up.

We discussed staffing back to school night with opposite grade parents, as well as the need to secure iPads to sign up for Konstella

* 1. Recording Secretary’s Report – Sarah Spletzer

No report to give at this time.

1. Methacton School Board Report – Brenda Hackett

As Ms. Hackett was not present, the group discussed the following:

Dr. Zerbe’s contract, as well as others, is up next year.

Home and School should help get the word out on when the school board meetings take place.

1. Methacton Coordinating Council Report – Cindy Rhoads

Cindy reported:

There was discussion at the MCC meeting on what to do about vacancies on the board, possibly by board appointment and that bylaws must be revised first. MCC is now officially a non-profit, donations are tax deductible and EIN number should be all we need to provide donors. We are to let MCC know if we are having problems getting donations with the EIN number. School officers now have to sign bylaws yearly. Representatives will bring bylaws for signing to H&S meetings. Redistricting is still under discussion. There was a report done in the fall. The process will be done all over again for a vote in the fall. ESL wants to pair up with MCC. “Up close and personal” meetings are coming back. This is where each school presents at a board meeting about its activities and plans. Worcester is scheduled for October. Ashley will create the schedule. A Methacton group focused on special needs advocacy and inclusion wants to pair with MCC. The High School football team 2 years ago received an inclusion award for including special needs students on the football team.

Regarding any recycling program, there is none at Arcola and Skyview. Part of the issue is getting someone to head up such a program.

1. Old/New Business

New Business: Liz discussed that Mercy approached her at orientation about taking on box tops at Arcola, and the Giant Card too. Arcola is not currently a registered box top school, and Giant hasn’t given Liz a good answer so far about signing up. Mercy will handle registering Arcola for Giant Food Stores (PA). If we are registered by then, we could put out a half sheet at Back To School night. Mercy and Marie Kramer will handle box tops. Mercy will be contact email and principal’s email is also required.

Liz also discussed that Boscovs gave out coupons (500 for the district) to sell for $5. The coupons are good for 25% off purchases on October 18. Suzy is selling them tonight for Skyview. We will post the signs Boscov’s gave us at back to school night.

Nicole clarified for the group that the magazine drive is not a H&S activity, but an Arcola activity. H&S merely volunteers to help hand things out. Profits go to the principal’s fund. Liz and Nicole will have a conversation on this, they will send an email on concerns.

Sarah will put together a list of committees.

1. Questions/concerns – none voiced.
2. Next meeting Tuesday October 11, 2016 at 7pm
3. Adjourn at 10:50.