

Velma Hamilton Middle School PTO Meeting January 17, 2018

Present: 5 board members, Principal Taylor, Assistant Principal Von Haden, 1 faculty member, 2 guest speakers, 1 parent.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Those present introduced themselves.

Principal's update (Jessica Taylor): Fiddler on the Roof was the 8th Grade musical. New lights were installed for the stage, they worked well and everything came together just in time.

Planning for the 8th Grade Moving on is just getting started.

Jessica asked for donations of electronics that can be taken apart. They'll be used in all 8th grade science classes.

February 9 is a professional development day for staff, spring conferences are in March, which is late, but the district wouldn't switch the two dates. Conferences are by invitation or if parents request a meeting.

The MLK awards went well. Nichole Von Haden attended and was impressed.

Fundraising (Sherry Nields): We made just under \$8,000 on the direct appeal. A fan Ottenheimer announced that he got an additional \$200 today, which brings the total up over \$8,000.

At the Barnes and Noble book fair, we got \$900 in books, plus \$3,400 in gift cards, for the school to do with as they choose. Sherry suggests getting cash next year - the school would get a little less, but it can be used for anything, not just books. Or we could get some books, some cash. We'll have the fair on the same date for next year (The Saturday before Christmas). The AVID kids had fun and did good job - they got just under \$400 in donations for their gift wrapping.

The next fundraiser is Sky Zone in March, the week we have a Friday off. We have to get at least 50 kids there in order to get any money.

Dane County Time Bank (Gary Messinger): The Time Bank has about 3000 members, including 200 organizational members. People trade time, skills, and resources with each other. For example, for individual members, person A gives person B 2 hours of their work, then person A can take those hours and use them anywhere else in the system (it does not necessarily have to be with person B). It is

ok to be "overdrawn," but the expectation is that you will pay it back sometime in the future.

VHMS is a non-active organizational member from 2010. Membership provides instant access to 3000 other members/potential volunteers. We could use it for extra help for events, for example, or special projects, like a community garden, or other special project for specific group(s) of kids. Individual staff can contribute hours, and school volunteers would have the opportunity to join the time bank if they are interested. It can be an added hook to get people to help. The time bank doesn't get too worried about whether organizations have a "negative balance" or not. For example, the bank itself has the biggest imbalance (owes the most time).

One big thing that the school can offer in exchange for getting volunteers is space for outside groups. Gary will be working more with organizations in the future. He considers it a way for groups to collaborate and stop competing for dollars. There's a Time Bank store on Allied Drive; people pay in hours instead of money.

Time Bank is also involved in Youth Court with the high schools; if a kid gets in trouble, their "sentence" can be volunteer work through the time bank.

The Time Bank could give individuals credit for going to a PTO board meeting, which could be contributed to the school. Shelby suggests PTO board members could contribute the hours they spend on board activities to the school.

Time Bank does background checks, but they only look at the Wisconsin sex offender registry and CCAP. Their background check might be different from what the school might want. Gary says that organizations are encouraged to do their own background checks. Jessica points out that MMSD has its own background check requirements for anyone working in the schools with the children, which Time Bank volunteers would be required to submit to. In 30 years of operation, there's never been any lawsuit over work that's been done, etc.

Time Bank is like a template, flexible for how we want to use it.

Organizations have a sliding scale fee. Gary suggests trying it for a while and then decide what we think it's worth. He doesn't want money to be a reason not to use the Time Bank.

Cindy Barbera mentions that they used to have a service learning club, but that teacher retired. She thinks that might work well as a program, though they would have to take into consideration the background checks, and would probably have to have a teacher present.

Volunteer update (Melissa Hornung): No news.

Treasurer's report (Mike McClain): The only expense this year was \$150 for Multico.

Jessica provided some clarification on the line item in the budget for the Hamilton school backpacks - they were given to 5th graders prior to the 2017/2018 school year as a welcome/way of making the students feel a part of Hamilton.

Mike asks whether the snack money has been used. It has not, because the person who started that is not here anymore, and it's possible the people who are doing it now may not be aware it's available. Snacks draw kids in, but when they're gone, sometimes kids don't come back. Also snacks attract mice and flying squirrels, so they can't be stockpiled. Jessica says they'll let teachers know there that there's money for snacks available if they're interested, giving the after school clubs first dibs.

Hannah Renfro asks about the Bayview event, and whether there will be more like it [in the fall, some teachers went to Bayview to meet families and brought pizzas along to share for supper]? Teachers go out there about once a month, but the meal was only a one-time gathering. But no funding requests have come in yet for that.

Outstanding Young Person Awards (Jessica and Nichole): A bunch of girls who live in the same apartment complex work together to do community service, and 2 of the girls were honored at the Outstanding Young Person Awards. The school paid for a total of 11 tickets to the event; Jessica asks the PTO to split the cost for those. Hannah moves to authorize the expenditure, Mike seconds, the motion passes unanimously. The total is \$55; we will reimburse the school.

The name of the group is Black Girls United, and there is a write up in Madison 365 about them from December. They would like to partner with the school to show a movie for black history month and maybe have a panel including some of the girls. The group is just getting started.

Moving On Ceremony (Sarah Kraak-Ripple): The date for the ceremony is the last Friday of school. Last year, there were 2 co-chairs, with subcommittees under them, and their first meeting was 3/29, which was really late. The first thing is to get chair/co-chair. Then we'll need committees for food, decorations, photo booth/photographer, a video/program person, t-shirts (just one person). Last year they had a DJ. We also need someone to coordinate with Edgewood High School. Little logistical details, need to be addressed, too. The 8th grade parents are at the ceremony, so if they also have to set up here, they have to miss the ceremony.

We'll post an announcement seeking volunteers in the weekly news.

Sarah made the photobooth and still has it at her house.

The people on the food committee will have to talk to the cafeteria staff - last year, the staff changed the whole setup because they had to feed the elementary school

kids. Talk to Peg Keelor (principal of Van Hise) - the Van Hise teachers might be willing to have the kids eat in the classroom or outside that day, but hot lunch kids will still need to come through to get their lunches.

Cindy says it would be good for the kids to get their 8th grade t-shirt early, so they can enjoy them, since they're already getting West gear by the end of the year. The person who designs the t-shirt depends who's in charge. Some years there's a contest among the students, and some years a parent/volunteer just has to get it done.

Hannah and Melissa will be PTO contacts for the graduation committee. Hannah will be a co-chair of the committee, and will try to set up a competition or something to get the kids involved in designing the t-shirts.

Wish Lists (Melissa Hornung): Melissa has a volunteer, Peggy Riley, to run the wish lists, and has suggested she talk to Sherry about getting a Google doc set up. We will do the lists in mid-February, when teachers should know if they've used up their budget.

New business (Mike McClain): There is an outstanding question about the Teacher Appreciation events from last year. For the one in the fall (potluck), there was no cost to the PTO. But for the second and third ones, there was a cost, and Sarah Kraak-Ripple purchased a lot of what went into those requests. She would like us to reimburse her from last year's budget of \$300. Her total out-of-pocket expenses were \$874. Mike suggests a couple of possible approaches. Approach 1: the PTO reimburses the \$300, then writes a letter saying she donated the balance of the amount, which would act as her receipt for taxes. Approach 2: we could split the cost evenly with Sarah. This is an expense we thought was in the previous year, but now it turns out that it's outstanding. Mike would like the board to vote. Hannah moves we approve the first approach Mike suggested, Melissa seconds, the motion passes unanimously. We will pay \$300 for Sarah, then write a receipt for the balance of her expense.

This discussion brings up the question about what the PTO can or should do with regard to unfilled wish list items. Should we fill them? Sarah paid \$447 supplementing what wasn't purchased. Hannah suggests that after the wish list items come in, we can discuss it as a board; maybe if there's leftover grant money, it could be used here.

Multicultural night (Afan Ottenheimer): Afan got an email from Mary Skemp, looking for paper products. She should have talked to Ellen to look at what we have. Melissa also has the gift card from Gordons Food Service (GFS), that they can use for the paper products.

Moving On Ceremony: Hannah suggests appointing her as chair of Moving On, so that she has the authority to make decisions. Mike moved, Melissa seconded, the motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.