



RHS HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 – 7:30 PM

RHS Learning Commons + Zoom

In Attendance (in-person and ZOOM):

Valerie Auyeung, Amy Beiersdorf, Laura Benner, Lynn Benson, Tara Briganti, Sheila Brogan, Sarah Bronstein, Valerie Caffrey, Marisa Carr, Peter Choe, Kristie Chun, Saam Farhang, Mark Ferreri, Greg Finning, Sally Finning, Alyssa Fiol, Robin Fisher, Priya Hali, Patricia Hans, Sheri Haug, Paul Hendriske, Carolyn Holt, Minjjung Kim, Howard Kim, Medha Kirtane, Sandra Kunzle, HyunJu Kwak, Elena Luslsly, Erin Mannian, Maureen O'Conner Martin, Laura McGrath, Mary Micale, Jeff Nyhuis, Chaitali Pramamnik, Kristen Plumley, Eileen Soto, Alison Stephens, Jennifer Tamis, Colleen Tansey, Tara Taylor, Nicole Torelli, Suzanne Tripp, Kyeogran Yang, Michael Yannone, Celine Ye, Yue Zhang

*Other callers participated in the ZOOM but their names were not registered

I. Call to Order/Approval Past Minutes/HSA Report:

Carolyn Holt called the meeting to order at 7:33 PM. Meeting information was made available via eNews, emails and GroupSpot post. All virtual attendees were accepted through ZOOM meeting. A motion to approve the November minutes was made by Mary Micale and seconded by Laura McGrath. Meeting notes were unanimously approved.

II. Presentation of the Academy Programs:

RHS faculty shared information on the following programs of interdisciplinary studies that rising sophomores can apply to for next year's academic year.

a. American Experience

Mark Ferreri shared the American Experience is a two-year sequence of English and History classes, which correlates American literature with American history. In this two-year sequence, the English and history teachers collaborate around enduring understandings that connect facets of American history to themes in American literature. In the English section, the poetry, drama, novels and essays selected are those contemporary with the period being studied in history. Included are many of the important American writers. As the two classes often meet consecutively, teachers can extend instructional activities for special purposes.

b. American Humanities

Mark Ferreri shared this is a two-year sequence of English and History classes. The course will follow the traditional U.S. I and II timeline. In-school field trips will explore connections to digital and traditional art forms. In addition, existing technology and arts programs will be integrated (digital photography, robotics, coding, etc.).

c. American Studies

Patricia Hans shared this is a two-year sequence of English and history classes,

which correlates American Literature with American History. The course is an alternative to English 10 and 11 and to United States I and II, and is open to students who have demonstrated both the interest and ability to handle a demanding program. English and History classes meet consecutively, so that if the teachers wish, students can be grouped for special instructional purposes.

d. **American History & Literature w/Integrated Study in the Arts (AHLISA)**

Michael Yannone shared this is an interdisciplinary course that creatively integrates study in the fine and performing arts with a strong academic focus on the study of both history and literature. With instructors from the English, History, and Visual/Practical/Performing Arts departments, students will explore the complex interrelationship between history and literature not only through traditional means, but also through exposure to and analysis of the visual, musical and theatrical work of the various time periods. Students will be expected to demonstrate their growing knowledge through the creation of images, musical compositions, creative writing, and theatrical performances that both intellectually and artistically assimilate and synthesize historical and literary material.

e. **Career Pathways in Medicine Program (CPM)**

Sandra Kunzle shared the Ridgewood Career Pathways in Medicine Program is a two-year program for students who have an interest in pursuing a career within health or medical professions. The goal of the program is to integrate participating high school students' academic college preparatory curriculum with real life learning opportunities for basic skills required to advance to further studies at the technologist level. This program will align with the college preparatory sequence of courses at RHS and offer students the opportunity to explore careers and programs in the health and medical sciences.

f. **Ridgewood Academy of Health Professionals (RAHP)**

Sandra Kunzle shared this is a three-year program developed in partnership with The Valley Hospital and Bergen Community College. It is designed for students who are interested in integrating their honors level academic courses with experiences and content in the healthcare setting. Admission to the program is by application and selection by the RAHP committee. In tenth grade, students will explore the many departments within the operation of The Valley Hospital through field trips. In eleventh and twelfth grades, students will participate in internship and mentorship programs. Students can earn college credit for certain courses.

g. **Engineering Pathways for Innovation and Creativity (EPIC)**

Tara Taylor shared the EPIC program consists of a series of three courses that focus on engineering design in all areas of science with exposure to various careers within the engineering field. These courses provide students with important career practice and skills that will benefit them in college and in the workforce. Students will think independently, collaborate with group members, engage in observation and research to design solutions, and write effectively to communicate solutions. Students will be challenged throughout the program as they research various types of engineering and apply concepts to real world problems.

III. RHS Student Reports: Sarah Bronstein and Matthew Carver

Sarah Bronstein shared an update on behalf of the student council. Sarah reports students are looking forward to the upcoming midterms. Students are meeting for study group sessions and many are looking forward to having the exams back in place so that finals aren't as cumulative at the end of the year. Teachers have done a great job reassuring students concerns about midterms through offering studying assistance and keeping the weight of the exams manageable.

The New Players concert is coming up and tickets are on sale now for two performance blocks.

The student council is working on planning a memorial for Mr. Pizzuto.

The Junior class is working on planning a dance to bring the class together much like the sophomore class has planned with their upcoming semi-formal.

The school has been very supportive of the students with a lot of the sadness in the school over the last few months.

IV. RHS Faculty Reports: Medha Kirtane

Ms. Kirtane thanked the HSA for their ongoing support through some challenging times. The lunch, cocoa, tea and coffee provided by the HSA has brought the teachers together. The faculty appreciates opportunities to come together as this is what Basil Pizzuto did best and it's a great way to honor him.

Robin Ha, an illustrator, writer and graphic artist, came to speak to the students at RHS to share her experience coming to America with her mother and finding her path to her career. Ms. Kirtane shared a thank you card from the students to the HSA for supporting the Robin Ha presentation.

The upcoming midterms have been a source of mixed emotions for faculty and students. Bringing back midterms is necessary for students to participate in as part of the high school experience and teachers are working hard to prepare students for the tests and to make finals less cumulative.

Course recommendations are being made by teachers after midterms. Many use midterms to guide their recommendations. Students are currently meeting with guidance counselors to make their course selections.

There was another round of Maroon Awards given to students recently to identify some who go above and beyond to demonstrate character at RHS.

Field trips and international travel trips are up and running and in full swing at RHS. Along with the trips, many guest speakers have been presenting to classes.

On the arts front, a student dance recital was held Friday, January 6th.

There are some upcoming dates for students to be aware of: All state band auditions are being held January 21st. January 26th is the Maroon and White Exhibit. The band citrus sale blitz will take place on January 29th.

Super Science Saturday will be held March 4th and the Asian Festival is slated for March 3rd.

In athletics, March 16th is the beginning of the spring sports season at RHS. All medical forms should be submitted to the nurse before that date.

V. RHS Class Reports / Introductions:

Senior Class Report (Sara Beinstein, Pamela Lobosco, Sandy Pires): Carolyn Holt reported on behalf of the Senior class. Fashion Show tickets went on sale January 9th via Handbid. There's a raffle for a trip to Paris being held. Tickets are \$100 each and there are only 100 being sold. A Fashion Show auction meeting is being held in the Learning Commons on January 11th. The PG committee is collecting baby pictures through February 24th.

Junior Class Report (Carla Sullivan, Suzanne Tripp): Suzanne Tripp reported there's a fundraiser with Chipotle on January 12th. A parent social is planned for February 8th at Park West. 150 tickets will be sold and will go on sale at the end of the week.

Sophomore Class Report (Lauren Radossich): Carolyn Holt reported on behalf of the Sophomore class. A sophomore semi-formal is scheduled for February 9th. Permission slips and details have been sent out.

Freshman Class Report (Meghan Agatep, Kim Cadaret): No report at this time.

VI. RPS Board of Education Report Hyunju Kwak:

Ms. Kwak updated that the BOE had a reorganization of the board Monday night. The leadership continues with the same board members but Mr. Lembo will serve as BOE president and Ms. Kwak vice president. Ms. Kwak said they are working with attorneys to have annual BOE elections.

There was discussion and approval to change paraprofessional positions in the district from part time to yearly salaries in an effort to maintain professionalism and be competitive in the job market.

Ms. Kwak provided an update on the Later Start initiative. Dr. Fitts will be presenting a plan to the BOE before the January 23rd meeting. There needs to be discussion with administrators and the BOE to address what needs to be done in order to implement the Later Start before a vote can be made in an open session.

An update on the superintendent search process was shared by Ms. Kwak. At this time, there are currently 27 applicants for the position and more are anticipated before the January 27th application deadline.

The next BOE coffee with the superintendent will be held at the BOE on January 30th at 5PM.

VII. RHS Principal's Report Jeff Nyhuis:

Mr. Nyhuis thanked the RHS students who are videotaping the special programs presentation this evening and the teachers for sharing all of this important information on the interdisciplinary programs offered at RHS.

Mr. Nyhuis shared the BOE updated this year's school calendar to close school on April 21st in observance of Eid al-Fitr.

The guidance counselors are working with the student to plan next year's schedules through small groups and meetings with classes. Teachers are going to be making course recommendations after the midterms. Second quarter grades will be finalized after midterms as well.

Mr. Nyhuis explained the importance of bringing back the midterms after feedback from recent RHS graduates highlighted the importance of the exams to be prepared for college.

Local scholarships deadlines are due January 13th. Mr. Nyhuis encourages students to apply. There are 67 scholarship opportunities. Jamboree raises over \$200,000 to give out to students and this is a great opportunity for students to take advantage of this wonderful scholarship program that is open to every senior.

Students should be prepared for the upcoming midterm exams with charged computers and calculators. A letter with these reminders was sent out to students and parents. Locations at RHS that will be open for snack breaks were included in the letter. The fitness center is also on the list of places open for students wanting to exercise before/after exams.

The open Grade Administrator position will be filled by Ms. Mitola through June and interviewing will take place for a permanent replacement to begin July 1st.

Mr. Nyhuis thanked the parents, HSA and schools for their support after the passing of Mr. Pizzuto. All of the support has really uplifted everyone's spirits.

Mr. Nyhuis is looking forward to presenting to the BOE in support of the Later Start initiative ahead of the upcoming January 23rd BOE meeting.

VIII. Questions/Discussion/Adjournment:

Carolyn Holt encouraged parents to show their support and ask questions for the Later Start initiative at the upcoming BOE meeting.

Kristen Plumley shared an update on behalf of Friends of Music. The organization has an upcoming Friends of Music Annual Fundraiser Concert on January 27th. Local

musicians and faculty from RPS will perform to help raise money to support the music programs in the schools.

The Friends of Music has two scholarships that students can apply to for \$1,000 each. Applicants need to apply by February 1st and more information can be found on their website.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 PM. Minutes respectfully submitted by Colleen Tansey, Secretary

*Next RHS HSA meeting: **Tuesday, February 7, 2023 - 7:30 PM** - RHS Learning Commons + Zoom*

RHS HSA Executive Board

President	Carolyn Holt
2 nd Vice-President	Amy Beiersdorf
Treasurer	Tara Briganti
Assistant Treasurer	Alison Stephens
Secretary	Colleen Tansey
Communications Director	Laura McGrath
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