

**MHS Home & School Association
Minutes
March 7, 2019**

In Attendance:

Bob Kramer
Mary Hull
Cindy Hartson

Marie Kramer
Karen Lutz

Sarah Spletzer
Michelle Petko

Mercy Varghese
Cara Woudenberg

Welcome – Introductions

MHS Staff Reports

Principal – Administration representative not available

Teachers – Cara Woudenberg reported:

- **From the Art Department:** There is a Professional Art exhibit with work from Methacton art students at Shannondell on March 8, beginning with an artist talk from 3-3:30 pm in the auditorium, and a reception from 4-6 pm in the gallery. Art will be displayed in the gallery until April 11. Please contact Beth Hall at bhall@methacton.org for more information.
- **From the Methacton Unified Track & Field Team:** This team is being started by coaches Sarah Quintois and Matt Alzamora. Special Olympics Interscholastic Unified Sports® (IUS) is a fully-inclusive co-ed high school sports program which successfully brings together students with and without disabilities. They train together and compete as equal teammates and through this experience, become friends. IUS teams are regarded like every other interscholastic sports team at the high school. It is a 10-week long season which begins in March and ends in May. The team will participate in at least three competitions against other local high school Unified Track and Field teams.
- **From the Sign Language Club:** The club and its sponsor, MHS speech therapist Andrea Borgmann, is looking for a parent or other volunteer to help teach sign language to interested students. Please email aborgmann@methacton.org if you know of someone that may be interested.
- **From the MHS Science & Medicine Club:** Methacton STEM Day will be held on March 23 from 1-3 pm in the MHS Girls' gym. It is an event to raise money for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital and is geared towards students in grades K-6. The cost is \$4 in advance and \$6 at the door. For more information, contact dadoff@methacton.org.
- **From the Class of 2022 and FCCLA:** The Senior boy pageant, Mr. Methacton, will be held tomorrow, March 8 at 7 pm in the auditorium. The talent never disappoints.

Counseling – Cindy Hartson reported:

- **Main Line** Regional College Fair Monday, April 8, **2019**; 6:30-9pm Valley Forge Casino 100's of colleges will be in attendance.
- Underclassmen have been working on career and personality style interest inventories. Parents can access results through their child's Naviance account.

- **Course Registration** for the upcoming school year took place in English classes. A listing of courses selected is posted for parent review on the power school portal. Counselors are following up with juniors to review graduation requirements and discuss the courses they have selected for next year.
- **Waiver process** will open up the day the 3rd quarter report cards are posted and will remain open for one week. Students may "waive" in if they are within 3% points for the pre-requisite grade. Directions for following these steps can be found on the district website under program planning guide.
- **College Board Opportunity Scholarship.** Go to <https://opportunity.collegeboard.org/> for specific information. Here are the steps to be part of monthly drawings:

The Scholarships

The more effort you put in, the more opportunities you have to earn a scholarship. Complete all six, and you're eligible to earn \$40,000. Scholarships will be awarded through monthly drawings to students who complete each action.

1. Build Your College List: \$500

Get started by [exploring colleges](#) you're interested in.

2. Practice for the SAT: \$1,000

Use [Official SAT Practice on Khan Academy®](#) to get ready for test day.

3. Improve Your Score: \$2,000

Show how practice pays off by improving your SAT score.

4. Strengthen Your College List: \$500

Make sure your college list has a mix of academic safety, fit, and reach schools.

5. Complete the FAFSA: \$1,000

Fill out the free government form to apply for financial aid.

6. Apply to Colleges: \$1,000

Apply to the schools you want to attend.

Complete Your Journey: \$40,000

Complete all six scholarship steps to be eligible for a \$40,000 scholarship.

- **Standardized Testing:** Upcoming standardized testing registration information:
SAT registration www.collegeboard.org
ACT registration www.actstudent.org
- **Reminder** - Just a reminder that counselors are available to meet with parents and students. If you need to set up a meeting, please reach out to our counseling department secretaries.

H&S Reports:

Secretary – Sarah Spletzer reported that December meeting minutes were circulated, approved and posted.

Treasurer – Bob Kramer reported:

- Page #1 of Treasurer's Report shows that the only activity for month end Feb. 2019 was 4 donations that came in, in response to another push on no-frills.
- Projecting out the full year, our No-Frills Fundraiser will finish below what we hoped for at \$6400 compared to \$7000. We have throttled down expenses to address that, but year upon year we may be seeing a declining slope. If we believe it is a trend, we are going to have to address what that means for Home & School funded activities. More to follow as we work through next school year's Home & School budget.
- Page #2 – the main item of interest is the To Go plan – representing what we think we have as far as expenses in front of us. For mini grants, we budgeted \$500 and received one request for \$108. This will give us some flex to increase the Home & School awards. These awards used to be \$1000. We downsized this year to \$500, but now may be able to get closer, to our original plan, roughly matching expenses to income so we won't need to consume buffer by the end of the year.

Vice President – Cheryl Rothe – no report given.

Presidents – Mercy Varghese/Marie Kramer reported:

- Home & School has traditionally ordered graduation pens for seniors. This year we took an informal survey about whether pens are really wanted, and we've learned that they are. We plan to cut down on the numbers we order a little bit.
- Nominations for next year's Home & School Board announced – Michelle Petko and Gabby Winters for co-VP, Sarah Spletzer for Secretary.

District Reports:

SEA –Karen Lutz reported:

- The Unified Sports Program was unanimously passed by the School Board last week. Recruitment of non-disabled students will take place this week. There will be 4 different length races including a relay. The program also supports bocce and basketball in winter.
- The SEA meeting topic in February was navigating the secondary education process – work programs, colleges, tech schools, etc., – to avoid “falling off the cliff.” It was well attended, even by parents at other school districts.
- The March meeting is a meet and greet to be held on 3/21 at 7:00. Come and learn what the SEA group is about, talk to others on the same journey, register online.
- There will be a 9:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. sensory hour at Post Prom this year.

Post Prom – (report was read in):

- Post Prom fundraiser dance is Saturday night. There are many signed up.
- Volunteer sign up genius will be going out very soon for the actual Post Prom event.
- Post Prom community walk through will be 4/26 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- Prom tickets go on sale tomorrow (3/8).
- Post prom registration for students attending will be coming soon.

School Board – Liz Drummond and Mary Hull reported:

The following took place at the February work session (2/19) and voting meeting (2/26):

- Security Camera Upgrade Recommendation was presented that would replace our current (10 year old) system and provide increased coverage, higher resolution and clarity, and allow interaction with local police if needed. The cost to the district is \$425,348.80. This

recommendation was approved by the board. Installation can begin in April (second shift) and should be completed by the end of June.

- A very preliminary timeline of considerations around the Arrowhead project was shared with the board. Relevant documents are now posted on the main website under a right hand link called Arrowhead Forward.

- There was a presentation on Unified Sports, an inclusive athletic program which pairs students with and without intellectual disabilities and is sponsored in part by the Special Olympics. Spring Track and Field would be the first program to run at the high school, with Winter Bocce and Fall Soccer possibly following if the program is successful. The board, administration and high school staff worked together and quickly to make this happen under a tight turn-around time. The recommendation was approved by the board, coaches have been identified and trained, and team recruitment notifications have been sent out at the high school. Cost to the district for the spring program is estimated to be \$5,000.00.

- Board approved the authorization of design services for Vertical Classroom Unit Ventilator Project at MHS; this project has been discussed in Property Committee and the goal is to upgrade HVAC in 3 targeted areas of the school.

- The Methacton Education Foundation presented a check for over \$9500 for third grade coding (will benefit all elementary schools).

- Sign to be placed on varsity softball field dugout.

- The board accepted a gift of \$15,000 from the Pellicano and Dorn families for a sign to be placed the varsity field visitor side softball dugout.

- Dr. Sosnovik presented the district's 3 Year Technology Plan which includes a badly needed upgrade of the district phone system.

- An update to Policy 214, Class Rank, was discussed. The update would eliminate class rank beginning with the Class of 2020 and only provide it upon request to institutions or scholarship committees. The recommendation was based on a comprehensive report from High School Principal Dr. Sorgini which involved surveys to parents, students and staff, meetings with class officers, surveys of other districts in Montgomery County, and information from colleges that Methacton students attend. Class rank can negatively impact a Methacton student's overall college application. For example, of 404 students in the Class of 2018, 130 received an "M" award for cumulative GPA of 93% or greater, but only 40 students ranked in the top 10% of the class. Eliminating class rank will also cut down on ultra-competitiveness among classmates and will allow students to try classes which would have previously negatively affected class rank. The Policy will be on the agenda for "Second Reading" (approval) in March.

- Finally, the 2019-2020 School Year Calendar was approved. It is very similar to this year's calendar, with a student start date of 8/28/19.

The next board work session is Tuesday, March 19th at 7pm at Arrowhead Elementary School auditorium and the regular meeting will be Tuesday, March 26th at 7pm, in the High School LGI room. We welcome your attendance, participation and feedback. Thank you!

MCC – Marie Kramer reported:

- The last meeting was January 14 and the next is next week.

- At the January meeting, new communications hire Amanda Kelly was introduced to the group by Dr. Zerbe.

- There is to be a monthly 2-3 minute video highlighting good things at Methacton.

- The group discussed mental health intervention programs such as Rachel's Challenge, and the Safe to Say Something initiative.

- Safe to Say Something Initiative, runs through Pennsylvania state Attorney General's office. All schools are required to participate. All districts must have a core-team to deal with it. Students and parents with concern can report, the Attorney General's office triages and

partners with local police. Complaints are dealt with in real time. In its first operational week, the program logged over 250 entries. The Safe2Say program has a page on the Methacton website for further information: <https://www.methacton.org/Page/18772>

- The group discussed developments in STEM approach and continued an ongoing discussion about Arrowhead.
- School board has asked someone from Home & Schools to put on presentations. Gabby did the last one. Jessica Fields will be doing May presentation.
- Planetarium star party being planned for 4/27, and will include special program and food trucks outside for party atmosphere.

Questions & Answers – as time allows

Adjournment

Dates to Remember:

March

8 – “Mr. Methacton” competition 7:00pm

9 – SAT

9 – Post Prom Adult Dinner/Dance

14 – Senior Banquet @ Normandy Farms 6:00pm

15 – ~~No School~~ (snow make up day)

20 – String Jamboree @Arcola 7:30pm

22 – Mini-Thon

29 – ~~No School~~ (snow make up day)

April

5 – Blood Drive 6:30 am – 2:30pm

5 – Film Festival 7:00pm

**Next meeting 4/11/19 7:00 pm
in the MHS Library**