

**May 17, 2019**  
**Horseman PTA meeting**

**Do we want to make the Horsemen PTA a K-12 PTA to cover the high school?**

There is no more Parent Advisory Council at the high school. There is interest in having the PTA expand to a K-12 in order to cover the gap. The PTA that was at the high school was inactive and was suspended for a three-year period. Starting in 2019-20, the high school is allowed to have a PTA again. Do we make this PTA a K-12? Angel will send out a vote to the full PTA to determine if we should do that. Angel will meet with Dr. Smith to talk about how we can make this work - it is not their decision- but we want to work to build that relationship. Dr. Smith seems to be interested in this happening.

All high school events are done by boosters so the PTA role would be less event-centric and more advocacy and collaboration with the administration.

One suggestion would be to split the meetings between K-5 and 6-12 so that we don't have every issue to discuss at every meeting. It would be one PTA, but organized to work more efficiently. PTA has been helpful to the administration when there are parents who have been in the PTA for years, because we've had such turnover. For parents who are parents of younger children, it's important that the history and information is built now to carry through to the later grades.

**Dates that need to be confirmed for next year**

- Movie nights (WI and Morse)
- Career Day (confusion over who runs it - not us - and then it was dropped - push to get it done)

**Summer Packets**

Goal to get them done by the end of June and to the schools so we can be finished before we are off for summer. Angel will send out an email with last year's information so we can update it, translate it, and include the membership forms (per school).

We should have more instructions on what to do if you have kids in multiple schools to indicate which schools you are volunteering for.

**Foundation Collaboration - June 15**

- We need volunteers to run this event. We will have an information table and maybe run the raffle for the American Girl Doll.
- We need volunteers from 12-3 PM. Sessions are 90 minutes long.

- There is food, music and activities.
- Down at Pierson Park. Middle School gym is the rain location.
- We will show ourselves to be partners with the Foundation. We are the ones in the classrooms and they are the ones raising money for the classroom.

### **Translation**

We are making a new position for a translator to come on board and be more a part of the PTA. Spanish Liaison will be the new position name. She will try and come to as many events as possible. Vote yes.

### **Board of Education Election**

Everyone is allowed to have their opinions and votes. We just have to be careful to not have any indication of the PTA in these communications. The PTA cannot endorse a particular candidate and should educate everyone on all of the candidates.

League of Women Voters forum is this evening. The PTA sent in three questions to submit to the candidates and were confirmed. We have more questions that will be submitted. There are 4 candidates and 2 seats open. The 2 candidates with the most votes will be placed in the seats. Biographies of each candidate are posted on the PTA web site.

There are lawn signs regarding voting at the Administration Building that people may take and display around town.

### **Open Positions - Committee Formed**

Thanks to Bri, Allison, Daphne, Kelly and Lauren for the committee setup. June 21 will be a voting party and all need to come vote.

Treasurer - Maribel Correia (accountant, book fair at WI leader, 5th grade parent)

Secretary - Andrea Williamson

Vice President - Allie Scherich

President - Christina Grillo

Other open positions:

Membership

Rivertown Parent liaison

VP for 2nd (may have someone) and 5th

Volunteer Coordinator

### **SEPTA Update**

Scott Dorn felt that the SEPTA meeting was the most successful we ever had. Westchester Institute presented information on services that are available to families. Also had a lot of high school parents there and a translator helping.

Andrea Harrison is going to set up a cocktail party in the late afternoon/early evening to give parents of special needs kids a break and a chance to meet in early June.

We are working to get SEPTA up and running so these events are helpful. We would like to continue working to bring our organizations together. Would like to participate in the Foundation Day table.

### **Rivertowns/Heads Up**

Introverts presentation - Brianna wrote an article for the Rivertowns Journal about the event. The presentations were excellent and it was well received by Chris Borsari and parents who participated. Borsari would be interested in having a presentation for the teachers on this when they return to school next year.

Sexual Consent presentation at Mercy College - 42 people showed up to the event. The presenter did K-8 scenarios and how things are changing. The Ardsley VP discussed the process when someone reports and how we help them through it.

Heads Up - Created a flyer for WI and Morse describing the program and will send it out next week. Discussing the 8th grade cell phone incentive program allowing them to use the phones during the last weeks of school during lunch and free time. Mr. Whitham feels that this is a successful reward that the kids look forward to. The phone must be out-of-sight in the school the rest of the year. There was concern that there was a harassment situation last year when kids had phones in school.

There is a grant giving more chromebooks to classrooms next year. There are chromebook carts in the majority of the classrooms. We will not cover all classrooms last year but the ratio is significantly better than it had been in the past.

Cellphones are rarely used in the classrooms (cahoots, special class assignments) and are rarely out in the hallways. Of course they sneak them but that just happens and the school works to avoid it as much as possible. Only the 8th grade in the cafeteria is happening.

### **Remind**

We are allowed to create a PTA Remind. We will have a QR code to take people directly to things.

### **School Updates**

## **JP**

- Incoming Kindergarten night had about 10 families last night. Maybe due to the nice weather.
- Staff appreciation week went well.

## **Morse**

- Organizing a book swap for kids to trade books.
- Did a daily activity for staff appreciation with a lunch on the final day.
- Trial with Curious-on-Hudson (Curiousitas) lunch program and if it goes well will consider for next year. The afterschool programs were too complicated with bussing. This is the group that does a lot of STEM program and does the wildly successful Tinker Night. Every student will get to do one activity. They are doing this for free. Next year if we do this, children-in-need will be fully funded to participate.

## **WI**

- Discussed the yearbook and difficulties. Mr. Holland suggested a committee.
- Appreciation lunch and daily activities were much appreciated. The raffle was won by a substitute so we suggested that next year it's limited to permanent staff.
- 5th grade moving up ceremony does not need PTA help.
- Climbing wall has been repaired.
- Mr. Holland submitted a letter to the Chief of Police to try and get someone there daily, which may not be possible.
- Dual Language Expansion to 5th grade - still no decision from Mr. Borsari and the Board of Education. If it is expanded, it is only a teacher reassignment rather than a hiring situation.
- Lunch time board games have had some difficulties - lost game pieces, and not running all the time.
- Assistant Principal search received over 200 applicants. The 2 best were presented with an issue in the school and were able to research with staff and then presented findings and suggestions for addressing those issues. Selection will be made soon, if not already.
- Bus behavior is a concern - loud, cursing from certain kids and some incidents with inappropriate videos shown on the phone. The bus driver cannot drive and handle behavior. Aides are not possible budget-wise.
- Discussed videos in class being used too often (example cupcakes for a birthday and the teacher ran a video in the background). He is looking into it.
- Students created a GoFundMe to eliminate plastic flatware. Mr. Holland thinks this is a positive change for the school and loves student initiative. We do have a contractor who runs all of this and there are personnel needs there. He is going to work with the business office to find out how this would happen and it would eventually need to go through board approval.
- Water fountain installation on the first floor has saved 217 bottles of plastic. Planning a second installation for the second floor.

## **MS**

- Staff appreciation was lovely and much appreciated. The lunch was nice, but they loved the daily treats.
- Sports scheduling has been difficult and there were confirmation issues and then teams arrived and the other school had no idea that they were playing. Scheduling done through BOCES and they are looking into it.
- 8th grade recognition ceremony - gowns need to be measured, etc. and will be done by the school.
- High school has more issues with vaping according to the middle school. There are some repeat offenders they are watching. Some bathrooms are being blocked to keep the middle schoolers as separated as possible. More is happening off-campus and there are videos. The school and Officer Kelly are pursuing it and being respectful of student rights and privacy. It is in our health curriculum.
- Honors program being changed based on feedback. There will be no honors in 6th grade and limited in 7th and 8th. Some parents feel left out of the conversation.