

RHS HSA Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2007

Board of Education Report

Michele Lenhard gave the BOE report. She announced that RHS had 5 National Merit Semi-finalists, 20 Commended students, and over 100 AP Scholars recently named. Student Michael Graifman recently made a presentation on solar panels to BOE. The system would cost just under \$1 million to install. The payback period would be 9 yrs. BOE has forwarded his proposal to the Facilities Committee for further consideration.

BOE has received the report on the 2007 Summer School Program. Teacher Ann Walczak led the summer school program. Classes ran from 8:30 to 3:00. The program, which is now held over a 6-week period, has grown from 40 -260 students in 4 yrs. Including Special Needs, there were 382 students.

At the recently-held Professional Development Day, teachers listened to keynote speaker Willa Spicer, Deputy Commissioner of Education, on assessment. Including work in the areas of math and the language arts curricula, there was a breadth of programming for our staff.

Michele Lenhard presented the recently-completed 10 yr. plan for Ridgewood fields.

The Ridgewood Education Foundation grant cycle was mentioned BOE has accepted the grants brought before them in the most recent cycle. At RHS, these include:

1. Exchange program with Paterson students
2. Music—Jazz Collaboration with William Paterson University (Jeff Haas)
3. Physics program (Harold Nelson)

\$13,500 in total grants were awarded.

Principal's Report

Jack Lorenz spoke about the *Message from the Principal* now on the website—he hopes this will be an important method of increasing communication between school and home.

Nov 11-17: American Education Week: Nov 13 and 14 will be open for parents to attend an am or pm session to see RHS in action. So far, 30 -40 parents have signed up. Please contact Mr. Lorenz's office if you are interested in attending.

Mr. Lorenz announced that Jeff Nyhuis will return to RHS in early Nov. as Math Dept supervisor.

He thanked the BOE for their support in the facility refurbishment and improvements. Next up are repair of water-damaged classrooms.

RHS hosted a German exchange program recently. A total of 16 students and 2 teachers visited. Our students will have the opportunity to return the visit to Germany next year.

Mr. Lorenz mentioned that our sports teams are doing well; they are performing at a high level. He is really enjoying the Sr. class this year—they are displaying a high level of excitement and support for our teams.

Jack Elwood Day is coming up this weekend--on Sunday, October 28. Mr. Elwood will be returning to RHS this week to speak to students.

A Peer monitoring program has been started --20 students have been paired with new Freshman who were identified by their Middle Schools as needing some help in order to navigate high school life. Thus far, the program has been very successful.

Mr. Lorenz spoke about the issue of MRSA infections. Disinfecting of the building is now taking place—locker rooms, key pads, etc. There is no outbreak at RHS currently. Any further information will appear on the Principal's Message—check there.

Containment drill will be taking place soon for the student body.

Mr. Lorenz is asking for HSA to help fund *Alcohol EDU*, an online program comprised of 3--30 minute sessions on educating students about alcohol and what it does to their bodies. \$2000 has been rec'd thus far. HSA is being asked for some help in funding this program, which may be offered to students in Freshman Focus. Parents can take the program by logging on from home.

RHS is working with Duke University in the Rise Program. Two of our staff will be attending this program regarding the incorporation of substance abuse knowledge and education into the science curriculum.

Please check out You-Tube: get on the search engine and type in **Ridgewood HS Social Norms Marketing!**

Students and a teacher from the Anderson School of Ambition on the Shetland Islands will be visiting in December. RHS will be looking for 3 host families. The visitors will spend 4 days gathering information about education at RHS and will collaborate with our students in the production of a film.

Mr. Lorenz also announced RHS' impending participation in a Global Learning Classroom. There will be 6 partner schools from various countries: our students would participate in weekly conversations and learning with these other schools. There will be a Global Learning Conference in Prague which our students will participate in.

Guidance Report

Peg Loonam reported on last week's Terra Nova testing.

Marty O'Connell spoke last week for our College Speakers series last week on **Colleges that Change Lives**. She was a wonderful speaker and well-received by parents. Mrs.

Loonam would like to invite her back to speak to the Juniors this winter. (Her honorarium was very reasonable.) Jacques Steinberg, who spoke in the College Speakers Series several years ago, is also interested in coming back to speak. April 16 will be the next college speaker series. It will involve a panel format; parents like this type of format.

This Thursday there will be a meeting for parents of students with IEPs. Case managers and Mrs. Loonam will attend.

This Saturday is the 8th Grade Invitational, an annual event. There will be a sampling of fun things for the 8th graders to try at RHS: fitness center, jazz ensemble, peer panel, TV studio. Pizza and complimentary tickets to the football game will follow afterwards.

PSATs took place last Saturday-- 600 Juniors and Sophomores tested. Results will be sent in December. College Rep visits continue—check the list on the website. It is very important for Seniors to attend these sessions and make the contacts. It is not really appropriate for the Juniors, however. There are generally 150-200 visits made by college reps to RHS each year.

Mrs. Loonam has been doing observations for new teachers and is amazed at the level of work in the classrooms. She has been impressed with the level of our students as well.

The Korean Parents Association will have a special night on November 14th (including a translator) with Mrs. Loonam to discuss colleges and guidance issues.

Suzanne Donovan asked about the transition between Middle School and RHS of the Teachers' College Program. Is it working? Mr. Lorenz spoke from the perspective of a parent. He thinks we will see the value of the TC Program in a few years; it will be a while before we see a dramatic change, he feels.

Faculty Rep—Mrs. Antonellis

The main focus in the Library thus far has been to get all the new 9th graders oriented to the RHS Library. Students have been coming during their extra science lab periods. She mentioned that the German exchange students enjoyed using the library's computers to check their email and stay in touch with their families, with the help of our librarians.

President's Report

Frances made a motion to approve the minutes from last month. Approved.

Federated Report

Dr. Brennan spoke about the district's enews and use of technology. He discussed implementing some type of Community pass which could be viewed by everyone. He is hoping to address how can we make the technology we have work better for us. The district's Wellness policy was discussed. There is no longer soda for sale in the middle and high schools. More awareness of good nutrition is being stressed.

This Saturday is *Make a Difference Day* at Habernickel Park. Habitat for Humanity is the beneficiary. Contact Nora Muzio at the Community Center for more info.

Fire Prevention week took place in October. HSA Presidents rode on the fire trucks and attended a luncheon. RHS was evacuated in 3:10—great job.

Frances is thinking of doing a *President's Corner* in the enews, spotlighting different areas of school life. This would be a good way of spreading information and addressing questions that parents have about RHS.

Directories are at the printer and will soon be distributed to families. Over 1600 paid directories were ordered. An additional 100 or so have been ordered for the staff.

Wendy gave the report, noting income and expenses for September.

Project Graduation

Beth Abbott spoke about the social event held at the end of September for Senior parents—it raised a nice amount of money. PG held a parents meeting last week; committees are organized and things are going well.

Sophomore Class Report

Eva Branton spoke about Jamboree Ad for sophomore families and key chain fundraiser. Please refer to the RHS Website for details.

Vice-President's Report

Elizabeth Resnick, VP, listed the various Senior class Fundraisers. The Junior class is selling frames—Lisa Diss, representative, spoke. The Junior class will also be selling photo albums later in the year.

Terri Mc Ateer spoke for the Freshman class—no specific fundraiser is yet planned. She is the Jamboree Ad Journal rep and is hoping to contact as many Freshman families as possible.

Class fundraisers help offset the class' costs at graduation; monies raised each year go into an account to be used Senior year.

Development Committee

Vicki Herbert spoke about the beginning of this new committee. It will be the fundraising arm of the HSA. They are looking to raise funds which will enhance every child's experience at RHS and plan to start with a simple letter writing campaign, asking each family to participate. Top priority at this point is Technology—the purchase of laptops with wireless cards. They will also work with a matching funds program and plan to look for corporate sponsorship in town.

Safety Committee

Rose Boniello was not available for a report, but Frances thanked her for her hard work in general on Walk-toberfest.

Hospitality

Carol Rapaport and Dixie Taylor spoke. A sign up was passed for the faculty Halloween Breakfast. Please drop your items off to Dixie or Carol on Tuesday, October 30 so they can set up that evening. The staff really appreciates these breakfasts, especially granola bars, bananas, and other healthy treats.

Jamboree

Auditions are over, but it's not too late to be a backstage hero. Set construction, ushering, etc.—there are lots of other jobs to do. 1/3 of the cast will be new to Jamboree this year. They will hold several parties before practice starts. The Jamboree rep has class rep packets with her. \$10 per name can be paid online now. Simply go to the Jamboree website to do this. Each class gets a full page of ads. Any \$ raised over \$500 (which goes to Jamboree) goes to your class' Project Graduation account.

Web Master

Sara Erwin said that anything that you would like to have posted, to please email her. Please do not respond to enews—there is no one there to read it!

Curriculum

Eileen Haynes spoke. There has not been a meeting yet, so no report. She has emailed Regina Botsford about assessment. If have any questions for the Curriculum communications committee or anything you'd like to see a presentation on, please let her know.

Eileen spoke about the job of the Curriculum rep—not really interactive—their job is to listen and to report back to the HSA.

New Business

Mr. Lorenz had one more item to speak on. He had written a letter to Starbucks some months ago—to the CEO. They did eventually get back to him. One concern was the cleanliness. They are now cleaning the sidewalk twice a day. They have added lights to the back parking lot to hopefully cut down on illegal activity. Starbucks personnel have volunteered to come to RHS in the spring and help with turning over the garden beds. RHS will also involve the students on Earth Day in April. Mr. Lorenz is trying to create a good partnership with them. He had an idea for a “refrigerator door” incentive for the kids to post work they're proud of. –Starbucks will support this. He will also be starting a breakfast conversation series at Starbucks at 6:45-7:45am—free coffee will be served to those parents who attend these sessions.

RHS will be starting a *Make a Difference Program*, honoring kids who are unsung heroes—Starbucks will be providing breakfast items for the families of these kids. Mr. Lorenz is interested in modeling good behavior for the students—building responsibility into their lives.

There is no update on the missing student. If anyone has any information on him, please get in touch with the school.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06.

Next meeting will be held on November 13, 2007 at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hilary Jones