

## Hinsdale Middle School PTO General Meeting Minutes --April 13, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Co-President Julie Liesse at 9:37 a.m.

**Secretaries' report:** The minutes from March were approved.

**Special discussion: Going Green at HMS:** Teacher Kelly Pelak Ditmars presented recent activities of HMS's Eco Club. The Club is trying to earn an Earth Flag from the organization Scarce (School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education) based in Glen Ellyn. One requirement was performing a lunchroom audit of garbage. Unannounced to the students, Eco Club participants sorted trash. They found 55 untouched sandwiches in the trash, and many untouched fruits. Unlike most schools where most of trash is from packaging or lunch bags, at HMS, 70% of trash was food waste or beverage waste. Students will be shown a video of the findings to help educate them on reducing waste.

Eco Club sponsored "What Can You Make from Trash" at the Green Fair sponsored by D181 Foundation at CHMS. The Club is raising money for recycling bins by making bracelets out of metal pull tabs from aluminum cans. Teachers must also be educated to earn the Earth Flag. T-shirts are being sold saying, "Green is the New Blue." Waste free lunch containers can be purchased at The Shack. HMS's alternative energy from the wind turbine and solar panels also helps earn the Earth Flag.

Principal Ruben Peña and HMS parent and PTO member Tammy Mason reported on the decrease in energy consumption at HMS since the new HVAC system was installed. Besides improved efficiency in the equipment, holes in the roof were patched, lights turn off automatically and turn on when motion is detected in rooms, heating and cooling shuts down on its own when not needed, and wind and solar panels contribute energy to the power grid. Combined efforts are saving more than \$100 thousand per year on energy costs at HMS!

Julie reported that School Supplies Chair Kristin Dunn will be moving to online ordering to save paper. The teachers have been asked to be more careful about what they request students buy in order to help reduce waste. Along with Cindy Scalzo, Lost and Found Chair, the committee donated school supplies in new condition to fee waiver students. These committees donated gym uniforms to school and sports teams in Guatemala after laundering them. Over 50 uniforms which had been discard or lost were recycled in this way.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Annette Phillips reported that Book Fair income was down this year. That money goes to the MRC. Overall projected income for 2011-2012 is \$39,650, with the same figure as projected expenses. PTO will hold steady on grade level spending, will decrease spending on extracurricular activities and will continue the increase for World War II Days and its professional speakers. Any surplus at the end of the fiscal year will be targeted for special purchases to help enhance student learning identified by the principals and PTO.

**Principals' Report:** Mr. Peña reported that Title 1 money was used to purchase a few iPads. Building budget was used to purchase iPod touch devices and iPod audiobooks. PTO recently

donated money to purchase 20 additional first generation iPads at special pricing. Mr. Peña is developing our own library of applications at HMS to use with each of these devices for student learning. A consideration: 2<sup>nd</sup> generation iPads can be used to project data on screens in classrooms, like Smart Boards. This is a possible future technology purchase.

End of the year scheduling: June 6 will be a grading day—no school for students. June 7 will be a full day. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be dismissed at 1:45 p.m. June 8<sup>th</sup>. That will be graduation day for 8<sup>th</sup> graders, who will not attend school. Graduation is at 3 p.m. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade only will have half-days on June 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> with 10:55 a.m. dismissal.

Vice Principal Martha Henrikson reported that encore class scheduling will begin with band and orchestra students this week and will move to 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders as a whole next week. There will be 10 days to make encore selections online. A password for student log-on and instructions will be sent to each student. There is no advantage to scheduling early as opposed to late in that 10-day window. The District has asked for core class placements for each student by May 16. A consulting firm with Infinite Campus will take the data, and with parameters such as a class size limit of 30 in core classes, will build student schedules. Then principals will modify schedules as necessary. Mr. Peña sees it as a priority to keep the integrity of the RTI classes intact.

**Special Guests:** Several student leaders from HMS's own "Link with Pink" fundraiser to benefit the Avon Foundation's breast cancer research efforts visited the meeting to present their goals and to ask for PTO support of the event. There will be a 2-mile walk on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 to highlight this fundraising effort led by students. Mr. Peña is serving as staff sponsor. Family sponsorships of the event are \$100. Corporate sponsorships are \$250. Parent volunteers are needed to help with the event. A draft of a letter to be shared with the community regarding this event was shared with PTO.

**PTO Presidents' Report:** The new CCSD 181 Board of Education members will be seated April 26, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. Staff Appreciation Week is the first week in May. There will be a breakfast May 2, a full luncheon May 6, and various goodies for staff during the week. Fifteen-minute chair massages will be available on April 28<sup>th</sup> for interested staff. This service is being provided by a chiropractic practice which Lynne recruited.

**New Business:** The Nominating Committee has identified volunteers to fill PTO Executive Board positions except for 1 vice president and 1 recording secretary. Please forward names of potential nominees and contact information to Co-President Lynne Bloomfield. Identify yourself at Kramer Foods as an HMS parent, sign the receipt, and a donation will be made to HMS today and tomorrow. On Thursday, May 12, at 9:30 a.m., the May General PTO meeting will host a Robert Crown Center representative to give a presentation on what our students learn regarding health and human sexuality when they go there as part of the middle school curriculum.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Submitted by Nancy Hamp, Co-Recording Secretary, May 4, 2011