

**Federated Home and School Association
Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2021**

Welcome: October Meeting

Mary Micale welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:20am.

In attendance:

Mary Micale (Federated President), Amy Gill (Federated 1st VP), Todd Rothman (Federated 2nd VP), Valerie Auyeung (Federated Secretary/Treasurer), Amy Beiersdorf (Federated Member-at-Large), Dr. Tom Gorman (Superintendent), Mike Lembo (BOE), Paul McCarthy (REF)

Jimmy Judge (Orchard), Patty Leung (Orchard)

Jess Vartughian (Travell)

Angela Lee (Hawes), Jennifer Pisani (Hawes)

Anna Crane (Willard)

Christine Lear (Somerville),

Jean Whitehead (Ridge)

Mayumi Harada (BFMS)

Tasneem Patrawala (GW)

Kelly Buchsbaum (RHS),

Jamie England (LSHSA)

Dan Forman (RED)

Special guest: Mark Kossick (GroupSpot, Alumni Association)

September minutes approved.

Superintendent's Update:

Dr. Tom Gorman, Superintendent

- Appreciate having HSA presidents communicate to the community
- Low number of cases up until this week—cases at K-6 level attributed to outside activities
- HEPA filters arrived this week—will be putting them in starting in cafeterias
- Starting to reimplement returning for recess at different schools through help of volunteers and some paid staff
- Great turnout for Friday night's high school football game
- All 3 fields are up and running
- Start Strong assessments this week (equivalent of NJLS last year)
- Teachers will be doing assessments 3 times a year
- 16 New students from the new apartment complex
- Todd: GW 6th grade (40 kids quarantining due to exposure outside of school)—decision to quarantine is made by whom?
 - Gorman: If less than 3 feet and no masks, then needs to quarantine if exposed; between 3-6 feet and wearing masks, then no need to quarantine

- No transmission thus far with kids who have quarantined
 - Todd: If vaccinated, no quarantine needed?
 - Gorman: No quarantine needed; a vaccinated 6th grader did not have to quarantine
- Kelly: How are kids who are quarantining attending class?
 - Gorman: At HS, can zoom in if teacher can do it
 - At elementary school, teachers can decide if they want to quarantine entire class and have virtual classes
 - At middle school, dependent on class and working with principal
 - Mary: 8th grade daughter, who had symptoms but not positive and kept home for 3 days, was permitted to attend class virtually
 - Gorman: Schools are trying to work with students but do not want to give families who are traveling the option to attend school virtually
- Jean: Ridge does not have a crossing guard in the parking lot; some kids have had near miss accidents
 - Gorman: Will discuss with principal; was not a busy street so crossing guard was removed. May consider closing that lot for 4th and 5th graders and have everyone wait in the cue
- Jean: Parents asking if air filters will be placed in classrooms.
 - Gorman: BOE looking into it; budget needs to be discussed—may be quarter of a million dollars, possibly use ESSR budget—gov funds to spend over 2 years due to COVID ex Spent some on extra subs for special needs students; intended to be used for safety and COVID-related spending
 - Kelly: Is there an expiration date for funds? Gorman: must be spent within 2 years
 - Mike Lembo: Funds from ESSR 1, 2, 3 distributed already
- Gorman: Alumni weekend for Homecoming—multiple sports events; alumni arrive Fri night; RHS tours; multiple entertainment events
 - Chalk talk
 - Trying to emulate college atmosphere
 - Consolidating as 1 large event for all alumni years
 - Kelly: Lucy P will send out district wide posting for HSAs to post
 - Alumni foundation (Duffield Foundation) donated over 600,000
 - RAX—alumni paired up with various students as mentors for externships
 - Kim Ng: Marlin's manager will be involved
 - Mike Lembo: Should also focus on various trade professions
 - Mike Lembo: Store available on website with products of alumni businesses
 - Will consider having alumni from various colleges to also speak to students about colleges they attended
 - Jess: Any mentors for students that are not college bound?

- Gorman: Currently working on programs
- Kelly: At RHS meeting, Mr. Bailey said there will be a program for kids taking a gap year or not going to college

Board of Education Update:

Mike Lembo, BOE

- BOE meeting: Board goals discussed
 - Contract with educators
 - Survey will be sent to community for schedules and alternative start times: subgroups involved (parents, transportation, etc)
 - LinkedIt will be able to track students' progress and teachers will be able to see the progression
- Lunch issue: parents volunteered; appreciate help of Federated in recruiting volunteers
- Mary: Is there still an issue with crossing guard shortage?
 - Mike: There were 6 open spots. Crossing guards are supplied by town; now rearranged and no openings
- Mary: Alternate Schedule Committee—As member, there are many things to think about but the end goal is to provide the best education for the students. Many robust discussions regarding all the issues and factors to be considered. Affects all students, not just the older students.
 - Dr. Gorman: Also factoring in all education goals, and end goal is to improve education for all students.
 - Mike Lembo: Want to examine every aspect and all students including the Glen School.

Special Guest: Mark Kossick (GroupSpot, Alumni Association updates)

- GroupSpot: Goal was set for Sept 10 for data upload with aim for Sept 20 to get data back from school—most schools able to make the deadline; Somerville was first school to go live
 - All data have been uploaded
 - Use mobile directory as an incentive to collect dues
 - All content in the app is free
 - Attempting to build website for use on laptop
 - Reach out to Mark with any questions
 - Jean: Can directory be purchased through app instead of being turned on by administrators?
 - Mark: Would have to run through Square or something similar as payment platform in order to do that; would have to decide in the next few months for next year
 - Mary: Federated has to decide if schools want to change payment method for next year
 - Mark: PayPal and Venmo will not work through GroupSpot app
 - Mary: Discuss changes for next year with executive boards and can meet in spring before transition of HSA members to discuss with Mark

- Recommend taking notes for changes as you use the directory
 - Mark: GroupSpot staff can also enter all committees for schools if ready early on instead of each directory chair manually entering for each school
 - Todd: Are views being tracked?
 - Mark: Not enough bandwidth or manpower to do that
 - Todd: Is there a way to put a school directory tab at the top next to calendar icon instead of having an extra click down on menu?
 - Mark: Can consider doing that for schools
 - Mary: RHS had a banner they could pin for the directory
 - Mark: Pins can be put on a 2nd screen
- RHS Alumni Association Committee and Football Scholarship Committee update:
 - Homecoming weekend for class years ending in 0, 5, or 6 due to missed year last year
 - Football game followed by pub crawl for alumni on Fri night
 - Also school tours, live band Group Therapy, Chalk Talk, class reunion celebrations at class-specific venue
 - After front lawn party on Sat ends at 4pm, will celebrate 1991 football team—1st championship game; chalk talk with Willie Geist at RHS stadium
 - Jim Stroker yoga on Sun am at RHS stadium
 - Will recur every year on Columbus Day weekend

President's Update:

Mary Micale, President

- Member of Municipal Alliance: town wide committee to prevent substance abuse
 - Safe home pledge: Ask parents to sign pledge to say they will not serve alcohol to underage children and will chaperone all parties at their homes
 - Did not have during Covid
 - TikToc: Videos encouraging vaping, drug use, drinking—make communities aware of these videos and discuss with children
 - Receiving significantly less money from the state this year and for next year; in order to continue programs, will need other sources of funding
 - Would like to bring back Tim Shoemaker to work with educators for professional development; Federated helped to fund Shoemaker to speak to parents last spring
 - Amy G: Will Tim Shoemaker address elementary school kids and families?
 - Mary: Will ask at next Municipal Alliance meeting
 - May ask Federated to contribute funds, possibly before Wizards game/fundraiser

- Personal recovery speaker is being considered but will be costly
 - Tasneem: Are there any current programs for middle schools?
 - Mary: No specific plans at this time. May not be an Alliance solution but district was discussing vaping sensors in the middle schools
 - Ridgewood recreation committee member also on Alliance: 6th grade event was well-attended; provide venue for kids to socialize at without vaping/drinking
 - Board members include Kevin Feeley, Basil Pizzuto, Middle School principals, Board of Health, Sheila Brogan (head of committee)
 - BOE elections:
 - If a candidate requests to speak at an HSA meeting, then need to extend invitation to all candidates and offer same amount of time
 - HSA cannot endorse any candidate; need to remember as HSA board members, you represent the organization
 - Kelly: RHS HSA meeting was recorded on Zoom; can recording be shared with candidate who requests it for that candidate to post?
 - Mary: May need to have disclaimer on the recording and also state meeting is being recorded
 - Todd: Consider having all candidates submit a presentation for HSAs to distribute instead of having them all speak at the meetings. Seems too political to have at an HSA meeting. However, need a consistent policy for all schools—cannot be a decision made by individual schools.
 - Mary: Any HSAs approached? Travell, Somerville, BF all asked by candidates to speak at meetings
 - League of Woman Voters sponsors a night for candidates
 - Link from RHS meeting should not be disseminated by HSA members
 - Will need to decide in the future how to approach candidate presentation requests
 - Jimmy: Have not been approached yet but if asked, candidates will be asked to prepare a fact sheet that can be distributed instead of speaking at the meeting

Vice President's Report:

Amy Gill, 1st Vice President

Todd Rothman, 2nd Vice President

- Wizards game 2022 updates:
 - Backup dates difficult to find in April
 - Would parents want to attend at end of January? May consider switching to April if community is hesitant
 - Eliminate snack bar to prevent eating during game; possibly pizza before games
 - Consider snack bags to go; possibly 50/50 but need gaming license
 - Consider having kids wear spiritwear but not have mascots

- Mary: may need to have decision by Nov whether it will be Jan or April
- Todd: Need to recruit teachers to play basketball possibly without masks
- Mary: Ask at HSA meetings for input from families
 - Kelly: Could closed circuits be a possibility? Mary: possible
- Ridgewood's Got Talent
 - Need to run by Dr. Gorman

Treasurer's Report:

Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer

- Some schools have not submitted payments for Federated dues and GroupSpot fees---please contact Valerie if you are not sure if submitted
- Submit signed receipt of policies form either via email to Valerie or hard copy

Member-at-Large Report:

Amy Beiersdorf, Member-at-Large

- GroupSpot data turned in quickly
- Insurance fees: schools can pay directly for riders instead of reimbursing Federated HSA; school will still request event with Amy B first

Open discussion:

- Travell: Having auction in spring with wine pull requests---flyer cannot be promoted in enews for wine portion but other requests for donations can be sent in enews

Meeting adjourned at: 11:35 am

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 11, 2021 at 9:15 am at Education Center, 49 Cottage Place, 3rd floor

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer