

MHS Home & School Association
Minutes
September 12, 2019

In Attendance:

Bob Kramer
Katie Shireman
Julia Bi
Michelle Petko

Brian Bernhardt
Sarah Spletzer
Colleen Kutz
Michelle Kolody-Cost
Lisa Coupe

Mercy Varghese
Gabby Winters
Jason Sorgini
Kate Cherekos

Welcome – Introductions were made.

MCC – Katie Shireman reported:

- She is the current president of Methacton Coordinating Council
- On September 17, MCC is sponsoring a volunteer social event in the atrium behind the cafeteria at MHS. This informal program is to help people find volunteer clearance information and sign up to volunteer in the District.
- Daily Bread Food Pantry has reached out to MCC and has asked for help stocking everyday toiletry items, for which they are experiencing an ongoing shortage. Katie will bring any items we have or have collected to Daily Bread as a donation.

MEF – Nikki Krelovich reported:

- She is the Executive Director for Methacton Education Foundation, which has been gaining momentum over the last couple years. The MEF serves great teachers with great ideas. Some of their ideas exceed the district's budget, so MEF raises funds for grants for this situation.
- Last year the MEF raised \$170,000 and funded quite a few programs at the high school. These include helping marching band get to the Liberty Bowl, providing equipment for a new music technology program that Mr. McCoach will teach, and helping with Electric Car Club, Robotics Club, Post Prom, professional development, MontCo Science Teachers Association fees and economically disadvantaged students. 17% of kids in our District are living below the poverty line and the MEF was able to direct \$17,000 toward these students for different programs such as college tours, the backpack program, graphing calculators and gym uniforms. At the end of last year, the MEF sponsored the Share the Love with the Teachers campaign, where parents wrote notes to teachers.

MHS Staff Reports,

Principal – Jason Sorgini – Dr. Sorgini reported:

- He is looking forward to working together with Home & School this year. Thanks for supporting teachers and staff with opening day dessert buffet and assistance with picture day.
- Mini-grants have been submitted.
- There are a couple big changes this year: we have no more homeroom, which is working well. The ordering process for AP (Advanced Placement) exams has changed and now happens almost early in the fall instead of in the spring. Dr. Kochenour will be sending out information. We have a new camera system thanks to School Board – we have 96 cameras in the school now.
- The High School Happenings email comes out from Dr. Sorgini every other Tuesday. His goal is to communicate every other week and try to hit the most important stuff. He encourages parents to use Konstella and get the Warrior News announcements.
- Back to School Night (9th-10th) went well, and the other one (11th-12th) is coming up on September 18th.

- We continue to focus on safety through preparations and drills. We had a fire drill in August, and a lock down drill already. In the high school we teach the Run, Hide, Fight approach and encourage the students to make decisions for themselves. During the last lock down drill he discussed decision making, knowing your surroundings and rally points. We have the SAP (Student Assistance Program) in place, to which students can be referred anonymously by classmates. We are also part of the Safe to Say Something initiative, as well.
 - Last chance for senior portraits is coming.
 - The One Book One School program this year was on the book Endangered by Eliot Schrefer. Mr. Schrefer will be coming to MHS on September 26, and students will have 3 opportunities that day to go see him.
 - The middle of the first Marking Period is Oct 1.
 - Teachers are utilizing Google Classroom and should be in contact regarding struggling students. MHS is now organized by "houses" with an administrator overseeing each house: Mr. Smink for 9th, Dr. Spiewak for 10th, Dr. Bontempo for 11th, and Dr. Kochenour for 12th. Principals are encouraged to work closely with families of students in their house.
 - Homecoming is October 11th & 12th. There will be a pep rally and tailgate before the football game on the 11th, and the 12th is the dance.
 - Parent question – How is SmartPass working out? Very well – we know who is where in the building. It has cut down on hallway issues, helps with vaping, and faculty likes it a lot. Visits to college reps have to be done through SmartPass, shouldn't be any issues, students can use it on the Chromebooks – no need to put it on their phones.
 - Parent question – Are there bathrooms shut down? No, we are going out of our way to avoid this, the building is zoned out for which bathrooms students should use based on where they are in the building.
 - Parent question – Why are there two teachers in some classrooms? One is General Ed and one is Special Ed. in some cases. Parent group discussed that the co-taught class approach is helpful in keeping the General Ed teacher focused on the larger group while the Special Ed teacher deals with any needs presented during class.

Teachers – Cara Woudenberg – no report given.

Counseling – Cindy Hartson – Mrs. Hartson submitted the following report:

- September 12 is Senior parent night in the auditorium.
- September 26 is Financial Aid Night (register through district calendar).
- October 16 is PSAT Day, Freshmen will have a Future Expos Day, Sophomores and Juniors will be involved with testing and Seniors will have planned activities – this is not a morning off from school for Seniors.
 - October 23 is FAFSA Completion Night (must register and bring some materials, see the calendar for information)
 - The counselors visited all senior English classes on Friday, September 6, 2019 to review the college application process.
 - Application Rescue: to supplement individual counselor support, the counselors will also be available after school in the library once a week to answer questions and assist students in a group setting. (These dates will be determined on September 5 and will be shared with the seniors on the 6th). This will go on for six weeks.

H&S Reports:

Secretary – Sarah Spletzer – Sarah reported:

- iPad signups for Konstella at the 9-10 Back to School Night went well, more than double how many signed up last year at this event.

- We have 653 parents signed up for Konstella, and 272 of those are signed up for Warrior News announcements.

Treasurer – Bob Kramer – Bob reported:

- Side 1 of the budget handout provides a summary for July and August activity. On the revenue side, the No Frills fundraiser is doing well and we are a little bit ahead of where we were this time last year. Over the last 6 years we have seen a steady decline in No Frills responses. How we are doing so far may be a positive indicator. On the expenses side, we purchased tickets for the Winning Warriors program, and paid the costs associated with the No Frills fundraiser, such as envelopes. Right now we have \$6,700 in cash.
- Side 2 shows the full-year projections. Right now, all budget categories are following the budgeted amounts.
- Mini grants, we allocate about \$1,250. We hone in on activities and focus on the High School, try to reach the most students. We hope to have some extra to allocate this year.

Vice Presidents – Gabby Winters/Michelle Petko – Gabby and Michelle reported:

- We will be representing Home & School at the Volunteer Social event on September 17th. We tried at the 9-10 Back to School Night to get people signed up for Konstella and the upcoming Souper Luncheon.
- There is a by-law change coming from MCC regarding the posting of minutes by Home & School officers. On 10/24, MCC and Home & School officers will get together, along with all administrators.

Presidents – Mercy Varghese/Marie Kramer – Mercy reported:

- Giant A+ rewards to sign up for, and you don't need a child in the school to link your account and benefit the school.

District Reports:

SEA – Colleen Kutz – Colleen reported:

- SEA is the Special Education Alliance. We provide a network of support for parents and caregivers of students with developmental or physical disabilities.
- Our upcoming events include a Fall Festival at Varner Farms on October 26, there will be cider and doughnuts as well as hayrides.
- We have a program coming soon on ADHD and Language Connection: Building Executive Function Skills

Post Prom – Gabby Winters/Lisa Coupe – Gabby and Lisa reported:

- Right now Post Prom is in a really good position, with all committee chairs full. Last year we had people shadow outgoing committee chairs, so successors would have some idea this year what they're moving into.
- Education is a huge part of what we do. We have a program coming up about drug use in Montgomery County in teens and youth, as well as a marijuana prevention project. These programs will give us information we can use and pass along as part of the education that Post Prom provides.
- The Golf Outing - our biggest fundraiser – is coming up on September 29. People can come to golf, or just come for dinner. All of the information is on the Post Prom page on the Methacton website.
- The Post Prom Dinner dance has been changed to March 14.
- Prom is April 24, 2020.

School Board – The School Board submitted the following report:

In June, we passed the final budget of \$111,863,608.65 which included a tax increase of 1.115%, the third lowest in Montgomery County.

Arrowhead Forward:

The district has worked to gather community input and feedback, analyze the facility study, taken tours of nearby newly constructed and renovated schools, refined enrollment projections, and worked with KCBA Architects on concept drawings for a new or renovated building. In August, the board approved a motion for KCBA Architects to provide design and documentation services for new construction of the Arrowhead Elementary School. This is not a final approval or decision regarding new construction, but is a necessary first step in the overall process.

Also in August, the Board approved 3 additional elementary teaching positions: one at Arrowhead Elementary grade 3, one at Worcester Elementary grade 1, and one at Woodland Elementary grade 1. These positions were needed to best address meeting the targeted class size and keeping as many students within their home school boundary as possible.

Over the summer, a new phone system and new security cameras were installed district-wide, items which the board had approved earlier in the year.

Our next work session will be September 17th and our regular board meeting is September 24th. Both meetings will be held in the LGI room at the High School. We welcome your attendance and input!

I know this is a very busy time of year for Home and School volunteers as the school year gets up and running, so thank you for all that you do for our students!

Questions & Answers – as time allows

- Parent question – Park Avenue is to be closed next week btw 7:00 and 3:00 each day. Does the District have a plan regarding bussing? The District has just been notified about this and is working on it.

Adjournment

Dates to Remember:

September

18 – 11th & 12th Grades Back to School Night 7:00 p.m.

26 – Financial Aid Night

29 – Post Prom Golf Outing

30 – No School (holiday)

October

3 – H&S Meeting 9:15 a.m.

5 – SAT

8 – Picture Retakes

11 – Homecoming Tailgate and Game

12 – Homecoming Dance

14 – No School (in-service)

16 – 10th & 11th Grade PSATs

***Next meeting 10/3/19 9:15 am
in the MHS Library Conference Room***