

Glen Rock Middle School/High School HSA - Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2016 9:00 AM Media Center

Attendees (23): Sandi Stern, Donna Beldner, Grace Cosgriff, Anne Marie Podd, Mona Milbrodt, Kara Stansel, Gretchen Horwitz, Angela Catanzaro, Kristen Neubart, Michele Sapoff, Holly Goshin, Joan Fisher, Ann Boyle, Alissa Somers, Louise D'Amato, Danielle Helder, Divya Verma, Linda Schultz, Ann Feige, Lorraine M. Scandale, Janet Romano, Jen Scherer, Kristine Gifford

Administrators (3): John Arlotta (HS Principal), Edward Thompson (MS Principal), Brian Pepe (MS Asst. Principal)

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by HSA President, Sandi Stern.

Approval of the November 18, 2015 Meeting Minutes: Submitted by Anne Marie Podd.
Motion to approve by Holly Goshin and seconded by Donna Beldner.

Principals' Reports:

Middle School- Mr. Thompson

- The Winder Concert was great!
- This past week, they had a professional development day working with high school teachers on student transition from middle school to high school.
- On Jan. 20th, they had Kindness and Respect presentations by motivational speaker, David Flood.
- For a whole week, the school participated in The Great Kindness Challenge featuring daily activities for students
- Wed. 1/ 20 is a homework free night.
- 2nd marking period ends February 2nd.
- 6th & 7th grade dance is coming up.
- Feb. 12th the Bergen County prosecutor's office will present to 6th & 7th graders.
- The MS musical is *The Sound of Music*.
- March 4 – Drug and alcohol assembly.
- Mixer/mash up being planned for 5th graders in June.
- Started indoor recess program where student can go to gym and run around.
- Washington D.C. permission slips are due.

High School – Mr. Arlotta

- We have a new Student Assistance Counselor, **Danielle Helder**.
- We are at the midway point in the school year.
- The HS musical is *Little Shop of Horrors*, Feb. 4-6th.
- Next week is mid-terms, Tues. – Fri., the schedule is on the website and it was also sent home.
- Guidance is starting to schedule meetings with students to plan course selections for next year.
- They use college as a guide for courses added to curriculum such as the new Broadcast Media course and new World Language course in Mandarin. They are considering adding a more advanced Broadcast Media course and hope to add a Level II in Mandarin. They are also considering more business offerings. The HS offers half-year electives to give students a chance to try things. Hope to offer: Business - Entrepreneurship, English – The

Graphic Novel (very popular on college campuses), Science – Anatomy & Physiology, Computer Science- Programming/Introduction to Python.

- Facility upgrades: The all-purpose room is not a fitness center.
- Next year, they hope to budget Phase II of fitness center and redo the weight room.
- A one to one laptop initiative is planned for all HS students.

Parent Questions to Mr. Arlotta:

- Scheduling classes for next year – Please make sure Guidance alerts parents about upcoming planning meetings with students, course choices and scheduling classes for next year.
- How do students find out about new courses?

Mr. Arlotta: Once new course offerings are determined, Guidance is brought up to speed, then Mr. Arlotta meets with Guidance to answer any questions or concerns and then Guidance presents to the students.

- With the new schedule and longer lunch period, can any club meeting be scheduled at lunch? Mr. Arlotta said he can't mandate it. It's up to the advisor.
- Languages – Is Latin I offered in the HS? Mr. Arlotta said it depends if they have enough kids to take it.
- Senior parents complained about Prestige, the company that does senior portraits: terrible service, high pricing & bad quality. We need a new vendor! Image Art in Glen Rock was suggested. Mr. Arlotta will pass this feedback on the Mr. Cello.
- Lunch: People are willing to pay more for better quality. Mr. Arlotta will pass this feedback on.

PARCC – Per Mr. Arlotta:

- If everyone takes PARCC seriously, the data could prove valuable. There is some merit to it. In college, students will do computerized, online assessments, so this is good experience/practice/prep.
- Also, for graduating seniors, PARCC is a fallback if you don't make the cut with scores on SATs.
- Overall, encourage students to do their best on all tests. It gives them more options and it will give the school meaningful data so they can best support students in preparation for college.
- There is a lot of misinformation out there.
- Mr. Arlotta is happy to speak with any parents individually, if they wish to discuss it further.
- Yes, the school is also concerned with all the testing.
- Keep in mind the GRHS has a very good reputation with colleges, and we don't want to do anything to mar that. Our schools are measured. It is documented. We don't want bad data associated with our kids. We want decisions made based on good information.

Mr. Arlotta introduced the new Student Assistance Counselor, Danielle Helder.

- Parent response to Danielle was very enthusiastic with lots of questions and interest.
- All her contact information is on the MS & HS school websites.
- As a counselor, she is shared by the MS & HS.
- Danielle stated that there is a lot of anxiety and pressure in this school district. Kids are not allowed to feel...only to perform.
- Danielle works with individuals, with small groups, and also brings in speakers to do presentations, such as the recent heroin initiative for 9th graders.
- Social skills, working on healthy relationships, self-awareness, working on your unique strengths, anger management, crisis management, domestic violence, substance abuse, sexual issues, etc. the kids can go to her.
- How do kids know she is there? How can one person handle both the MS & HS?
- What about prepping seniors to make good decisions in college re: drinking, drugs, looking out for each other, avoiding sexual assault, etc.?
- She needs to have an assembly with parents so they know about her services.
- Also, smaller "book club" sessions with parents would facilitate Q & A and discussions.

Treasurer's Report – (Gretchen Horwitz)

- Overall, we are in good shape.
- We slightly exceeded our membership goals.
- We received \$188 from one quarter in the Boiling Springs program! Open an account! The more linked accounts we have, the more money we make.
- Bagel Day went well.
- Box tops generated \$316 over 6 months! Save box tops! There is a collection box near security.
- The MS/HS HSA made a donation to the Arboretum. A sign commemorates our donation.
- We will do a Direct Ask fundraiser in the spring.
- A Bollywood fundraiser was suggested for the fall (per Divya Verma).
- Someone suggested selling cases for laptops as a fundraiser for the HAS.

Board of Ed (Donna Beldner)

- There was a huge presentation on PARCC. Go to the website for details.
- The new board seems very positive.
- There are a lot of tech people. They want computers/ one to one laptops for HS students. Laptops will all be the same, only for school and can't share outside of school.

New Business

- Michele Sapoff (Handbook) mentioned a mobile app called Mobile ARC to possibly replace the handbook. Parents input their own information, so it is correct. Mobile ARC does this for other schools. Are there 3rd party privacy issues? Check with other schools and see how it worked. Also, talk/email Dr. Valenti about it.

Thank You

- Teachers loved the Faculty Holiday Breakfast! Many thanks to Elaine Howe and Julie Weber for organizing.
- To Michele Sapoff for organizing our Membership Drive and distributing handbooks and to Maura McCarthy for helping with handbook distribution.
- To Joyce Silva for the bagel/smoothie day.

Next meeting: Friday, March 18th @ 9:00 AM in the Media Center.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was made at 10:42 AM by Jen Scherer and Donna Beldner.

Minutes respectively submitted by Anne Marie Podd.