

Ridgewood High School Home and School Association

Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2008

Welcome and introductions

Frances Ekblom opened the meeting and welcomed one of the string quartets from the RHS Chamber Orchestra who have generously offered to perform at the meeting. The ensemble players who performed were Joshua Law and Minjae Kim on violin, Shantini Persaud on viola, and Sarina Taylor on cello.

"Throughout the year the students not only rehearse and perform at their 3 concerts, but also participate in small ensembles that perform throughout the community, take trips to see concerts and plays and spend time raising money to provide unique opportunities for each ensemble. This year the orchestra raised money for NY Philharmonic violist, Peter Kenote, to give a master class with both the Symphonic and Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Kenote provided a unique opportunity for the students to be critiqued by an incredible musician and given a chance to reflect on the music in a different way.

Music students very often volunteer their time to participate in Downtown for the Holidays, pit orchestra, small ensemble performances, car washes, and many other events that contribute to the orchestra. Next year, the orchestra and choir have combined efforts to go to Orlando to participate in clinics, workshops, and performances that will be an incredible experience for all who participate. To the HSA, thank you for all the support you provide for our music program here at RHS. Without support from parents and community members, a music program such as Ridgewood's is not possible ." Amy Hotto, Ridgewood High School Orchestra Director

Frances thanked the outgoing HSA Board for all of their hard work and help since last May. Frances also thanked Jack Lorenz for a phenomenal year.

The HSA Meeting Minutes from May 13, 2008 were presented, voted on and approved.

Treasurer's Report -Wendy Wong

A copy of the monthly financial report was circulated to all those in attendance. The expenses paid in May were \$473.25 for the REF Speaker Series, \$1,300 for the Auditor. The HSA gifted \$10,000 to RHS for the purchase of overhead projectors. \$77.82 was spent for retirement gifts.

Assistant Principal's Report -Peg Loonam

Graduation will be held in two weeks on June 24 at 5 pm.

June 16 is exam review day for all classes at all grade levels . The Exam Review Day that was held in January was received very favorably by students, teachers and parents. Final Exams are scheduled for Tues, June 17 – Fri, June 20.

Student schedules will be mailed out shortly. Jeff Nyhius, the incoming Assistant Principal, is reviewing the schedules now to insure balanced class sizes and that students get their desired classes when possible.

Jeff Nyhius will be serving as the Assistant Principal of Guidance, the position Peg Loonam has filled for many years. Peg is very excited about her new position as Principal of Orchard Elementary School. Jeff has taken on many roles at RHS and knows the school, its staff and students at many levels. Jeff has served as a math teacher, a Department Head and Guidance Counselor. This past academic year Jeff had been appointed the Director of Math Curriculum for the Ridgewood Public Schools. Frances wished Peg Loonam success in her new role as Principal at Orchard and welcomed Jeff Nyhius to his new role at RHS.

Elizabeth gave words of thanks to Peg. Elizabeth presented a plaque citing her many personal attributes and countless contributions to the high school and the community of Ridgewood.

Ridgewood Board of Education Report – Joseph Vallerini

The new superintendant of the Ridgewood Public Schools has been announced. The new superintendant, pending final approval from the County Superintendent's Office, is Dr. Daniel Fishbein . Dr. Fishbein has been a resident of Ridgewood for many years and has children here in the school system. Dr. Fishbein had been serving as the Superintendant of the Glen Ridge School System. The contract to hire Dr. Fishbein is being reviewed by the County Supervisor as per the new State guidelines. The BOE is confident that the appointment of Dr. Fishbein will be approved.

Principal's Report - Jack Lorenz

Jack congratulated all those who had organized the Senior Prom. This prom was the best one he has yet attended! To date he has been to over 40 proms. The night went on without "any incident". Everyone there at Prom Night seemed to enjoy themselves and very importantly all were safe.

The RHS Spring sports teams all have had successful seasons.

Jack thanked Frances for all of her work and all the work of the HSA . The RHS administration and teachers so depend on this parent organization for support.

Jack met with the Beverly Road residents earlier tonight to discuss the regrading of the school property along Beverly Road and other proposed improvements to be funded and overseen by the Ridgewood Board of Education.

As you are aware, much work has been done this year to improve the conditions of the school facilities. Thanks to all the roof and gutter repairs and upgrades, Jack is very glad to report that all is finally dry inside RHS.

President's Report - Elizabeth Resnick

Elizabeth welcomed all who came in light of school being cancelled for the heat wave. Elizabeth took the job because she knows of all the dedicated parents who are part of the community and will assist in supporting our kids and teachers.

Introduction of the 2008/2009 HSA Officers, Board Members and Liaisons ;

Vice President – Rola Boddoura

Treasurer – Wendy Wong

Secretary – Lynn Granski

Communication/Webmaster – Sara Erwin

Senior Class Representatives/Project Graduation- Lisa Diss and Patty O'Herlihy

Junior Class Representatives – Cheryl Alterman and Leesa Manderano

Sophomore Class Representatives – Lisa Gobble, Terri McAteer, and Cristy Sippel

Freshman Class Representatives – Audrey Fink and Arlene Sarappo

Development Committee – Katie Van Saun and Teresa Callaghan

Directory Design – Linda Willk

Directory Distribution – Rosemary Chersi

Hospitality – Amy Scher and Nancy Stewart

Nominating Committee – Patty Mullen and Carol Rapaport

Board of Education Liaisons – Joseph Vallerini and Laurie Goodman

Faculty Liaisons – Donna Antonellis and Ruth Parks

Student Liaisons – Nicholas Aynilian and Jacob Levitsky

A very gracious thank you was given to Beth Jorgensen and Vicki Herbert for initiating and overseeing the Development Committee this year. The 2007/2008 school year is the first year that the RHS HSA has had a Development Committee. The committee was established to raise funds for specific educational

enhancements to the school that all students will benefit from. The Development Committee and the HSA would like to thank all those families who so generously contributed to the Development Fund. With the money raised, 16 computers were purchased for the RHS Library/Media center.

Donna Antonellis, RHS Media Specialist, confirmed how frequently the computers are used throughout the day. The additional computers have been a huge contribution to the school!

Elizabeth reminded all those in attendance that one key goal of the HSA for the upcoming year will be communication. The website will have all minutes of the HSA meetings posted. The agenda for each of the HSA meetings will be posted prior to the date of the meeting.

Federated Update

Timothy Brennan, outgoing Interim Superintendant, stressed that the schools in NJ are in a lot of flux right now in light of legislation and budgets being reviewed by the State. Dr. Brennan stated that the Ridgewood schools are in great shape and have tremendous assets including the faculty, the curriculum, the students, and parents.

The Rotary Club is creating a Ridgewood Calendar to be sold as a fund raiser. The calendar is going to feature artwork of Ridgewood students. This fund raising effort is being supported by Ridgewood Federated HSA. Each calendar sold by RHS will bring a \$3 contribution to the RHS HSA. The HSA officers have agreed that the funds raised should be earmarked for the RHS Art Department.

All banking by each of the Ridgewood schools' HSAs as well as that of Federated HSA will be done at Commerce Bank. It is important for the RHS Class Representatives to move their Class accounts to Commerce Bank. If you have any questions, you may contact Wendy Wong, HSA treasurer.

Brainstorming

One of the primary goals of the 2008/2009 RHS HSA is to continue to foster open communication between parents, students, the HSA representatives, faculty and administration. With that being said, the HSA would like to get feedback from all those who are here tonight. A series of questions have been prepared to get feedback on what you as parents, teachers, administrators would like to see improved or modified.

The questions/statements to gather input on were:

- 1) What are some "HOT" issues for the HSA to explore or discuss? Please include suggested guest speakers and topics.
- 2) What role do you see the HSA playing? What should the HSA continue to do? What should the HSA not do? What should we not get involved in?
- 3) What is concerning you as parents? What can the Administration, Faculty and parents do to help?

4) What makes a good HSA meeting great?

5) What are your fondest memories of high school? Are your children experiencing the same benefits at RHS?

The Executive Committee will meet this summer to review the flip chart input with the purpose of creating key strategies and an Action Plan as a result of the brainstorming activity. The highlights will be shared by Elizabeth at the September Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05. Next HSA Meeting is Tuesday, Sept 16, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Granski

In attendance:

Elizabeth Resnick, Rola Baddoura, Sara Erwin, Frances Ekblom, Rosemary Chersi, Arlene Sarappo, Vicky Herbert, Carol Rapaport, Dixie Taylor, Terri McAteer, Amy Scher, Nancy Stewart, Patty Mullen, Cheryl Sabath, Rose Boniello, Patty O'Herlihy, Cheryl Alterman, Linda Willk, Theresa Callaghan, Lynn Granski, Maryam Alsop, Cristy Sippel, Donna Antonellis, Nick Aynilian, Jacob Levitsky, Katie VanSaun, Lisa Gibble, Annie Zusy, Jack Lorenz, Peg Loonam, Jeff Nyhius, Joseph Vallerini, Lauri Goodman, Lisa Diss, Rose Boniello, Wendy Wong