**Hollis Elementary PTA Meeting**

**September 13, 2016**

Start Time: 10AM

Location: HUES Cafeteria

Attendees: Cassandra Vorisek-Creto, Amy Kellner, Alexis Brooks, Sarah Constantine, Paula Izbicki, Candi Fowler, Tricia Harmon Stone, Maryanne Shanley, Nicole Tomaselli, MaryJo Naber, Melanie White, Brian Edmunds (NS Academy)

Call to order- Cassandra V. Approval of last meeting minutes- Amy K

**Principal’s Report**: HPS Paula Izbicki

* Open House: Approximately 90% of parents preferred the “parent only” Open House last year so the same policy will be enforced for the September 2016 Open Houses. The goal is also to have the parents spend a longer amount of time visiting with specialists.
* Bus Departures: Being addressed at HPS. The K, 1, and 2 graders are getting quicker at finding their buses and settling in. By next week, drop off times should be more consistent.
* Lunch Period: 3rd and 2nd graders may sit where they please. Kindergarten and 1 st graders are still required to sit with their own class as to have the younger and newer students connect!
* Volunteers: PTA should continue to request lunch and recess volunteers as the feedback from parents and teachers is all positive.
* Town Meeting: Will be held at the end of September and will “kick off” STEM Week. Though parents have requested to attend, the gym cannot hold a large number of kids and adults. HPS would love to video stream the meeting. At this time, there are not enough parents who have approved the taping of their children.
* Bus Splits: Occasionally a bus has to be split amongst other buses when there is an issue at the bus barn. This Friday, Bus 5 will be split. Children are individually walked to the appropriate bus or given a slip with new bus number.
* Communication: Encourage parents to use Twitter. Twitter can be done from the buses while PowerSchool requires one to go in the building, log on, etc.- simply taking longer to get information out to parents.

**Principal’s Report: HUES** Candi Fowler

* FYI No School on November 8th, therefore no PTA meeting as listed on the calendar.
* Bus issues being addressed at the start of the year. Children are encouraged to take on the ownership in fixing the problems.
* “Hawk Happenings” board: A space for kids to post their own events, sports, and activities which occur outside of school. 5-7 day postings. A great way for kids to help keep the community connected and share their accomplishments.
* Hawk Awards will also be awarded during lunch.
* Teachers also participated in various summer workshops for professional development. Extremely valuable and enriching experiences!

**Guest Speaker: Brian Edmunds from Neil Stone Karate.** The program has expressed an interest in participating in Parent Talks (not as much experience but are developing the program), classroom talks with the kids (themes like bullying) as well as bringing fundraising opportunities to our schools! They offer mental, emotional, and physical development of the whole person through Martial Arts. Their fundraisers would last for 6 weeks at a cost to the parent of $100 with uniforms included along with flyers for our schools to distribute. Classes would take place at the studio. Children already enrolled may be able to “work a deal” to get their class funds transferred over to the fundraiser. There should be plenty of instructors (all background checked) so the programs should not max out. Teens may teach for his or her own leadership development but they are always watched by an adult instructor. Cassandra added that the winter months may be a great opportunity for this to occur, post holidays and when there are not as many afterschool activities to contend with. Funds could be donated to the PTA directly with the PTA coming up with a use of the funds for both schools TBD.

**Treasurer’s Report**: Amy K distributed a copy of the report to all attendees. The 2016-2017 proposed budget would begin to spend the reserves down with the goal of always maintaining 1 year of reserves as a safety net! Increases can be found in the Live Auctions, Teacher Requests, and Student Enrichment programs. The president noted that the PTA can be very flexible, with line items being a little over or a little under. Such movements should not make a huge impact on the following year.

**Parent Talks** to be organized on the PTA side by Charity Bell who will work to coordinate talks with Colleen M to keep the talks varied and useful to parents. Talks will be hosted once a month, mostly in the evenings. PTA would like to be able to offer babysitting , pizza, etc. for those families who need childcare. Parent Talk theme ideas included Screen Time, Gratitude, “The Sad Stuff”, and Keeping Kids Safe. The October theme of “Resilience” is set for the 6th and will be used as the “kick starter” for the series. PTA will look into using the student council at the high school for kids to get the hours they need by babysitting. From a scheduling perspective, it was recommended to check the SAU schedule so there are not conflicts with school board meeting, etc. Varying the day of the week was also recommended so the same families would not miss out on the ability to attend due to work schedules, etc. Streaming potentially from the town hall was brought up. The PTA would then be able to archive the talks as well. Permission to do so would be needed from each speaker.

**Feedback from Teachers:**

* A request made for a budget line item for all trophy related materials.
* Can the PTA locate guest speakers to come into the schools? The teachers are looking for “What is out there?” A discussion was had on the difficulty in finding a speaker who can successfully speak to the vast age range of the student. It can also be challenging to know which speakers are great and which are not so great in addition to the topics being appropriate for the curriculum.
* It was asked if the PTA could utilize the student council at HUES for various projects. Currently there are 16 kids who can contribute more to the schools. A fashion show of “lost and found” and Spirit Wear items was a topic of excitement.
* A request was made for more help with Turtle Island throughout the year. Possibly a group such as the Girl Scouts could help in addition to approaching the Hollis Women’s Club.
* PTA was asked about the teacher request timeframe and process. The PTA has been analyzing the process and has put forth improvements for ease of paperwork and lessening the “wait time” for the items requested. Adding an “urgent” title would potentially help some of the more time crunched items get reviewed faster. A point was made in making sure the PTA does not spend too much on items that should be presented to the school board for their budgeting purposes. The president noted that the PTA may be able to assist in trying out ideas for a year as to decide whether or not they should go onto a school budget.
* A welcome email was recommended for the teachers from the PTA so the teachers could better get to know the members and who they should be contacting.
* The PTA was asked about the current website and it’s challenges. The PTA has spent time over the last several months addressing what is working and not working on the website. A new one is already in progress!
* PTA teacher membership forms should be kept separate from the parent ones as it can get too confusing in the offices. Possibly giving the teacher PTA forms to the principals would help to lessen the confusion and remind teachers of the opportunity to join the PTA.
* LEGO league: There is currently no Chair, however 2 dads from HPS have expressed interest. They will be approached about their commitment and control over the program! Chairs need to be reminded they can control times and days as they are donating their time to the program.

2016-2017 Budget Vote put forward by Cassandra. Motion to Approve: White Second Motion: Fowler

**Meeting Adjourned**: 11:06 AM