

MINUTES

HSA PTA Meeting

September 6, 2023, 8:45 am | Meeting called to order by PTA President Lydia Vincenty

CALL TO ORDER

Attendees: Lydia Vincenty, Emily Casey, Erica Ashlock, Jen Donnelly, Nancy Chin, Nick Bondi, Kristy Patterson, Vanessa Shropshire, Amy Nathan, Sophia Kim, Julie Lei, Lindsey Seeskin, Jeff Kuhl, Amy Nussbaum, Jessica Gagle, Andrew Gagle, Wendi Wolmer, Michael Kosko, Mira Loh-Trivedi, Natsumi Saito, Diana Tate, Maria Rentzelos, Jackie Kelly, Principal Trish Davlantes

Member welcome from President Lydia Vincenty. First few weeks have been great. Meeting minutes posted soon after meeting on the PTA website for those who need recap or can't attend. Welcome to Dr. Michael Kosko, a new addition to Hawthorne administration and former AP at Bell.

NEW BUSINESS

I. Walkathon:

- a. Event details: Hawthorne's annual fall fundraising event; this year on Thursday, October 12 (rain date Oct 13). Each class has its own theme and mascot selected by teacher and kids. Kids dress up. Big pep rally in the morning, and kids are scheduled to run/walk around the turf at set times. Launched automated device for tracking laps last year for older kids; little kids get bracelets. Parents can attend and sign up to help count laps, distribute snacks, help with balloon arch, music, cleanup, set up, etc. Goal is \$40K. Donations are captured online – site has kid/class info preloaded.
- b. Sponsorships: Event features t-shirts where families can write a name or message on the back of the shirt; these family sponsorships are \$125. There are also business sponsorship options; messaging will go out soon. Snack sponsor confirmed and they upped their donation this year. We try to do healthy snacks for kids; Trader Joes usually gives bananas and we get bagels. May need help with music and daily prize donations for kid incentives (a couple of years ago had Altitude passes). Need to keep prize options differentiated from the Student Raffle.
- c. Shirt Logo: This year's theme is Stronger Together; Ms. Dominguez created a logo specific to that theme. Last year had a student logo design contest for the front of the shirt but tricky to translate to print; may use Ms. Dominguez's logo or may solicit drawings from select students. May also have a kid poster contest based on theme that will be part of extra incentive "prize" options; TBD.
- d. Misc: Meeting committee open for anyone who wants to join; kicking off with Zoom this Friday. Reach out to Emily Casey if interested.

II. **Shop for Schools:** Fun fundraiser over 3 days this year, October 4-6. New this year: program has expanded to include some Southport shops (eg, Candyality – might make for a fun after school meetup). Hosted by Roscoe Village/Lakeview Chamber of Commerce. We get 10% back off purchases from local shops. Top 5 or 6 schools get additional money. Last year we came in third and got an additional sum – made around \$1500. Stay tuned for more with flier and HSA specific meet-up info. Room parents may want to do a quick outing too.

III. **Fall Movie Night:** September 29 on the turf, weather permitting (vendor won't come in rain). Will start around 7. Will sell concessions for JH: candy, chips and pizza. Movie suggestion – Elemental from Pixar. Good for multiple ages. Will work on movie flyer and circulate soon.

IV. **Spring Gala:** March 8th at Artifact Events, Hawthorne's big spring fundraiser. Last year raised ~\$136K, not including raffle or Cubs donation. HSA is the only school in the area that doesn't charge for entry. Lots of options for folks to participate at different price points (or none). New co-chair Lauren Lopez. Looking for volunteers already – will add request in Friday blast. Considering a different name that entices everyone to come. Kristy also looking for wine or dessert contacts. In November is when we start asking for donations. Going to do committees again. If you're interested in helping on a specific committee please reach out to Kristy.

V. **Spirit Wear:** We have 2 sites: Square site for in-house merch delivered through school/student and a secondary site via school supply vendor where a % of purchase proceeds are returned to the PTA. Both for

convenience. Ordered new inventory – blankets. Will be at curriculum nights and movie nights. We have a committee but can always use volunteers to sell at events.

OLD BUSINESS

- I. **Fun Fest Recap:** Aug 27th. Went great; beautiful day and no major issues, although RAS (confirmed vendor) didn't show. Everyone seemed to have a great time. Multiple Connect 4 game sets that the kids enjoyed (ie, from parent Amy Nussbaum, Chicago Fire, Bright Smiles). Broke even for this event between what we made and what we paid. Didn't have to pay for tents. May want to rethink wristbands for next year if we intend to give them away as free items; they were pricy. If we're not going to charge for the wristband activities perhaps we consider something simpler like a stamp for tracking. Ticketed booths seemed to do well: sand ran out, tie dye in smaller sizes sold out. Might also consider increasing cost for the tie dye as it can be expensive.
 - a. K Aide Fund: raised over \$3K. Didn't sell as many ice cream treats at event because of snow cones but sold them last week after school and raised a quick \$250. Might do once a month while supplies last. Current K aide fund total is just over \$16K – great job to the K families.

OTHER BUSINESS

- I. **Neurodiverse Caregivers Group:** Jessica Gagle, Andrew Gagle and Amy Nussbaum are all Hawthorne parents with children who are neurodivergent. They've started a Neurodiverse Caregivers Group and are looking for interested participants (all welcome; those with or without kids who are neurodivergent) and for folks to spread the word. Group is still in its infancy but they have a mission statement that's been sent to Principal Davlantes and the school's guidance counselors and should be shared by administration in the coming weeks. Team wanted to introduce themselves and start putting word out. Interested in exploring possibility of spaces to bring in appropriate after school activities; see what kind of fundraising options might be available. Culling a support group Google doc where folks can share information/resource exchange.
- II. **Bus Petition/CPS Funding:** Check out the bussing petition on PTA website. 197 Hawthorne students were originally routed - impact at our school too. It was helpful to have an HSA parent at recent board meeting with numbers in hand to make the case. PTA meeting attendees shared some options/ideas for helping (eg, Piggyback, reengaging around the survey admin sent to those impacted by bussing stoppage). Principal Davlantes has discussed with CPS, emphasizing the magnet mission to make sure CPS understands that HSA needs transportation as well as funding they pulled back last year. Can't achieve mission without access and funds. Hawthorne has done well achieving growth among all students: low income, kids of color, kids with disabilities. Now it's time for CPS to show their support: "There's always a path to solving problems if you get in front of it and know what you're trying to achieve."
- III. **Room Parents:** Planning to do a room parent 101 Zoom call once the full roster is set. Room parent guide document in the works to distribute. Not all teachers have reached out so ask yours if you're interested. Primary grades differ from older grades but room parenting is great for coordinating families and students, helping PTA and supporting teachers. Room parents also do collections for classroom fund for class parties, supplies, snacks.
- IV. **Junior High Fundraising:** JH fundraising options in play to support graduation activities and 3 field trips: 1 in 7th grade to Lorado Taft and 2 in 8th grade – Yellowstone and DC. First JH fundraiser is the Messi game on October 4th; 100 entries available. Winners will be pulled Monday after curriculum night. All online.
- V. **Chicago Fire Outing:** Chicago Fire calling later today to coordinate school outing. Will aim for same section and send form out to families to gauge interest.
- VI. **Curriculum Nights:** Next week. PTA will sell spirit wear and memberships.
- VII. **Marquee Message:** Will explore a better way to sync the google form and payment. Need better communication about the 2-step process. Maybe add to the spirit wear Square Site or clean up the messaging.

NEXT MEETING

Next meeting Wednesday October 4th.

Meeting adjourned.