

## **RIDGEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 9th, 2012**

**In Attendance:** Jeff Nyhuis, Basil Pizzuto, Jaime Frederick, Tracy Autera, Carol Olson, Lynn Knight, Beth Holmes, David Zrike, Ruth Parks, Vicki Herbert, Ines Bunza, Elizabeth Jastrzebska, Laurie Goodman, Jennifer Parsekian, Jenny Rabinowitz, Joyce Suss, Lori Weil, Hannah Fogg, Sharon Walker, Elaine Hammer, Bamini Pillai, Ann Cabay-Walsh, Sue Sofka, Vincent Loncto, Michelle Leonard, Liz and Bill Dunn, Angela Chang, Anne Brabant, Amy Bourque, Kim Ford, Carol Rapaport, Theresa Callaghan, Kate Gonzalez, Larry and Kathleen DeParis, Maureen Martin , Kathy and Randy Pastorius.

**Welcome and Approval of Minutes:** Jaime Frederick called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. and welcomed all attendees. The minutes from the November 7, 2011 meeting were submitted and approved.

### **Principal's Report:**

Jeff Nyhuis and Basil Pizzuto stated they are doing well in their interim co-principal positions. They are working to efficiently divide the responsibilities of the job. Their secretary, Pat Ferreri, is a good resource to direct questions/issues to the right man.

In February, Skyward is being upgraded to allow the system to be accessed by mobile devices. The administration will continue to enhance Skyward with features that are beneficial to its users. Federated board members have volunteered to test the applications.

Construction at RHS continues with the replacement of windows, and drawings for the Learning Commons have been given to district administration. The plans will be presented at a later meeting.

Mid-term exams will be held January 19–24 and a letter detailing the exam schedule will be sent to parents/guardians within the week.

### **Co- Principal/Administrative & Student Services:**

Basil Pizzuto stated that the year ended on a positive note and that the recent spirit week was really enjoyed by the students.

Jack Lorenz is doing well and has settled into his new home in Alabama.

### **Co-principal/Guidance, Curriculum & Instruction:**

Jeff Nyhuis distributed a summary of the RHS class of 2012 college applications/acceptances to date. A second report containing admissions statistics of 2012 early admissions for some top colleges and universities was also presented.

Course selection for the 2012-2013 academic year will begin soon. Students will receive course recommendations through Skyward and will have two weeks to finalize the selections.

On February 16, 2012, there will be a junior class parent meeting to kick-off the college admissions process. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade parent meeting is also being planned.

Beginning with the Class of 2014, the state has added a new academic requirement in Financial Literacy. This new mandate may cause difficulty in scheduling, especially for students in the band and orchestra courses. Shortly, Jeff will be distributing a letter to families outlining three options to address this issue. One of the options is to attend an approved summer school. Plans are underway to reopen the RHS summer school for this summer.

**Presentation: Course Selection:** Jeff Nyhuis introduced the panel who outlined the options available to RHS students beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Informational meetings for 9<sup>th</sup> graders on each of the special programs will be held in the next few weeks. Each of the programs has an application and specific selection process, which includes recommendations by at least two teachers. About 45 students are accepted into the American Studies Program each year, while AHLISA accepts 25 students per year, and RAHP has about 40 spaces available. Applications for the special programs are due in mid-February.

Mike Yannone presented the AHLISA Program (American History and Literature with Integrated Study in the Arts). This honors level, interdisciplinary course integrates the study of fine and performing arts with a strong academic focus on history and literature. Students participate in the program for one or two years, depending on whether they begin in their sophomore or junior year.

American Studies is a two-year program based on a thematic rather than chronological approach to American history and literature. The course content of the program is similar to the content included in the US History I and II Honors and English 10 and 11 Honors. Pat Hans added that students in the American Studies program study from primary sources and attend field trips to Boston, Washington DC, the Tenement Museum and Jamestown.

RAHP (Ridgewood Academy for Health Professionals) was presented by Lucy Fern. RAHP is an academic, three-year program in partnership with Valley Hospital, Bergen Community College and the Christian Health Center, and is designed for students who are interested in pursuing careers in health and medical fields. The program includes hands on learning through explorations, mentoring and internships.

**Student Report:** There was no student report because the students could not attend due to a conflict with the New Players dress rehearsal.

**Board of Education Report:** Michelle Leonard stated that letters outlining the principal search were emailed to RHS families. Stakeholders were invited to provide the attributes and priorities considered important for the new principal. Response levels were low to these requests.

On February 2, 2012 Representatives Russo and Rumano will speak at the Education Center about education topics in the State Legislature.

Despite three sessions with a state mediator, the teacher negotiations have not resulted in a contract. Progress has been made but the two sides have had to enter into the state's fact-finding process. Both sides will present their offers to a fact-finder who will issue non-binding recommendations in a report to both parties. This report will also be available to the public. Both parties then have ten days to respond to the report. No dates have been set for this fact-finding process.

**Faculty Report:**

Ruth Parks discussed studying strategies for students, especially the freshmen, as midterms approach.

**President's Report:**

Jaime Frederick thanked the executive board for all of their help on the farewell party for Jack Lorenz. She also thanked the Maroon Men and members of the Orchestra for providing such wonderful music.

On December 19, Tim Sylvestri spoke to the Class of 2014 during the day and parents in the evening about the effects of binge drinking. Those in attendance felt it was quite a thought provoking presentation and very beneficial.

Jaime, Jack Lorenz, David Zrike, and Tina Telesco reviewed the plans for the new Learning Commons with Dan Fishbein and Michelle Leonard. The District Building Department will now study the plans and assess feasibility and costs.

**Vice President:**

Tracy Autera had no items to report this month.

**Treasurer:**

Lynn Knight discussed the cash balance and related financial statements. The audit of last year's financial statements is complete and the tax returns have been filed.

**Communications:**

Beth Holmes reported eNews was distributed and to contact her if you are not yet receiving it or you have something to include. Also, anyone still interested in ordering a directory should contact Brenda Flood.

**Development:**

David Zrike stated the HSA would be conducting a phone-a-thon/telethon in March 2012. Last year's event raised \$55,000 which was used to purchase microscopes. If you are interested in volunteering for the phone-a-thon, contact David.

**Backwoods:**

David reported on plans for a February dance and a dodge ball tournament.

**Class Reports:**

Class of 2012 (Trace Autera): Project Graduation is having a meeting Thursday, January 12 at 7:30 p.m.

Class of 2013 (Jenny Rabinowitz): Thanks to Mango Jam for hosting the recent fundraiser that netted \$500. Plans for a bake sale are still underway for spring, along with an apparel sale.

Class of 2014 (Joyce Suss): T-shirts are still available for sale and "WOOD" magnets for cars will be offered soon.

Class of 2015: no report

Jamboree: no report

**Curriculum:**

Laurie Goodman reported on the Social Studies meeting on November 30. A panel of professionals led a discussion on the skills students need to learn to obtain jobs in this field. Feedback from the session will be incorporated in the development of the new Social Studies curriculum.

There was no Other Business and the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

The next meeting is Tuesday, February 14, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectively submitted by Carol Olson