

Federated Home and School Association Meeting Minutes April 7, 2022

Welcome: April Meeting

Mary Micale welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:22 am.

In attendance:

Mary Micale (Federated President), Amy Gill (Federated 1st VP), Todd Rothman (Federated 2nd VP), Valerie Auyeung (Federated Secretary/Treasurer), 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)
Jean Whitehead (Ridge)
Tasneem Patrawala (GW)
Kelly Buchsbaum (RHS)
Jamie England (LSHSA)
Margarite Carmody (LSHSA)

Guests: Dr. Anne Robinson

March minutes approved.

Superintendent's Update:

Dr. Tom Gorman, Superintendent (not present)

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Board of Education Update:

Mike Lembo, BOE

- Excellent turnout at Wizards game; outstanding event
- Budget: Chapter 44 savings (new health plan enacted 2 years ago)—less expensive plan with cost savings; some of the savings goes back to taxpayers
 - State calculated savings at 4 million dollars—much higher than estimated initially
 - Money will be returned to taxpayers; -4% tax increase; some extra wish list items were cut (world languages at elementary level, sign language teacher at RHS)
 - Other districts also had this issue but highest for RPS; appealed to state
 - Budget increase still under 2% cap
 - New budget will be presented at next BOE meeting
 - Will not be cutting staff
- Dr. Gorman will be resigning at end of school year; search started for interim position and will also start a national search for permanent position

- Jess: Will parent involvement be considered for the search? Mike: Parent insights will be considered but we have not decided on ways to roll out. Jess: Parents prefer not to have surveys—suggest focus groups instead.
- Amy G: BOE should partner with parents and be transparent
- Todd: BOE needs to figure out what made the last 2 superintendents leave and how to support a new superintendent. It will be difficult to recruit a new superintendent given that 2 left in the last 18 months. Mike: Will make more of an effort to determine any reservations that candidates have with the position.
- Todd: BOE needs to look introspectively to see if there are ways they can improve in supporting a new superintendent
- Amy G: Will Dr. Gorman have an opportunity to speak to the new superintendent regarding challenges? Mike: It may be difficult based on timing of when new superintendent is hired. Would like to arrange to have an exit interview with Dr. Gorman.
- Mary: Dr. Gorman's leaving has been politicized; caution BOE not to allow schools to be politicized. Need to express the BOE's wishlist to the search firm and to the community.
- Amy G: Is there a contingency in the contract with search firm to recoup some of the fees if candidate leaves before 2 years?
- Staffing can be an issue for some positions. For example, elementary school Spanish and sign language teachers are difficult to find. Difficult to offer higher pay to aides due to number of staff there are in the district—increasing salaries by \$1 would cost half a million dollars.
 - Todd: Suggest looking beyond salaries when hiring new staff; consider adding to benefits
 - Todd: Has it been considered to add more BOE members? Mike: Would need to have odd numbers. Could cause more of a divide with more members.
- Alternative schedule still a priority—survey will be going out after spring break.
- Ojetta retiring in Sept—will be starting search to fill her position.

Guest Speaker: Anne Robinson, MD (“Late to Bed Late to Rise Makes Teens Healthy and Wise” presentation)

- NJ legislation recently proposed to mandate all NJ high schools start 8:30 or later
- Created Smart Balance initiative with Jeff Nyhuis 12 years ago
- Adolescents require 9 hours of sleep
- AAP statement: Adolescents should not start school before 8:30 due to change in circadian rhythm at puberty
- Mary: What is the timeline for the NJ legislation? Anne: Needs to pass by June or will be delayed until Sept. If bill is passed, then change would be required by 2024.

President's Report:

Mary Micale (President)

- Needs contact info for incoming presidents for the next meeting; also need contact info for treasurers for annual meeting with accountant
- Will send out contact info for EZ Ride (nonprofit organization dedicated to safer and more sustainable modes of transportation)
- Send list of vendors used for school events to Mary

Vice President's Report:

Amy Gill, 1st Vice President

Todd Rothman, 2nd Vice President

- Wizards game: In 2020, raised \$25K with more tickets and pizza sales; 2022 raised >\$26K with fewer tickets sold and no concessions
 - Mary: Phenomenal job at pulling off the 2 nights
 - Thanked all the volunteers
 - Did not hear that there were issues with families not being able to get tickets
 - Will probably not reinstitute pizza sales next year; may offer water and packaged snacks
 - Will try to do it in Jan again instead of March either Wed/Thurs, Thurs/Fri
- Crossing guard reception in May at joint meeting; will prob purchase gift cards
- Teacher of the year award: requesting \$2750 instead of \$2500 due to addition of Glen School teacher

Treasurer's Report:

Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer

- Wizards update as per Amy and Todd

Member-at-Large Report:

Amy Beiersdorf

- No update

Federated Nominating Committee:

Kelly Buchsbaum, Jamie England, Valerie Auyeung

- Slate presented and voted in:
 - President: Mary Micale
 - 1st Vice President: Amy Gill
 - 2nd Vice President: Todd Rothman
 - Secretary/Treasurer: Jess Vartughian

- Member-at-Large: Amy Beiersdorf

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 5, 2022 at 11:30 am at Education Center, 49 Cottage Place,
3rd floor

Respectfully submitted by Valerie Auyeung, Secretary/Treasurer