

Hammond Middle School PTA

Meeting Minutes for October 14, 2014

Attendees:

- Pat Johnson, President
- Liz Boateng, 1st Vice President
- Tricia Miller, Secretary
- John Woodson, PTACHC Rep
- Cathy Stohlman, Chair – Fall Dance
- Amy Shugar, Chair – 8th Grade Dance / Ice Skating
- Felicia Friedman, Chair – Staff Appreciation
- Michelle Howard, PTA member
- Kamilah Walker-Bowers, PTA member
- Mary Altaner, PTA member
- Tim Altaner, PTA member
- Kerry Dufresne, HMS Principal
- Jenny Abel, Visitor – School Circles Team
- Stephanie Williams, Visitor – Drama Learning Center
- Karen Washington, Visitor

Minutes

- **Opening:**
 - The meeting was called to order by PTA President, Pat Johnson.
 - Roundtable introductions
- **Secretary's Report (Tricia Miller):** The September 2014 meeting minutes were presented. Tricia circulated updated minutes that reflected a correction to the Back to School Night activities. John Woodson made a motion to approve the minutes; Cathy Stohlman seconded; the motion passed.
- **Treasurer's Report (Pat Johnson reporting for Jen Larsson):** Pat circulated the Treasurer's report and also reported that both Spiritwear and Membership numbers look good.
- **Principal's Report (Kerry Dufresne):** Kerry reported that with the new families attending HMS this year, she is striving for a strong sense of community. She is also looking for new strategies to address the needs of the student body including academic, social and behavioral needs. Two noteworthy items in this area: "student advisories" and "school circles".
 - **Student Advisories:** will begin later this month. Advisories will take place for 30 minutes weekly on Wednesdays. They will alternate between academic and social / behavioral. It is a great opportunity for students and teachers to meet outside of the classroom for academic help.
 - **School Circles:** Kerry spoke briefly on this. Part of the staff has already been trained and additional training for the rest of the staff is scheduled. A letter will be sent out to families which will provide information on both restorative practices and school circles. Kerry

introduced Jenny Abel, a trained mediator and member of the School Circles Team, who spoke further on the subject. Jenny elaborated that school circles can be either “restorative” (in response to a particular incident) or “community building”. Jenny will be working with the HMS staff to implement this new program. She has already participated in several circles with HMS students and has observed positive results. Prior to engaging the PTA in several “circles”, Jenny provided the ground rules for the process which include:

- The “talking piece” governs who will speak. All others should be listening.
 - Speak “your truth” rather than rumors you may have heard
 - Confidentiality is a given for information shared in a circle
 - Exceptions to the confidentiality rule include: child or elder abuse and implied or explicit eminent danger
- **1st Vice President’s Report (Liz Boateng):**
 - Staff Appreciation: Oktoberfest was a success! Italy is next on November 24th – sign up coming soon.
 - Fall Fling: ready for this Thursday. Attendance relatively low at 85 but expect last minute additions. Cathy Stohlman inquired about dismissal procedures.
 - Spelling Bee: has been scheduled and information sent out in the newsletter
 - Restaurant Night: two individuals have expressed interest in this position. Will follow up.
 - **2nd Vice President’s Report (reported by Pat Johnson):**
 - Adopt a Staff: up and running
 - Ice Skating: scheduled for Feb 27 from 7:30-9:30
 - Talent Show: Kerry reported that Mr. Quinn is interested in coordinating this year
 - Spring Fling: still need a coordinator for this event
 - 8th Grade Dance: Amy Shugar is officially on board to chair this event!
 - **PTACHC (John Woodson):**
 - 385 teachers were hired this school year out of 7,000 applicants
 - Aspen will be discontinued after this academic year
 - Telehealth is a new pilot program this year which provides an online nurse for health rooms
 - PTACHC poll to PTAs – do you want school to start after Labor Day?
 - Board to form advisory group to evaluate later school start time for high schoolers
 - **President’s Report (Pat Johnson):**
 - Back to School night was a success!
 - Vacancies on the Board: discussed briefly. Kerry will recruit a 6th grade parent to assist Felicia with Staff Appreciation
 - PTA Calendar is now online
 - Gift Card Program is gearing up. Order form to be copied this week and distributed soon after.
 - **New Business:**

- Drama Learning Center: Stephanie provided information on DLC's program. DLC is an ensemble based theater company that provides necessary staff, equipment and printed materials. The PTA would act as sponsor and secure space. Stephanie answered various questions about logistics, fundraising options, insurance and cost. Pat put the issue before the Board. Felicia made a motion that the PTA to sponsor this program and Liz seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to implement the afterschool drama program.
 - Geography Bee: similar to spelling bee event. However, winner at HMS takes test and must be selected to advance to National Level. Mr. Riley has volunteered to sponsor this event as the required HMS employee. Mr. and Mrs. Altaner are willing to assist. Timing and logistics were discussed. The cost to the PTA is \$100. Pat put the issue before the Board. John made a motion to sponsor the Geography Bee and Liz seconded. The Board voted unanimously to implement the Geography Bee for this school year.
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- **Roundtable:** Kerry is happy to see so many new faces at our PTA meeting!
 - **Closing:** Amy made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Liz seconded; the motion passed

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tricia Miller, HMS PTA Secretary.