

Newton South High School PTSO
Minutes of the meeting of November 20, 2013

Present: Joel Stenbridge, Lori Lass, Betsy Blagdon, Faith Paul, Marnie Bolstad, Jennifer Dimmick, Ethel Downey, Suzanne Feldman, Cynthia Lacasse, Carie Michael, Sara Ramirez, Emily Prenner, Bruce Blakely, Jill Bellio, Ryan Augusta, Jo-Louise Allen

Joel introduced the Success@South campaign, which is a fundraising effort aimed at supporting capital improvements at NSHS. Emily Prenner will chair this 2013-14 campaign. This year will focus on improvements to the library.

I. Introduction of PTSO Officers: Lori Lass introduced Emily Prenner. Corie Meith was elected Secretary.

II. Principal's Statement: Joel reviewed the year so far. The two student suicides have prompted several new initiatives aimed at suicide prevention. He is very excited about the Success@South campaign.

III. Student Comments: The student representatives (Samantha Berg, Mary Levine, Eli Lerner, Johan Kan) commented that they continue to work hard trying to find a balance among schoolwork and other commitments (and sleep). A discussion of homework and the success or otherwise of the homework-free weekends ensued.

IV. Teacher Comments: Ryan Augusta agreed that the year had had a rough start but felt that the school community had really pulled together. He feels that the timing of the grant cycle is awkward because it comes at the end of the term.

V. Secretary Update: In Corie's absence, Faith presented the Conflict of Interest statement, which all officers and directors need to sign annually.

VI. Treasurer Update: Faith presented the 2013-14 budget. It was approved as presented. We will present the 2014-15 budget at the May meeting. The year-to-date financial were reviewed.

VII. Grants Committee Update: Betsy reviewed grant requests and awards. Thirteen requests were received, split between fall and spring. We are fortunate enough to be able to fund every request. The Grants Committee will start publicizing the grant awards.

VIII. Special Education Update: Jo-Louise remarked that this year's issues seem to center around College Board accommodations. The College Board is

becoming stricter about granting accommodations. The PTSO website now has a FAQ about special education matters at NSHS.

IX. Feedback on Mental Health Initiatives: Cynthia Lacasse stated that the educational program for students is coming along. Sam suggested having a student's experience (or someone close in age to a student) as part of the program. Ryan suggested that when the program is presented in English class, parents receive an email to facilitate discussion at home.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Faith M. Paul, Treasurer and Acting Secretary

Attachments:

Agenda

Budget

P&L year to date