

HMS PTO General Meeting Minutes – February 10, 2010

Attendance: Nancy Hamp, Christine Allen, Cindy Scalzo, mary Cass, Yvonne Mayer, Liz Monson, Julie Liesse, Lynne Bloomfield, Tammy mason, Stephanie Domiano, Ruben Pena, Sara Joyce, Maria Kallis, Suzanne Heneghan, Dr. Janet Stutz, Martha Henrikson

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Co-President Stephanie Domiano at 10:05 a.m.

Recording Secretaries' Report: The minutes from the January 13, 2010 meeting were circulated and reviewed. Julie Liesse, Co-Vice President made a motion for their approval, which was seconded by Liz Monson, Treasurer. The minutes were unanimously approved. Stephanie added that minutes would now be available as “pending” approval on the HMS PTO website before their final approval at the subsequent meeting.

Presidents' Report: No report

Treasurer's Report: Liz Monson thanked the PTO for funding the Treasurer's laptop and software. She reported she would maintain a hard drive back-up. The computer will transfer from Treasurer to Treasurer.

Principal's Report: Principal Ruben Pena reported that staffing for next year is being considered. He expects HMS to have an enrollment of approximately 800 students next school year. Two CHMS teachers will transfer to HMS. The District is considering switching from Power School to Infinite Campus for its academic administration software. It has many benefits, including allowing families to register once for district-wide student enrollment. ISAT testing begins in two weeks. SELAS week included a “Breaking Down the Walls” presentation from the high school which may have had too colorful language at times, but which seemed to focus on real peer issues. Student behavior will be described as “above the line” or “below the line” as a way to avoid inflammatory language about student behavior with parents and students. Stephanie suggested being sure a Connect Ed message is sent to parents to reinforce SELAS programming. On March 12 there will be a Weather Bug training for teachers—check the CCSD 181 Foundation website for details on how to access the weather data. The HMS Weather Bug data was reported on WGN TV and was donated to the district by the D181 Foundation.

Committee Reports: Maria Kallis, High School Liaison, reported there will be a presentation on the Hinsdale Central library at HCHS on February 22 at 10:15 a.m. sponsored by PTO. Families may sign up for HCHS news emails at the HCHS website. There is a link to it from the HMS PTO website: www.hmspto.org. There was a discussion of designating a place in HMS for posting high school information or flyers about high school events.

The Book Fair will be February 23 to February 26. There are several upcoming fine arts performances, including Beauty and the Beast this week. The Peer Leadership and Movie Clubs will sponsor a movie afternoon to benefit Haiti, which is being planned. See the HMS PTO and HMS websites for details. Lost and Found committee chairperson Cindy Scalzo reported there is no longer a bin for Lost and Found, and there are many 8th-grade textbooks waiting to be picked up.

Stephanie reported the CCSD 181 Foundation has grants for student available under its "Kids making a difference in society" program. These grants are underwritten by Hinsdale Bank and Trust, and students should be aware of them for service projects. More information can be found on their website, www.d181foundation.org

Old Business: None

New Business: Senator Burriss is going to send a representative to see our Blue Ribbon School to HMS this month. Ruben will show him around.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Janet Stutz, CCSD 181 Assistant Superintendent for Learning, presented on the Gifted Program and Testing. There will be a presentation to the Gifted Education Oversight Committee of the CCSD 181 Board of Education on Tuesday, February 16, 2010. Certain tests are being reviewed for elimination or continued use to reduce testing hours and to increase instructional hours for students. There are instructional Differentiation Facilitators, as well as Gifted Coordinators at each building. The District is actively training teachers on differentiation strategies for teaching. This will be an ongoing process, focused on many aspects of differentiated instruction, including for ELL students, students with high interest, gifted students, and students in need of reading support. Dr. Stutz reported significant training occurred at the last Institute Day in this area, and will be continuing. It takes years to become an expert at differentiated instruction, and the District is committed to this.

Submitted by Nancy Hamp and Mary Cass, Co-Recording Secretaries
February 16, 2010