

Federated HSA Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2018

Coleman School

9:00 a.m.

Attendees: Melissa Antonelli, Lynda Coppola, Cathy Courtney Fintzy, Mara Trager, Allisan Emes, Sharon Scarpelli, Bryon Torsiello, Mona Milbrodt, Anne Marie Small Podd, Colleen Manley, Alix Schater, Orlee Goldfeld, Phyllis Simon, Katie Fanelli, Megan Findley, Ed Thompson, Andrea Silk, Leslie Kossar Schraer

- **Approval of the Minutes** – Approved by Leslie Kossar Schraer and Holly Goshin

- **Board Officer Updates**
 - **Welcome – Mrs. Allison Cassin and Mrs. Sinead Rundell**
 - * Dr. Regan not able to attend today. Next update at spring Federated.
 - * Christine Gifford was unable to attend today's meeting. She wanted to remind everyone that the next SEPAC district meeting will be on March 28 at 7:30PM in the MH/HS Media Center. Dr Edwards will be giving a presentation on the Special Education program to the Board of Education sometime in February or March.
 - * In May there will be a transition meeting for 5th grade parents with children in the Special Education program. It will be a good opportunity to come and ask questions. When the date is set it will be advertised.

 - **Federated President's Report – Mrs. Allison Cassin and Mrs. Sinead Rundell**
 - * Online directory was rolled out for the first time. It's very exciting to see the process come to fruition.
 - * Leslie Kossar Schraer shared that the process went smoothly this first year. There were 12 total requests for the file to print the directory - 5 were administrators. So overall there seems to be good uptake and a smooth transition to having the directory in a digital format.
 - * The step by step guide to the system will be updated for next year to make it easier to follow. All comments and feedback on the system are welcome.
 - * One question was raised regarding email addresses. There will be further discussion regarding whether email addresses will be shown by default in the

future, vs having to select to make them visible.

*A reminder that changes to the Directory system do not get communicated back to Genesis – the information flows one way only.

* Kathy Duggan is the new web master for the Federated HSA website.

* Federated HSA is working on setting up an evening and daytime coffee with Dr. Watson for parents to have the opportunity to meet and talk with him.

- **Calendar Report – Mrs. Holly Goshin**

* If you have any changes for the calendar, please send to Holly at hollysgoshin@gmail.com.

* Next version will be distributed next week. All changes will be noted in dark blue.

- **Treasurer Report – Mrs. Sara Mazin**

* There have been two expenses since last report. \$1,000 was paid for the HSA online handbook. And \$200 was spent on the holiday breakfast for the non Union district employees. The Central office was very touched by the breakfast.

* The account balance stands at \$3,666.49.

- **District Update**

- **Elementary Schools Principal Report – Mr. Ed Thompson**

* Coleman – Welcome to the Coleman Library. Thank you to the HSA for sponsoring the visit of Jason Chin, the author/illustrator, on Dec. 12. Winter concert was held on Dec. 13. Thank you to Mr. Bazaz who coordinated a wonderful show. Looking forward to the next Coleman Café on Friday, Feb. 2 for 2nd grade. Looking forward to first annual Science Fair on March 7 - 8th. Professor Dave Maiullo, a Rutgers professor, is visiting the school to talk to the students about the Scientific Method and general science ideas. Student Council has asked all students and staff to don their favorite jerseys next week in recognition of the super Bowl on Feb. 4. Big thank you to the Coleman HSA for the Gaga Pits, Holiday Shop and constant support of our teachers. Looking forward to next tubing night at Campgaw on March 2.

* Byrd – Cliff Mendelson, a professional artist, sculptor, potter will present an Artist in Residence program to the 3rd and 4th grade students on Jan. 30. He will present students with information about how Native American ceramic vessels are made and their connection to various cultures. Students will create their own individual clay vases. On Feb. 9, the HSA will sponsor a Mother/Son Dance in the gym. Chinese New Year is Feb. 16 and the 3rd grade will be participating in activities to learn about the holiday on Feb. 12. The art, music, learning center and PE teachers will set up stations for the students to rotate through. Family Life instruction for 4th and 5th grade students will be on Friday, Feb 16 and 23.

* Central – Lunchtime enrichment began this week. Thanks to parent volunteers and funding by the HSA, students are able to participate in various indoor activities including legos, acting, chat and draw, arts and crafts, family game night, basketball and yoga.

Family Bingo Night is Jan. 26. The winter concert was held on Dec. 14. 4th grade instrument, 5th grade instrument and early morning chorus performed beautifully. Many thanks to Mr. Malone. Thanks to Central's HSA, Central had a wonderful "Lead U" on Kindness assembly, wonderful holiday shop and book fair. Central raised over \$7,000 to buy beds for a village, Los Naranjos in Puerto Rico. Student Council has done wonderful community events and is collecting soup for the Community Food Bank in celebration of the "Souper" Bowl.

* Hamilton – Students, teachers and the HSA have been busy since the return to school. One of the things most proud of is community service work through Hamilton Helping Hands. We collected \$340.26 for Puerto Rico. Students donated \$1 and were able to participate in Silly Hat Day. \$345 was collected for Heavenly Hats, an organization that provides hats for children with cancer. 4th and 5th graders put on an amazing concert last week. Many thanks for Mr. Diomedes for his wonderful work with the children. Check out twitter @GRPSHamilton for some short clips. Looking forward to 3rd Grade Husky Café on Friday, Jan. 26. Look forward to the Circus residency which will take place the week of Jan. 29. All students will learn circus skills and our 5th graders will be highlighted with a show on the last day. And finally, we're excited about our upcoming Multicultural Festival, taking place on May 4.

- **MS/HS Principal Report – Mr. John Arlotta**

- * MS/HS HSA meeting is on Jan. 26.

- * Middle school just came back from their first ski trip. There are a few more to come. Middle School Geography Bee was held on Jan. 4. Practice has begun for the Middle School Musical – "Mary Poppins." Coming in March.

- * High School Musical – "Legally Blonde" – will be performed Feb. 8-10.

- * Currently in the midst of midterms at the High School. When PARCC came out some schools discussed whether they still needed midterms. Some schools went to quarterly testing at the end of each marking period but found that it increased stress for students. Midterms are still the norm at the college level, which played into the High School's decision to continue to have them. 98% of Glen Rock students go on to college so the school feels it's a valuable activity to prepare students for college.

- * Administrators, teachers and staff are trying to find ways to balance being rigorous and not stressing out students too much. One of the benefits of being at a smaller school is that there is the opportunity to personalize education as much as possible to benefit each student.

- * The Department of Education has included a new rating system in the school report card. It rates schools from 1 – 100. Different criteria for different grade levels. High schools are rated primarily based on PARCC performance, % of chronic absenteeism and graduation rate. Glen Rock's number is good but it's hard to tell as this is new and the first year they rankings are being released. Glen Rock did well however – it was Rated # 1 public high school in New Jersey. There were a few private schools ahead of Glen Rock but we were the top public school. No matter how we're ranked, we are always trying to do better.

- * PARCC test - online assessments are common in college and workforce. Since it's computerized, data is returned faster. The test allows school to see over time how a

child progresses, and allows schools to individualize instruction based on where a child is strong or needs improvement.

* PARCC also allows administrators, staff and teachers to look at the entire school to see where improvements could be made. Year One of the PARCC was hard since so many kids didn't take it. Year Two better but still not great – lot of older kids still didn't take test. Now it's more useful as most students are taking it to ensure they can graduate. Current 10th graders are the first grade that must take all of the tests to qualify for graduation. Now that most kids have taken it, learning can be gained and adjustments made. For example in Math, teachers are now incorporating more reasoning into the curriculum.

* There have been a lot of questions about substance abuse at school. The opioid epidemic kept the staff busy last year. Law says if any staff member suspects that a student is under the influence, they have to act upon it. They can't use their discretion. In the event someone is suspected of being under the influence, the Nurse does quick vitals, and then the next step, since they always are on the side of caution, is to send the student out to be tested. Once they know if the results are positive or negative, they can act accordingly. The school's approach isn't punitive but to help children. They try to get to the kids as early as possible so they don't become statistics. Last year there were 30 cases at school. Assemblies and parent meetings were held and it appears that some of the measures have helped.

* This year, the substance abuse of choice appears to be vaping – it's a problem in the middle school and high school. Education is best. The school is working on a letter to send home to educate parents. Kids think vaping is not that harmful since it's not "traditional" smoking. However, that's not true. One problem is that the children may not know what they are smoking. Vape smells fruity. It could be nothing or it could contain nicotine or THC. The school has to assume the worst and they will send students caught vaping out to be tested so that they know what they're smoking. It's all about the safety of the kids. Parents should know that children use gift cards and order vapes via mail order and have them delivered to abandoned houses in town. Also, alcohol is still a problem, and parents and the school need to be in this together.

* A question was asked regarding what is being done to educate kids? There are more educational activities and assemblies at the high school level but more is starting to happen at the middle school level too. Have had Chris Heron and Vance Johnson, former pro athletes, come to speak about their experiences. They've also had the Bergen County prosecutor's office bring in a speaker from their heroin initiative. Counselors from New Pathways come in and speak to the students. Efforts are successful if they can stop even one child from abusing substances.

* Another question was asked about what is being done about the pressure on kids, which leads some to "blow off steam"? The school is working to create balance between rigorous educational experience and not overly stressing students. They have reworked the schedule to have a one hour break in the middle of the day for lunch and time to decompress. Continue to look at the idea of homework. Not realistic to have no homework but have been pressing teachers to think about quality vs quantity.

c. Board of Education Report – Mr. Bryon Torsiello & Mrs. Sharon Scarpelli

- * The Board of Education thanks the Federated HSA for sponsoring the staff appreciation breakfast.
 - * Two new trustees. Megan Findley and Ed Hayward.
 - * Jan 9th reorganization meeting. New Committees announced: SEPAC (Special Services)-Rona McNabola; Fiscal Management-Sharon Scarpelli; Operations committee-Elizabeth Carr; Governance-Rona McNabola; Curriculum-Dr Kevin Brennan.
 - * Board of Ed representatives to schools: Byrd: TBD; Hamilton-Megan Findley; Central-Megan Findley; Coleman-Sanjiv Ohri; MS/HS-Ed Hayward
 - * Rona McNabola broke her leg so Bryon will be helping cover for her committees for now.
 - * Board of Education held a retreat on Jan. 20 to go over concepts for new trustees and refresh all Board members of key initiatives. New topics were introduced as well.
 - * Board has been busy with the reorganization of assignments, meeting with Dr. Watson, starting the budget process, and hearing concerns from the school community.
 - * The calendar of Board of Education meetings has been approved and is now available online. Meetings are held twice/month and more of the work is happening behind the scenes to make sure the meetings are shorter.
 - * Sharon Scarpelli – Currently working on the 2018-19 school year budget. It will be a challenging budget year. Working hard to move district forward in cost efficient way. Will be difficult to stay within 2% cap and will most likely need to use the banked cap.
- **Superintendent’s Report – Mr. Bruce Watson**
 - * 2% cap is in regards to the tax base. Can raise taxes up to 2% to support growth of school. Legally can not go over 2% unless you “bank” potential increase. However that just means you are increasing taxes higher.
 - * Wanted to note that Special Education is important – we must educate all children to the best we can. No one is blaming increases in Special Ed costs for woes of our budget. Will need to go through the budget line by line and will face challenges and have to make hard decisions this year. May not be able to maintain everything. Must give kids “thorough and efficient” education.
 - * Goal is continuous improvement. Position is to support administrators.
 - * Important to the Board and District -- focus on wellness as a district. Each school is looking at homework.
 - * Coleman’s water system – put filters on ceramic fountain and testing now. If the tests show that the issues are all corrected, the district will put filter on all of the fountains in Coleman.
 - * Enrollment in the district is growing. Holding another Kindergarten enrollment in March. Want to know as early as possible how many Kindergarteners are enrolling.
- **New District Website Overview – Mrs. Andrea Tahinos**
 - * Provided a demo of the website. Goal is uniformity among all the individual websites.
 - * No login required to use the site.
 - * Used exclusively for district/school information and announcements. No teacher pages.
 - * District pages look different than individual schools. To select a school, use the drop

down menu to take you right to the specific school website.

* Glen Rock Public Schools has a new logo.

* All sites has a section for Quick Links.

* Calendar on Superintendent's page can embed links/forms to attach to a calendar event.

* Online calendar – there is one for every school. Parents can subscribe to get alerts for each calendar.

* Includes links to the Facebook page, Twitter, Youtube (right now just for HS) and email.

* You should be able to find anything using the search bar but if you can't, reach out to Mrs. Tahinos.

* Work in Progress – depending on what browser you use, you may not be able to see everything. For now, recommend using Google Chrome. There will also be an app in the future.

* Will be using School Messenger instead of Honeywell for emergency announcements, probably by July.

- **Motion to Adjourn** – 11:21 am by Anne Marie Small Podd and Mara Trager