

**Federated Home and School Association  
Meeting Minutes  
February 4, 2021**

**Welcome: February Meeting**

Kelly Buchsbaum welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:18am via Zoom.

**In attendance:**

Kelly Buchsbaum (Federated President), Colleen Tansey (Federated 1st VP), Amy Gill (Federated 2<sup>nd</sup> VP), Valerie Auyeung (Federated Secretary/Treasurer), Kathy Marshall (Federated Member-at-Large), Dr. Gorman (Interim Superintendent), Mike Lembo (BOE President), Juliane Cho (GW), Christine Malloy (Travell), Jess Vartughian (Travell), Jimmy Judge (Orchard), Todd Rothman (Orchard), Francesca Parker (Somerville), Sarah Traband (Somerville), Ashley Minetti (Ridge), Kelly Ashford (Hawes), Elena Croy (RED), Paul McCarthy (REF), Mayumi Harada (BF), Jen Giammarella (Hawes), Mary Micale (RHS), Jamie England (LSHSA), Mindy Muselli (Ridge Directory Chair), Nicole Liu (RHS Directory Chair)

**Special guests:** Sheila Brogan (Municipal Alliance and Super Science Saturday); Kristen Plumley (Friends of Music); Mark Kossick, Jason DeBacco, Stephen Grant and Neil Blaney (GroupSpot).

January minutes approved.

**Superintendent's Update:**

**Dr. Tom Gorman, Interim Superintendent**

- Snow day with 1 virtual day worked out well. Unsure if state will allow a virtual day to count as a snow day in the future.
- BOE meeting on Monday will be summarizing COVID impact
- Stacie Polestra reporting on DEI at BOE meeting
- Late start time will also be discussed at BOE meeting
- Christine M (Travell): Is there a plan to vaccinate teachers? Dr. Gorman: Depends on the state and supplies. Ridgewood Health dept was receiving vaccines but not receiving any more.
- Kathy: If teachers are vaccinated, will they be teaching in school again? Dr. Gorman: When school opens in September, and if governor does not allow teachers to teach from home, then teachers will have to teach in school. Also kids will not be vaccinated by summer.
- Ashley M (Ridge): Will Ridgewood schools start following rules of CDC after traveling (ie 7 days with negative test as per CDC instead of 14 days?) Dr. Gorman: We have to follow NJ guidelines which is 14 days.

**Board of Education Update:**

**Mike Lembo, BOE**

- COVID vaccine: BOE and Dr. Gorman doing everything possible to get kids back in school. If possible, everyone should get vaccinated when able to in order to achieve herd immunity
- Late start time: 2 BOE members to view the Smart Balance presentation; other 3 BOE members have seen the presentation
- Internet policy: Revision of use of internet being reviewed
- DEI: Meeting tomorrow and presentation will be on Monday's BOE meeting
- All BOE meetings recorded and on website
- Budget: All Board members will be meeting with Business Administrator and giving presentations in the spring at schools
- AlphaBest running before and after care for K-5 and will be expanding services to holidays

### **Guest speakers: Sheila Brogan (Super Science Saturday and Municipal Alliance)**

- **Super Science Saturday** entering 33<sup>rd</sup> year this year. Will not be canceled but will be entirely virtual on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Livestream program starting at 10am with visit to Omaha Zoo. Ridgewood HS Invent team will do a 15 min presentation on award-winning project---won \$10K grant from MIT. Virtual visit to Bergen County Zoo and Van Saun Park. Will end with virtual rocket launch. Adult presenters will do selfie videos that will be posted to website for 1 month. On March 6, go to SuperScienceSaturday.org and click on livestream. Students can do selfie videos and send in. Funded by REF and Zenocide.
- **Ridgewood Municipal Alliance:** funded by NJ Alliance on alcohol and drug abuse program. Established by municipalities. Focused on alcohol and drug use prevention for anyone. Responsible for submitting grant to state for programs. Funding through fines paid from penalties for alcohol and drug abuse ie drunk driving, etc. Ridgewood has been recognized for work. Supported by RPS, esp middle and high schools and crisis counselors are on the committee. Mary Micale and Kelly B serve on the committee. Data tracked from hospitals and schools. Reported incidences are low in Ridgewood. Funds used for training for prevention at HS and middle schools. Funded the program, "Parents who host lose the most." Sponsor safe homes pledge and network. Grant decreased to \$3500 this year due to deficit funds of \$10K. Tim Shoemaker developed videos for middle schools about vaping. Cost would be \$2500 to use in the 2 schools—proposed to middle school principals.

### **Special Guest: Kristen Plumley (Friends of Music)**

- Friends of Music: Looking for new board members especially at elementary level
- Fundraise for scholarships for graduating seniors
- Additional programs offered to students outside of school
  - Young Musicians program for elementary and middle school students: fundraiser for Summer Music Program
  - Annual songwriting contest: K-12 and beyond; any musician can write and submit a musical piece

- Honor band for middle school students started by Mr. Haas and Mr. Luckenbill
- Dance event for elementary school students run by former dance teacher at RHS
- Website (RidgewoodFriendsofMusic.org) lists private music teachers as well as music camps
- FOM concert on February 19<sup>th</sup>: tickets available on website

### **President's Update:**

Kelly Buchsbaum, President

- Thanks to the Federated nominating committee (Colleen Tansey, Jamie England and Juliane Cho). Please reach out if interested in serving as a Federated executive board member in 21-22.
- Wizards funds from 2020:
  - Granted to RHS fitness center in 19-20 (\$9,651)
  - Request for donation from 2 groups:
    - Special Programs Office: STEPSS (Student Transition and Employment Program for Student Success) request for \$2000 to set up space in downtown Ridgewood
      - 18-21 Program focuses on life and job skills; will be adding a life skills unit this summer
    - Municipal Alliance (see description above) request for \$1500 for anti-vaping Middle School program
    - Representatives from all HSAs voted unanimously in favor to fund STEPSS and Municipal Alliance utilizing Wizards funds from 2020

### **Vice President's Report:**

Colleen Tansey, 1st Vice President

Amy Gill, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

- Colleen will be meeting with middle school presidents today
- Wizards game unlikely for the spring
  - Kathy: Is it possible to do a virtual Wizards event? Colleen: Since Federated is not technically a fundraising organization, the virtual event would not be a good fit since the actual event of the game would not be able to be held.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer

- See above President' report regarding Wizards funds from 2020

### **Member-at-Large Report:**

Kathy Marshall, Member-at-Large and Mark Kossick (GroupSpot)

- Ad revenue decreased from last year, but dues collected increased for most schools
- Improved ease of use, ease of launch, functionality

- Mark introduced team members: Neil Blaney, Jason DiBacco, Stephen Grant, Sam (intern)
  - Reviewed year-one objectives for Federated HSA and GroupSpot
  - Can increase engagement by turning on comments and Group Chat--- can be decided on a school-by-school basis
  - Reviewed best practices
    - Directory partner of the week
    - Notifications and event reminders
    - Notification routing
    - GroupSpot feedback

**Paul McCarthy (REF)**

- Winterfest campaign launched yesterday--storytime yesterday and will end with Super Science Saturday in March
- All events are free but encouraged to donate; 2 events have kits that can be purchased
- All funds will be distributed back to schools
- Met with Mark Kossick to determine best way to communicate program events via GroupSpot

Meeting adjourned at: 11:09 am

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 9:15 am—via Zoom

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer