

AGENDA & MINUTES

Hiawatha-Howe PTO Meeting

September 15, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Location: In-person at Hiawatha Media Center and on-line via Zoom

26 caregivers in attendance

Watch the recording [here](#). Passcode: m%caU&.9

Welcome	Introductions for PTO Board Members Note: Donnelle Buchsbaum who was elected as an at-large member last May has resigned.
Social Work Team	Ms. Kiley Krocak - starting fourth year at Howe; has a 6th grader at Sanford, and a 9th grader at Roosevelt. Both school social workers have interns from the Metro State Bachelor's Social Work program. - Tuesdays, and Wednesdays all day, and Thursday mornings, Ms. Chai will be at Howe. Ms. Marge Noyes - has been here at Hiawatha since 1998! - Tuesdays and Wednesdays all day, and Thursday mornings, Ms. A What do social workers do? At small schools, we wear many hats. - Listens to all of the problems. - Mental Health - Before coming to a school, Ms. Kiley was a licensed therapist. Loves the organic flow of working in a school that allows her to practice without needing diagnoses or appointments. - Crisis work: checking in with students - Small group work; trauma recovery group; building friendships; reducing anxiety - Offers a different lens to behavior questions - Special Education - Involves working with speech clinicians, occupational therapists, school psychologists; a lot of times, the school social workers are the ones pulling people together. - Both schools have DCD (Developmental, Cognitive Delay) programs, which allows students to do work both in classrooms and in a unique environment - Really appreciates the partnership with PTO to help make events and activities accessible - Has ideas of ways to make Spring Celebration more accessible - 504 Case Management Resource Coordination - Applies to any student who has a medical condition and requires certain additional attention to facilitate their learning - Coordinate with the school nurses to reach out and support any students who may have new diagnoses or changes in diagnoses - Resource Coordination - Every Meal program - helps to get food to students in families who may not have enough food over weekends; very discrete. - Helps support students in highly mobile families to remain in the same school for the entire school year when they otherwise would need to transfer one or multiple times.

	- Helps with coats, backpacks, any supplies that students might need. - Can also help with other resources for students in families who may be grieving, with things like gas cards, etc. - Can help students in families who may be at risk of losing their housing; homelessness prevention - Attendance - Working to address any barriers that students may have to come to school every day, on time - It may take some time to figure out patterns for specific students, but once they figure it out, they are often able to set up a plan of intervention
Annunciation	Students will be returning to Annunciation tomorrow, September 16. - Some of their colleagues and their manager have been and will be at the school to support the community during the coming weeks. How do we talk to our little ones about the shooting? Ms. Kiley shared many thoughts about the topic of keeping students safe. - We continue to perform safety drills and lockdowns. - Do police officers make everyone feel safe? It really depends on who you ask. - It is important to remind our students that there are a lot of adults in our school community who are helping to make sure everyone is safe. We HAVE to do better. Navigating this horrific tragedy has been challenging for all of us. As a PTO board, we discussed ways that we can reach out to support our neighbors at Annunciation. Some ideas we came up with include: - Host a blood drive; this is an act of community service - Daniel, Dad to Esther and Elijah, provided an overview of giving blood. - Hoping to host a blood drive on March 10. - Please pledge; we need 40 people to pledge to donate blood in order to host the blood drive, as it is a lot of work to coordinate to bring the blood mobile here. - To pledge to donate blood, please fill out this google form. - We are also in desperate need of blood platelets, which is a blood clotting agent. - Put the blue and green ribbons on the trees and poles on our school community property. - Sign a card that will go to members of the Annunciation community
Trees!	Hiawatha Campus is getting 21 trees, Howe Campus is getting 15 trees HUGE thank you to Tiffany Blomgren who has been working with Tree Trust to help with siting the location of the trees and working with the City of Minneapolis to cover the cost of all of the trees! - We are still looking for volunteers who will water the trees for at least a week. - Tree Trust will stake and bag the trees. - We have to water them for two years or we will lose them. - We are going to purchase hoses and a few keys for water access to the school building. PTO Board will put more of the details related to watering the trees in the next weekly PTO newsletter.
Advocacy Efforts	Samantha Pipkorn provided an update of Minneapolis Families for Public Schools

	In a survey of 1,000 caregivers last year reflected that the top two concerns are: 1. Class sizes are too large 2. Need more resources for special education Joining with Minneapolis Federation of Educators - Get to witness the contracting process and see how everything is made. - MFE class size proposal: - Pre-K: 20; Kindergarten and 1st grade: 20; 2nd-5th grade: 24; 6th-8th grade: 28; 9th-12: 30 Ms. P-B - new 5th grade teacher at Howe is very supportive of advocating for these smaller classroom sizes. Q: How can parents get involved? More to come! Q: Are there concerns about class sizes at Hiawatha or Howe? Specifically in kindergarten. Comment: There is no formal avenue to raise questions to address class sizes throughout our schools - MFE is proposing accountability to class sizes in the contract. Together with a caregiver from Dowling, Samantha is coordinating a forum in early October with Lori Norvell. There are many options to join this important work; protecting english language learners, immigrant families, etc.
Fifth Grade Biking, Bike Train	Ms. Wilson's class will go out biking on Wednesday, September 17; still need five volunteers to help with biking.
Treasurer's Report	Andrea Cecconi loves spreadsheets and pie charts. When we spend money that is raised at Hiawatha and Howe, that money goes right back into resources for the community; inclusion is key. We hold a single fundraiser in the fall (Move-a-thon) and one in the spring (Spring Celebration). 65% of our expenses go directly into the classrooms. - Husky gear sales (not huge revenue generator, is about school spirit) - Garage sale funds went directly into the Howe Playground fund, which is already at \$7,600+ July and August investments in our schools
Family Fun Night	We had one in May; there was too much in May, so this is our September event! - Walking Tacos, beverages, desserts for sale - Games for all!
Move-a-thon	Friday, October 10th (Rain date is October 13) - PTO's biggest fundraiser - A chance to be active and celebrate our community - Come join the fun! - Serve a snack, walk along with your child's class, help do sidewalk chalk!
Principal Updates	Thanks for the 5th grade team for organizing the bike workshops!

	Classroom size updates: 55 in kindergarten: Trent: 27; Britta: 28 57 in first grade: Deluca: 29; Marquardt: 28 68 in second grade: Hannah: 24; Emy: 23; Winchell: 21 Hiawatha total: 180 76 in third grade: 202: 23, 204: 27, 208: 26 69 in fourth grade: 206: 22; 209: 24; 210 23 86 in fifth grade: 201: 28; 203: 29; 207: 29 It is truly...the squeaky wheel gets the resources! Get involved! Family Tech Support, Parent Portal Campus: You can email your student directly Be sure to email the main office because teachers are not able to monitor email real time when they are teaching; Ms. Molly and Ms. Diana will be able to help out in most situations.
Closing	Next meeting: Monday, October 20, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at Howe or on-line.