



Present: Joanna Ramos-Romero, Sharon Blessing, Leesa Yhim, Ernestine Wright-Palmer, Nalini Munnangi, Michele Kocak, Jess Cutler, Amanda Shearer, Amy Grutzik, Mary Klyap, Francine Bennett, Theresa Yodzis, Gwen Bury, Elizabeth Fitch, Nicki Mantzouris, Ruchira Mahajan, Vijaya Porturaju, Lori Bacon, Antoinette Marbray, Marrine Shen, Arun Mandalika, Kevin Dorsey, Tammy Goldeisen, Bruce Neimeyer

Call to order – PTSA President

Joanna called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and reminded us of our mission. Our mission is to make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. New attendees were invited to introduce themselves.

SGA report – none for this meeting

Staff Report

Amanda Shearer, special education teacher, reported that the staff had to work hard to develop an alternate service delivery for special education students. She noted that the Google breakout room is a great space for students, and it has afforded the opportunity for special education students to receive one to one support. There is a work study pod put together with 4 other schools, so students get job training and virtual work experience. She noted that it has been a tough year, but the team has been awesome.

Mrs Jess Cutler, the English instructional team leader who teaches grade 10th grade students, affirmed that the special education teachers have been working really hard and noted that it is amazing to work with the special education team. She gave highlights from English classes. All 11TH grade students have to complete “world of work.” Mr. Miller created a mini world of work experience for his students. His students wrote and submitted their resumes, and faculty reviewed their resumes and gave mock interviews. This exercise got positive feedback from students. Ms. Richards, the English 11 honors and English 11 AP teacher, has show-and-tell days when students turn on their cameras and share something of interest to them. This has facilitated lots of student engagement. She also plays a song that is relevant to the lesson during her class every Friday for students to analyze. In order to assist seniors not enrolled in English in the first semester, the team ran an after school program for seniors in October, November, and December to provide feedback on their essays. It was very popular and well received. Ninth grade classes worked on “story strong,” which focuses on writing a personal story in your own voice. Students enjoyed sharing stories on topics meaningful to them.

Principal’s Report

Mrs Goldeisen reported that the Ridge Round up survey results were shared with administration and the staff at the school. Most of the feedback from parents was positive. Based on the Ridge Round up survey results, the staff are planning to have a 9th grade parents’ night.

There was a virtual open school for incoming 9th graders and 10th to 12th graders new to the school. It was a busy evening but well received.

She mentioned that the MRHS scheduling website has a lot of information about scheduling, and it is a great resource.

Mrs. Goldeisen discussed plans to return students to the building. Small groups are scheduled to return to school building on February 1st, if the COVID 19 metrics for Howard county are favorable. There will be 15 students initially and this will be increased to 45 by the end of the month of February.

The instructional model for the 4th quarter will be presented to the Howard county Board of Education on February 11th and the board will then vote on this, to determine whether students will return to the buildings in the fourth quarter.

Text Book collection is ongoing currently.

Details are still being worked out for the Junior PSAT test scheduled for 01/26/2021. 105 students signed up. It is uncertain whether this will still take place, and this will depend on the county’s Covid-19 metrics.

Plans for the seniors are being discussed. There are 3 options for graduation: Merriweather Pavilion, MHRS stadium, or virtual graduation.

The county is also looking into outdoor venues in Howard County to host Senior Prom. All high students would use the same venue on different dates. They are also working on having events like the senior class picnic outside.

Cap and gowns for seniors will be ordered in February. Prom may only be for seniors this year, not juniors, to reduce numbers.

Administration and counselors are still trying to contact students who are struggling.

The county is looking at the bell schedule because if students are in the building in the 4th quarter, there needs to be transitional time, and they may add more time to synchronous times and reduce asynchronous time. Nothing is set in stone currently.

There is a bit of resistance and fear from staff regarding returning to the building. The administrators have been in the building and are comfortable, but some who have not been in the building since March 15th are afraid to return.

Sharon asked about the possibility of a senior parents’ night to discuss what’s coming up for the spring.

Joanna asked about the deadline for making a final decision regarding prom. Mrs. Goldeisen said the date was undecided. Venues for prom that are being investigated, including the Belmont in Elkridge, Centennial Park, Howard County Conservancy, Waverly Mansion, Howard County Fairgrounds, and Howard Community College. The plan is to ensure that all Howard county seniors can afford to attend.

President’s Report

Joanna reported that Boosters and the PTSA are putting together a Memorandum of Understanding to define each organization’s contribution to the summer mailer. The PTSA pays for the bulk mail permit, and Boosters pays for the printing and mailing. Both organizations have agreed on dates to ensure timely mailing of the summer mailer going forward.

Joanna followed up with NAMI (National Alliance of Mental Illness) regarding providing support for students. NAMI has a free workshop, “Ending the Silence,” for students that is normally given during health class by invitation of teachers. Incorporating this into the school day has been challenging in the virtual learning environment, however. Denise Guiliano, the executive director, shared that they have been doing it through HCPS high schools’ Active Minds clubs, and Joanna suggested that this could be organized with MRHS’ Active Minds club, possibly with assistance from SGA to promote it, and Denise Guiliano could give a presentation to the PTSA before the workshop for students.

Joanna shared a promotional video about the “Ending the Silence” workshop. The presentation deals with recognizing mental illness and resources available for students who need help. The workshop is 50 minutes long with Q&A with students. Parents thought it was a good idea and thought it was important to have the presentation for parents prior to hosting the workshop. Denise Guiliano would present to the parent group for about 20 minutes.

Joanna will contact the advisor of the Active Minds to let them know of this opportunity.

Financial Report

Nalini gave the Financial Report. The bank beginning balance on 12/01/2020 was \$41,906.59 The PTSA spent money on membership dues, hospitality for staff, PBIS, and bags for the student textbook pick up, and the ending balance on 12/31/2020 was \$38,880.89.

Minutes

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Committee Reports

Membership

Sharon reported that we currently have 528 members, bringing in a revenue of \$9,495.00. This includes 195 families, 22 faculty, and 56 students. Ideas were discussed for increasing staff membership. The PTSA will include flyers in the tote bags that teachers will receive on Jan. 13, along with the drive by breakfast, and any staff who signs up to become a member of the PTSA and all current staff members will be included in a raffle for a FabFitFun box. Mrs. Goldeisen was asked to encourage her staff to join the PSTA.

PTSA membership cards will be placed in the 3rd quarter textbook bags that students will pick up at the end of January.

Fundraising – on hold

Grocery rewards – We have 81 Harris Teeter participants generating \$636.88 in revenue. Pam Wilson, who could not attend the meeting will contact Weis about their grocery rewards program.

Afterprom – on hold until the school decides whether prom will be held, but we will provide prizes to students whether or not there is a prom.

Hospitality – reported in president’s report

Liaisons – nothing to report

Website/Facebook/Communications – Sharon shared that some 9th grade parents were interested in changing the format of our Facebook page to look more like Mount View Middle School’s.

Horizon Foundation – Bruce will start working on programs to offer mental health support to students. He asked about whether the PTSA had received the Horizon grant money. Linda will reach out to student groups in the spring to gauge interest in outdoor yoga sessions for students.

Student Directory – Bruce reported that he was trying to make the directory a searchable database, but he is still working on it. He will put out the list first and work on making it a searchable database later.

Senior Scholarships – Amy Grutzik reported that applications will be ready on February 1st. She will send the information on Senior Scholarships to Lynn Rashid, senior class sponsor and SGA sponsor, for dissemination to the seniors.

PTACHC Report – Ruchira reported that the last meeting was on Monday January 4th, and the focus was on zoning and construction of schools. Construction is ongoing at all schools. Hammond High School is expected to be completed in 2023.

A virtual international night and career night will be sponsored by Bushy Park Elementary school, and all are welcome to join in.

Volunteer Coordination – Leesa thanked all parents who contributed candy to the teachers’ tote bags.

Joanna thanked everyone for joining, and the meeting concluded at 8:08pm. Next meeting will be on February 8, 2021.