HMS PTO General Meeting Minutes-Sept. 8, 2010

Attendance: Nancy Hamp, Cindy Scalzo, Newenka DuMont, Lori Goebel, Sue Shupe, Kelly Sopel, Pam Keseric, Christine Allen, Sharon Johns, Sherril Gray, Susan Cook, Yvonne Mayer, Lilliane Holland, Lisa Rose, Betsy Bruns, Anne Lorenz, Becky Arbor, Donna Donaldson, Missy Rafferty, Kim Notaro, Sarah Magnesen, Lynne Bloomfield, Julie Liesse, Molly Bowater, Kristin Dunn, Kimberly Peña, Lisa Becker, Roseann Coyner, Charlotte Laughton, Kathy Gartlan, Inga Haveric, Tammy Mason, Nickie Byrnes, Janet Meyer, Cindy Elazegui, Susan Joyce….

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Co-President Lynne Bloomfield at 10:05am.

Secretaries' Report: The minutes from May 12, 2010 were circulated and reviewed. They were approved.

Presidents' Report: Lynne thanked the many people that have helped to make this the best start to a year ever at HMS. The chairs of various committees have done a great job running Back to School Day and the Activity Fair, getting the Spartan Shack open, vending machines stocked, directory sent to the printer, teacher gifts distributed, outside gardens tended, over 30 new families welcomed, $2600 worth of spirit wear sold, etc.

Announcements for committees/events etc. can be sent out via e-mail blast and added to the PTO website (www.hmspto.org) at least once per week. CCSD 181 website (www.d181.org) has a link to the HMS site, which HMS Secretary Gail Vescovi updates regularly.

Treasurer's Report: Our $42,000 budget for this year is posted on the PTO website. We zero out our budget every year by spending any leftover money on appropriate Wish List items for enhancing instruction at HMS that may be proposed by Principal Ruben Peña, Assist. Principal Dr. Martha Henrikson, or PTO. Net proceeds from Dues and Directories should be about $12,500. School Supplies will net about $8,000. Net income expected from the Magazine Sale is budgeted at $17,500. Please hand in requests for reimbursement promptly. Forms are online or in the Treasurer's mailbox in the Main Office. Use the tax exemption number for PTO purchases as PTO funds may not be used to reimburse sales tax.

Committee Reports: Community Service committee (Pam Keseric/Teresa Pielet) will be conducting the coat drive for Hinsdale Community Service and putting together holiday meal packages. They are looking for a teacher to head the HMS group running in the Rotary Run Oct. 17, which will start at the Community House.

Hinsdale Central liaison (Lili Holland) suggested that HMS parents, especially those with 8th graders, look at the Central website for info on their PTO as well as other Central activities. The Explore test for 8th graders is in mid Oct. this year and parents are encouraged to talk to the HCHS Guidance Dept. if they have questions about student placement or curriculum.

The Activities Fair (Newenka DuMont) was a great success. Over 250 kids attended. Timing and length of the fair next time are under discussion.

SELAS (Chris Allen) will be focusing on cyber-bullying this year. Several staff members were trained in how to use SELAS materials and there will be a week of SELAS activities this year.

Items from last years' Lost and Found (Cindy Scalzo) were sorted, cleaned and donated as follows: 50 gym uniforms were sent to a village in Guatemala to be used as sport team uniforms, 30 pair of sneakers were given to the Community House footwear drive, several lunch

bags and gently used school supplies were given to a program for underserved kids in Willowbrook (thank you Kristin Dunn for distributing these items). Another 6 large bags of jackets, sweatshirts, etc. were sent to a hospital/orphanage in Haiti (Susan Joyce).

Board of Education Introduction: CCSD 181 Board Member Yvonne Mayer was introduced. During the summer months the board began early negotiations with the teachers' union. Progress was made, but no agreement reached. The process will resume in the spring. The preliminary budget for this year is on the d181 web site—they are projecting to be $500,000 in the red, but that is better than initially projected. The board is still looking for ways to balance the budget and will be hosting community engagement sessions to get feedback on long range planning. Four seats will be up for election this coming spring. Meeting schedules can be found on the d181 website and the meetings are webcast live!

Upcoming Events: The Magazine Sale has begun and we are looking for a way to donate an inflatable party to an inner city school. Whole Foods (63rd St) is donating 5% of sales on Sept. 15 to the District 181 Foundation. A meeting for parent input for CCSD181 long-range strategic planning is Oct. 20 at HMS

Principal Ruben Pena: Mr. Peña is excited to begin working with our new superintendent Dr. Renee Schuster. The opening weeks of school have gone well, although curriculum night was a bit chaotic. HMS currently has 779 students, which is projected to be the largest population. However, there are a lot of empty houses in the district and more bodies than anticipated may end up at HMS. All the classrooms are in use (at least one teacher works off a cart), and the staff is working to balance out the number of children in some classes. Mr. Peña is pleased with the 12 new teachers and the excitement and skills they bring to HMS. There are several male instructors at each grade level, as well as several teaching encore classes. MAP scores were used to target kids that need extra help with LA/math. Extra class time was arranged in place of foreign language so that these children can work to close the learning gap.

October 1 is the target date for having the Parent Portal up and available. Parents are concerned that is not soon enough. Ruben explained that it will open sooner if they can work out the bugs with teacher access.

Increased fees for school activities, especially the sport teams, have resulted in calls from some parents. Payment plans have been created for those who cannot afford a lump sum. There was discussion of possible ways to accommodate those students who do not qualify for fee waivers, but are still unable to pay the activity fee.

Mr. Peña reported that the Blue Ribbon School plaque approved by PTO is mounted in front of school. The new sound system is installed in the commons and is partly finished in the gym. He obtained money from CCSD 181 to augment PTO's contribution to these needed improvements. He purchased and had installed 5 new ENO "smart boards" to improve technology for instruction in classrooms with PTO funds as approved last spring. Professional development training in their use is included in their cost. Several new sorely needed band instruments were purchased, as previously approved, with PTO funding.

New Business: none

The meeting was adjourned by Lynne at 12:00 noon. Submitted by Cindy Scalzo