

## **Federated Home and School Association Meeting Minutes February 3, 2022**

### **Welcome: February Meeting**

Mary Micale welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:18am.

#### **In attendance:**

Mary Micale (Federated President), Amy Gill (Federated 1<sup>st</sup> VP), Todd Rothman (Federated 2<sup>nd</sup> VP), Valerie Auyeung (Federated Secretary/Treasurer), Dr. Tom Gorman (Superintendent), Paul McCarthy (REF), Mike Lembo (BOE) Jimmy Judge (Orchard), Patty Leung (Orchard) Jess Vartugian (Travell), Nancy Joachim-Ventura (Travell) Angela Lee (Hawes), Jennifer Pisani (Hawes) Anna Crane (Willard) Christine Lear (Somerville) Jean Whitehead (Ridge) Carol Waldman (BFMS), Mayumi Harada (BFMS) Tasneem Patrawala (GW) Kelly Buchsbaum (RHS) Jamie England (LSHSA) Margarita Carmody (LSHSA)

January minutes approved.

### **Superintendent's Update:**

#### **Dr. Tom Gorman, Superintendent**

- COVID numbers decreasing; Omicron wave going down; appreciate all the work being done by parents, teachers, and staff
- Increasing numbers of students getting vaccinated; new survey sent out and due Fri
- Mask mandate extended 1 more month to Feb 10, 2022; unsure what will happen after this date; need to wait for official guidance before making a plan and instituting; cannot rely on tweets made by Governor
- Masks could be optional if certain criteria met and if state does not mandate masks
- Mary: Why is there inconsistency regarding masks for athletics and arts?  
Gorman: Athletic associations have different mandates than schools. Due to high vaccination rates, performers can take masks off during performance but have to have masks when off-stage. Choirs are close contact and require masks. Performers at elementary levels were not all vaccinated last year; will reevaluate this year based on vaccination rates. Also relying on guidance received from local and state health departments.
- Jean: Is there a staffing issue?
  - 5600 students in the school district—largest single town school district in Bergen County

- Staffing would have been the barrier to staying open but able to send staff from other schools to cover the lack of staff
- Appreciate the communication by Federated
- Jean: Is there a long-term COVID plan? Gorman: Cannot plan until we receive guidance.
- Alternative schedule committee met. Question still coming up regarding whether Ridgewood is really ready for the change in schedule. Need more feedback from elementary school community.
  - Jess: Has polled the community and pushed questions to admin. Gorman: Some questions were too specific and looking too far ahead. Will address more general questions and send responses back to community.
  - Jean: Will this take effect in Sept? Gorman: More difficult to do as each day passes.

### **Board of Education Update:**

#### **Mike Lembo, BOE**

- Reorganization of BOE
- Budget—waiting to hear from the state and will meet with Mr. Bisig and finance committee prior to release of guidance. Wait due to audit being 6 months behind as a result of pandemic. Governor is waiting until late Feb to release budget. District budget is 90% complete but waiting for state contribution piece from the Governor. Budget presentations will be scheduled at various schools and also at BOE meeting.
  - Nancy: How does the state determine the amount of money each district receives? Gorman: Based on a formula used by the state
  - Nancy: Has ESSER grant been distributed? Gorman: Funds have been allocated; have 2 years to spend.
  - Tasneem: How do you budget for normal maintenance of schools? Gorman: Can hold a referendum within a community. Facilities committee will meet to prioritize needs (Dani and Mahmoud) on committee). Lembo: There is a maintenance reserve in the budget for emergencies.
  - Kelly: Would HSAs be able to partner with BOE for wishlist items? Gorman: Has been done in the past ex Learning Commons was partially funded by REF
- Calendar committee meeting this month; calendar set 2 years ahead of time
- BOE meeting: Mask mandate is a statewide decision; need to receive official guidance before making changes at the district level
  - Appreciate the articles being sent to BOE regarding masking; parents need to also send to state legislators and Governor
  - Feb 7, 2022: Speaker discussing importance of art; author of Visual Intelligence
  - Feb 10, 2022: Resilience speaker

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

#### **Mary Micale (President)**

- ASTF Update: Robust meeting; feedback from elementary schools has been sparse; continue to ask for feedback and questions from parents
- Nominating committee: Valerie Auyeung, Kelly Buchsbaum; need a 3<sup>rd</sup> member preferably from elementary school or LSHSA
- Municipal Alliance update:
- Citizen Safety Advisory Committee: Would like to determine safe parking areas for schools and fields (ex Stevens) and post on town and district website; requesting help to collate info and formulate best way to present to out-of-town visitors. Would like to have info by end of March before spring sports begin.

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

#### **Amy Gill, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

#### **Todd Rothman, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

- Wizards games rescheduled for March 30 and 31, 2022; games starting at 6:30pm. Keith Cook assisted with gym availability. Will send out info and start soliciting volunteer teachers. See Amy G for posters for schools and lanyards for players. Will release dates to schools soon. Mask mandates still in place; no concessions being sold. Will email signup sheet for teacher players today. Planning to sell tickets for both days. If teachers are more comfortable with everyone on the court wearing masks, the Wizards are willing to wear masks on the court. Tickets will most likely go on sale in the beginning of March.
  - Kelly: Can ask men's and women's acapella groups to perform at the National Anthem
- Crossing guard breakfast in May

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

#### **Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer**

- With upcoming spring events being planned, suggest asking for W-9 forms from vendors even if amount for the year may not exceed \$500. A few schools have had difficulty obtaining W-9s from a vendor who should be issued a 1099 for this year.

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

#### **Amy Gill**

- No update

### **Open Discussion**

- Mary: Best practices for hiring outside vendors
  - Use vendors with insurance: Continue to share names of vendors with own insurance
  - Events on school property vs off-site
  - Angela: Sample COI to pass on to vendors

- Jess: Vendor engagement agreement would be helpful
- Amy B: If an insurance request is submitted, it will take at least 10-14 business days. Allow for 2 week lead time.
- Mary: Consistent communications
  - Any request for enews needs to be approved by Lucy Papamichael if coming from outside source
  - For GroupSpot, must be approved to be used in enews before posting.
  - Federated and HSAs are not there to provide a platform for anyone's agenda; purpose is to work to support the students, families, and teachers but not to promote anyone's agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 11:29 am

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 3, 2021 at 9:15 am at Education Center, 49 Cottage Place, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer