

## HTEPA Meeting Minutes

Date: 11/3/25 Time: 6:30p.m.

Board Members Present: Mandy Buzzell (President), Jane Bowler (Secretary), Tristan Barnum (VP Communications), Tasha White (VP Fundraising), Alexis Osuna (VP Community Events), Miss Jenny (School Representative), Benjamin Hulley (Community Events Chair)

Board Members Absent: Brit Apone (Treasurer)

Staff Present: none

### Admissions Outreach and Community Engagement

The admissions team, represented by Veronica, is actively focusing on outreach across the district's seven schools to boost applications, which are currently tracking slightly below last year's levels.

- Veronica highlighted that 60% of outreach effectiveness comes from word of mouth by current parents, emphasizing the critical role of parent leaders in spreading positive experiences.
- They are encouraging families to post updated reviews on key platforms like Niche, Yelp, and Great Schools to improve the schools' online reputations and counter outdated, often negative, ratings.
- Veronica acknowledged that rankings on these platforms rely on delayed or incomplete test score data and outdated reviews, which can mislead prospective families, underlining the importance of firsthand experiences like school tours and exhibitions.
- The team is exploring formal and informal ways for parents to help, including testimonials, social media sharing, and community events, with an open invitation to parents to participate in outreach efforts.

### Parent Association (PA) Growth and Fundraising Strategy

The PA continues to grow its volunteer base and is aiming to increase sponsorship revenue, which currently stands at \$0 cash sponsorships towards a \$5,000 annual goal, compared to about \$3,000 raised last year.

- Tristan and Kate have initiated outreach to local businesses, but follow-up support is needed to convert inquiries into donations and prize contributions, especially for the March 18th jogathon.
- The PA calendar includes a Halloween candy buyback, Teacher Appreciation Day before winter break, and major events in early 2024 such as skate night in January, family night in February, and jogathon in March, with jogathon planning starting in December.
- Fundraising capacity is limited, so the PA is cautious about adding new campaigns; however, they are open to boosting jogathon and logo wear sales if volunteer support increases.
- The PA raised approximately \$10,000 to \$11,000 in the fall fundraising campaign, slightly under last year's \$14,000, establishing a realistic benchmark for future campaigns.
- Issues with poor Wi-Fi on campus are hindering logo wear and concession sales, prompting plans to implement Venmo or tap payment options to simplify transactions and potentially double sales.
- The recent book fair generated \$10,200 in sales, surpassing the previous high by nearly \$1,000, and yielded \$3,755 in scholastic dollars for next year's fair, marking a successful event supported by strong volunteer turnout.
- Plans to diversify logo wear with limited edition designs like tie-dye and new items like beanies are underway to boost seasonal sales.

## Communication Improvements and Parent Engagement Tools

Efforts to maximize parent communication focus on increasing Constella platform adoption through a newly developed Google opt-in form to comply with privacy restrictions, improving access to classroom rosters and parent contacts.

- Mr. Jonathan and Dr. O are key drivers in this initiative, with plans to distribute the form broadly and integrate opt-ins into the system for better engagement.
- Teacher adoption of Constella is incomplete, so interactive tutorials and direct outreach to less engaged teachers are planned to raise participation.
- The PA is seeking a dedicated communications volunteer to ensure weekly PA updates reach teachers and families reliably, complementing the existing email and weekly wave distribution by Dr. O.
- A new proposal for a simple monthly paper newsletter aims to reach families less connected digitally and improve overall accessibility and event participation.
- Tristan is leveraging AI tools to identify and contact local businesses for sponsorships and continues to refine outreach to maximize impact.

- The PA is exploring more accessible fundraising options for families, including easy cash or check drop-offs, to increase participation and ease of giving.

## School Programs, Projects, and Support Needs

The school reported a busy month with increased emphasis on attendance, critical for securing funding, and active use of PA funds to enhance student experiences.

- Field trips are ongoing across grades, including fourth grade's Gold Rush focus, third grade's Olive Wood Gardens visit, and fifth grade's Maritime Museum project tied to American Revolution themes, with the first exhibition scheduled for December.
- The school is expanding extracurriculars with free art clubs and friendship groups, providing creative and social outlets during lunch.
- Parent collaboration has established a strong network of local artist and community resources, supporting project-based learning without requiring new outreach.
- Teachers are currently using PA funds for project enrichment materials and rewards, with plans for weekly raffle tickets tied to school values underway.
- The school support team is planning a drive for food and household necessities to assist families impacted by benefit cuts and the government shutdown, with bins proposed at the school entrance for community donations.

## Operational and Event Planning

The PA is organizing key events with a focus on volunteer involvement and streamlined planning:

- The jogathon committee will start meeting in December, aiming for a smooth, well-structured event with clear roles, building on last year's successful template led by Tasha.
- The spring community events calendar includes a picnic, camping, teacher appreciation week, and variety show, with planning support welcomed from parents passionate about leading specific events.
- Food truck coordination for the December 11 exhibition requires volunteers, as current leads have limited capacity; contacts like the Coffee Wave vendor have been identified for staff events.
- The fifth grade fundraising team is actively running weekly pizza and popcorn sales and pursuing a unique fundraising opportunity to use the Zamboni at a January 31st hockey game, targeting a \$9,000 fundraising goal from 75 students at roughly \$130 each.

- Room parent coordination is ongoing, with a social event planned to boost participation and outreach to teachers missing room parent assignments, facilitated by Holly and supported by PA leadership.
- New parents are stepping into leadership roles for teacher appreciation and dad's club, with initial activities focused on teacher favorites lists and student thank-you notes for December, and dad's club planning expected to ramp up in early 2024.
- The PA is considering creative engagement ideas for the Halloween candy buyback, including community prize events and reuse of decorations to increase participation and visibility.

## Officer Roles and Transition Planning

All PA officer positions except for school support are open for the next school year, with current officers approaching term limits due to bylaws allowing only two consecutive one-year terms unless no other candidates run.

- The leadership team aims to identify and shadow interested candidates starting January, with nominations in March and elections in April to ensure a smooth transition.
- Shadowing opportunities include email correspondence access and small task assignments to prepare new officers.
- The PA is encouraging committee chairs and volunteers to consider stepping into officer roles to sustain momentum and leadership continuity.