

# **Ridgewood Home And School Association**

## **Meeting Minutes For May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Attendance:** Lori Weil, Tom Gorman. Carol Olson. Lynn Knight, Jaime Frederick, David Zrike, (absent: Tara Callaghan) Basil Pizzuto, Jeff Nyhuis, Joan Gaidimas, Lynn Granski, Pam Riccato, Maureen Burke, Kelly Gioia, Gina McDade, Keri Hwang, Ann Robinson, Tracy Autera, Kathy Marshall, Kathy Entwistle, Sheila Brogan, Hema Chaurasia, Betty Eng.

Welcome and approval of minutes: Lori Weil called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Motion to approve the minutes for April was called and duly approved and seconded.

Student liaisons were not available.

**Principal's Report:** Tom Gorman informed of the Academic team awards to be held on May 15<sup>th</sup> for students. He also talked of the new initiative taken this year to bring back the summer reading program on a voluntary basis to involve K- 8 grades working along with the public library. Also a summer reading list will be provided within the next two weeks. He also informed of the revised calendar for the next year with some changes to Holidays and graduation date. A 3-tier Summer School (Remedial, work-for –credit and enrichment) is being held at RHS primarily taught by the high school teachers. Flyer is on the website and will also send out another email regarding Summer School at RHS.

Question on whether the credit on Summer School is included in the transcript, Jeff Nyhuis confirmed if the student is a current HS student it will be reflected on the transcript and will be included for the GPA.

Tom spoke on the topic of Academic Integrity Policy which is being given a top priority and working on looking into consequences and reviewing methods of educating the students.

Jeff Nyhuis elaborated more of the prevailing situations at the high school and also the investment on the website “turnitin.com” which is helping the kids learn about plagiarism etc.

He also informed of not having anymore “Collaboration Day” for the rest of the school year and also pointed out they will have 10 days (one per month) for the next year planned and included in the calendar for the district. Also all breaks will be homework free. Over the summer there will be a black out week during which time there will be no sports practices and no weight room training. As of now it will be from Aug 10 to 18<sup>th</sup>.

More discussion on planning ahead for meet schedules and communication was requested by parents.

In keeping with special topics Lori Weil requested to look more closely at starting sports practices too early in the summer. This would provide families more time together with kids. Also when scheduling meets and tournaments to take into consideration the Saturday exam schedules. Concern was also highlighted regarding kids spending too long before and after school, which limits their time to do homework and prepare for tests.

Jeff Nyhuis also added that kids today are over involved in activities in school and at home which hinders students having down time.

**Basil Pizzuto:** Basil informed of the freshman semi formal being held on Friday and have slightly changed the agenda to have the kids have dinner outside and then go inside for the dance. This would give them more opportunity to socialize with the kids. He also said that the student government election was run differently this time and has more kids involved.

**Jeff Nyhuis:** DECA students returned from a very successful trip to the DECA National competition in Anaheim, CA with two kids being placed in the top 10. They competed against 16,000 kids and had an amazing accomplishment. RHS had about 431 students taking in total 931 Advanced Placement exams. He also informed that next year will be the last HSPA test and the replacement has not been rolled out yet. The NJBCT (Biology Competency Test) will be on May 20th and 21<sup>st</sup>.

The college speaker series went well and was very informative. Admission officers from four colleges spoke on a panel about the college admission process. The guidance team had a very productive college visit to four Midwestern colleges thanks to the HSA and will be presenting their power point presentation soon.

He also spoke about the benefit of collaboration days and informed of the panel of students who had given a presentation to the Board of Education. He was very pleased to listen to the student's perspective on having collaboration days.

Ann Robinson also added to Jeff's observation and elaborated on the health benefits of having some time off from the rigor of schedules.

Sheila Brogan pointed out that ranking and rating of schools are working against making some choices.

Jeff Nyhuis talked about the pros and cons of having AP curriculum.

**David Zrike** informed that the Learning Commons construction bid came in much higher than the estimate. The committee is now taking a closer look at the individual costs and will come up with a feasible solution soon. The support from the community is still ongoing and is greatly appreciated.

**Faculty Report:** Ruth Parks thanked the HSA for the Teacher Appreciation luncheon and said that staff enjoyed the time to talk to each other and had a relaxing time.

**Board of Education Report:** Sheila Brogan informed of the budget being passed despite a low voter turnout. This may cause for the town to move the election to November. The board is also making decisions on tenures and hiring and is gearing towards graduation.

**President:** Lori Weil thanked Annette Testa and Christine Eckels and all the volunteers for providing refreshments at all HSA events. She encouraged all to respond to the parent surveys sent by the board as it helps with many of the decision making at the district level.

**Vice President:** Carol Olson did not have anything to report.

**Treasurer:** Lynn Knight circulated the financial accounting as of May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

**Nominating Committee:** Tracy Autera presented the slate for the school year 2013-2014 as follows.

President: Carol Olson

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Tom Gorman

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Kim Lucky

Treasurer: Pam Riccato

Secretary: Kelly Gioia

Communications: Tara Callaghan

Development: Lori Weil

The slate will be voted in on June 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm.

**Class report:** No report for PG. Kim Lucky informed that they looking for someone to chair Project Graduation for 2014 and hope to have names soon. No reports for class of 2015. Karen Feder and Kathy Marshall informed of first PG 2016 fundraiser, which is a blanket with their logo, and the flyers will be sent to all freshman parents.

Lori informed that Carol Olson would need class reps for the incoming freshman class so if anyone interested to please contact her.

Back Woods: David Zrike informed of a Spring Dance to be held on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June and the theme is "Blue Out". The event will have 11 police officers to create a safer environment for the students.

David also informed of his last term on the board and thanked everyone for all the support and wished more men would come forward to being on the board.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Bamini Pillai