

**Federated Home and School Association
Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2020**

Welcome: October Meeting

Kelly Buchsbaum welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:17am via Zoom.

In attendance:

Kelly Buchsbaum (Federated President), Colleen Tansey (Federated 1st VP), Amy Gill (Federated 2nd VP), Valerie Auyeung (Federated Secretary/Treasurer), Kathy Marshall (Federated Member-at-Large), Dr. Fishbein (Superintendent), Mike Lembo (BOE), Mary Micale (RHS), Juliane Cho (GW), Carol Waldman (BF), Christine Malloy (Travell), Jess Vartughian (Travell), Jimmy Judge (Orchard), Francesca Parker (Somerville), Sarah Traband (Somerville), Ashley Minetti (Ridge), Lauren Dunleavy (Willard), Kelly Ashford (Hawes), Jen Giammarella (Hawes), Jamie England (LSHSA), Elena Croy (RED), Paul McCarthy (REF)

September minutes approved with amendment: RED Program attendee correction (Liz Kempey attended in place of Elena Croy).

Board of Education Update:

Dr. Dan Fishbein, Superintendent

- Appreciate everyone's support with HOPE trees
 - Need update from PSEG regarding markouts
 - Kelly A (Hawes): Hawes has a lot of oaks in the playground, and child has been hit by acorns---request to have trees planted away from playground
 - Todd R (Orchard): Note: Northern red oaks grow to 60-70 ft, lots of branches and shade---kills grass around them
 - Alternative: Design a plaque to put on an existing tree
 - Dr. Fishbein: Each school will have a post next to the tree
 - Kelly B: Each school will have an opportunity to design a post; Dr. Fishbein and principals all supportive
 - Todd R.: Respectfully decline the offer for the tree
- Phase 2 update: Working with BOE to enhance offering
 - Concerns with eating lunch at school from parents and staff
 - Todd R: Since start date pushed back to Nov 9th, consider moving back later and extending day another half hour
 - For start times for middle and high school level--- suggest starting 45 min later for in-person
 - Dr. Fishbein: Discussed in the past; not many HS in other districts have moved start times---only Tenafly has moved start time but they do not have bussing
 - Moving it 45 min can impact bussing as well as other issues

- Mary M (RHS): Has been discussed at the HS for a long time; suggest raising issue with BOE; there was an extensive presentation last year; may not be the best time to start something new
- Kathy M: Parent committee represented by BOE and students; sleep-in days extended to twice a month last year
 - Consider for this year since no sleep-ins with the current schedule
 - Agree with Mary that it may not be a good time for changing start times this year since kids are not back at school full-time yet
- Ashley M (Ridge): Question regarding opening playgrounds for elementary schools
 - Dr. Fishbein: Protocols will be put in place and work with medical professionals
- Kelly B: There is a new company, Village Table, that is soliciting business from schools – this could be a concern with existing contracts and/or other lunch providers who have asked to work with RPS in the past and not been able to due to Pomptonian. Please share info on Pomptonian contract - Dr. Fishbein
 - Dr. Fishbein: cannot compete with contracted provider---gives a certain percentage back to the schools. Other suppliers cannot deliver to school---must be delivered to home then kids can bring to school
 - Kathy M: If 3rd party is delivering to home but benefiting HSA, it is ok to do as long as not being delivered to schools; web portal is organizing with local businesses
 - HSA presidents may need guidance regarding curbside pickup
 - Juliane C (GW): GW is working with Village Table as a fundraiser; parents can go to the restaurants to pick up for curbside; only participating in homes via deliveries and/or curbside restaurant pickup
 - Ashley M (Ridge): Also working with Village Table to do the same as GW; not for RFP
- Contact-tracing letters
 - 3 different situations have occurred
 - Contact tracing occurs immediately, and info disbursed quickly
 - Fortunate to not have closures yet
 - Nurse acts as conduit to village health officials; asks questions of teachers
 - Teachers have been emphatic that kids have been wearing masks and socially distanced

- Elementary kids do not appear to be impacted by wearing masks

Mike Lembo, BOE

- Kelly B thanked Mike for acknowledging HSAs and Federated at last BOE meeting
 - Mike trying to get more parents involved
- HOPE trees: Working with Dr. Fishbein regarding signs
- Delayed start time: was discussed with the last board; issue with sports--- every district would have to move times
- Phase 2 reopening: Admin requested 2 extra weeks; Ridgewood has a low rate of positive tests; working towards full-day and will also keep remote option
 - Mary M (RHS): Recent schedule change well-received; parents and students want more time to get used to schedule change before proceeding
 - Would BOE consider having elementary kids have full days and MS and HS continue with current schedules?
 - Mr. Lembo: Has been brought up and agree that kids of different ages have different needs
 - Mr. Lembo invited to BF and Travell meetings
 - Kathy M: New BOE members may not know how schools operate on a day-to-day basis; may be beneficial for BOE members to attend school HSA meetings and hear from principals
 - Automatic default from parents---petitioning BOE seems to be an automatic response and bypassing schools and principals
 - BOE meetings must address this issue and reinforce system, and petitioning BOE should be last resort
 - Mike agrees that BOE meeting was drawn out due to BOE not knowing all the school issues; parents should talk to teachers first then principal then move up from that point; BOE cannot change anything at the school level
 - Social media: Mr. Lembo will encourage BOE members to post positive posts
 - Todd R: Issue that BOE airing issues on social media and stating opinions instead of going to the schools
 - Mike agrees that BOE members should go to HSA meetings
 - Mary: Agree with Kathy and Todd---needs more dialogue between parents/HSAs and BOE. Consider special public meeting with all HSA presidents and BOE or just have 2 BOE members at the HSA meetings if all are not permitted without having a special public meeting

- Kelly B: Will request dates of when HSAs would like to have one or two BOE members attend meetings
- Ashley M (Ridge): Should feedback be reported back from Google forms? Kelly B: Definitely---can do in the open discussion and then will funnel to Mr. Lembo and Dr. Fishbein
- Kathy: Special curriculum meetings occurred in the past that parents were part of; process changed to wellness speaker series
 - At BOE meetings, Gifted and Talented topics and mapping issues have been coming up; if issue is brought up to the BOE, then these should be directed to the teachers
 - Mr. Lembo: Curriculum committee exists---will check to see if there is parent involvement
- Kelly B: OPRA---what is it, what is the purpose, and how should it be used?
 - Mike: Open Public Records Act---ensure government officials or public officials are kept in check
 - Any member of public can request documents
 - Purpose: To keep things transparent and to see if officials are doing things properly
 - Cannot control who makes the requests
 - Cannot have private conversations with attorneys posted and other sensitive issues cannot be released
 - Unfortunate that a private citizen's email was exposed
 - Kelly B: Can a person request anonymously? Mike: Yes but need to have an email to send info
 - There have been OPRA requests for OPRA requests
 - Mary M: What is the cost to the district for an OPRA request? Mike: Cost of requests are low due to emails being sent (not hard copies) but still time-consuming; need to have specific info in the request (dates, topics, etc)

- Mr. Lembo: Cannot discourage people from using OPRA; appears requests are slowing down
 - Web services now available to make it easier to obtain info
- Posted position for RPS Interim Superintendent; closing on the 16th with next meeting on the 19th
- Interviews with Business Administrator position and close to filling the position
- Kelly B: All HSAs have had first meetings; RHS has had more people at the meeting than ever before
 - HSAs should capitalize on this opportunity via online meetings to reach more parents
 - Would HSAs want Mike or a BOE member to attend their meetings?

President's Update:

Kelly Buchsbaum, President

- Vote for Northern Oak Commemorative tree: Each school will get one vote; send 1 vote per school and state name of school to Valerie by private chat or email. Vote to: (1) Have Federated contribute \$800 from Federated's Convocation Breakfast fund to defray cost of tree (note that Convocation Breakfast did not take place this year due to covid); (2) Have individual HSAs contribute \$302 each school to purchase tree for their school
 - **Both votes (\$800 contribution from Federated and \$302 individual HSA contributions) were approved by 14 out of 15 members**
- HSA presidents please remember that our Federated meeting updates should be shared at HSA meetings; if preferred, a Federated Executive Board member could attend a school's HSA meeting to provide updates upon request
- Fundraisers: Try not to book dates on other schools' fundraiser dates
 - For no-cook nights – is it okay to promote all no-cook events via community social media and among other schools? Kelly B: It does not seem to take away from other schools and supports Village businesses and restaurants.
 - Christine and Jess (Travell) agree
 - Todd R: Just want to make sure they aren't overlapping dates; Christine thinks that school parents will see their school's fundraiser on enews and support their own school
 - Jess: Suggest using google doc to share
 - Christine: Shared google doc for all fundraisers/events
 - Kelly B: Have Colleen (VP – secondary schools) and Amy (VP - elementary) to send to those for respective schools to discuss
 - Colleen and Amy will send out Google doc

- Jimmy: Orchard has a google calendar that can be shared
- Kelly B: also please add your HSA meeting dates and times
- Elena: No school calendar started
 - Kelly: Elena can email her with dates and times or start a calendar
- Somerville: Created signs to thank teachers as fundraiser
 - Kathy: REF had fundraiser through Printology; easy to do with Printology---just had to send in design
 - REF: Did not sell that many but may have more traction and sales at school levels
 - Francesca: Printology said it could be sold at other schools as well

Vice President's Report:

Colleen Tansey, 1st Vice President

Amy Gill, 2nd Vice President

- Meet with secondary school presidents after this meeting
- Amy: Had meeting yesterday with elementary school presidents; exchange of many creative ideas

Treasurer's Report:

Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer

- Thanked all HSAs for submitting Federated dues

Member-at-Large Report:

Kathy Marshall, Member-at-Large

- Directory update: Moving along; most staff and schools submitted data
 - GroupSpot will do upload this weekend
 - Meeting next Fri, 10/16, at 10am to discuss what directories look like with data loaded in; can invite ad chair if there is one; final 3 steps
 - Loading partner info ads
 - How to complete school info tab
 - How to allow access to subscribers to directory tab on app
 - On track to launch the week of Oct 19th
 - Report on dues collection requested: interested to compare to last year
 - Schools that sent in info seems to be comparable to last year
 - May be useful for Kelly B to also see ad sales; Kelly: new GroupSpot app allows businesses to update messages and HSAs to sell ads seasonally
 - Sarah (Somerville): Somerville did not receive Zoom meeting info for GroupSpot – Kathy will send
 - HSA presidents can also join other schools' news feeds for inspiration
 - Can amend directory

- Kelly A (Hawes): How can people have access to directory if phones are not updated enough for platform? Kathy: Will work on workaround after data is uploaded, possibly hard copies. May have web-based version later.
- Ashley (Ridge): ~50% have bought memberships. Can remaining families be targeted? Kathy: Yes. Also consider a special eblast along with customized emails to those who have not signed up
- Juliane (GW): Customized blast works
- Insurance:
 - New policy in place
 - Issue with RHS Class of 2021 event that was piggybacked at Village event---possibly needed a rider but issue was resolved; request for advanced notice for these events to get a rider
 - Reminder of insurance procedures if insurance is needed
- LSHSA update:
 - Membership meeting on Fri, 10/2, attended also by Mike Lembo; Dr. Fenwick provided update; discussing having a meeting with just special ed parents at each school to discuss needs
 - Janel Nese will speak with elementary schools, and Danielle Wood will speak with secondary schools
 - Looking at more instruction for remote days
 - Special ed rep, who is the LSHSA rep, is expected to be on every Pandemic Response Team at every school
 - STEPSS 18-21 year old program launched during Dr. Fishbein's tenure and plans are proceeding for this program
- Paul McCarthy (Ridgewood Education Foundation)
 - Outreach for fundraising; REF Oktoberfest cancelled this past spring; looking for fundraising methods; met with district yesterday and reviewed events
 - Discussed grant for abroad art program and raising funds to support
 - Will meet next week to discuss fundraisers
 - Thank you for donating space to promote REF in ad on GroupSpot

Open Discussion:

- Kathy M:
 - College Club of Northern NJ
 - Grants to students in Paterson and surrounding towns, as well as Ridgewood
 - Need-based grants for young women going to 4-year colleges
 - Interest-free loan program for women or men in colleges
 - 2nd largest donors at RHS scholarship award ceremony
 - New website to check out

- 2 Upcoming events: For and against electoral college; \$25 to enter zoom to listen to authors on this topic
- Membership fee: \$100 first year, \$90 subsequent years

Meeting adjourned at: 11:20 am

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 12, 2020 at 9:15 am—Location TBD

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer