

## Executive Board Meeting Tuesday April 13, 2021

Present: Pam Schnatterly, HongMei Xu, Alana Marino, Rebecca Wasynczuk, Mike Redmon

Pam started by asking if we were supporting Mike and Matt the way they needed. Mike will share later in the meeting a new scheduling effort that he has been working on.

**6th grade Scavenger Hunt** – Pam asked if there is a way that the PTO can support the 6<sup>th</sup> grade scavenger hunt now that the event is changing direction. The event is overseen by Matt and will be a School-run event staffed by teachers. No need for parent volunteers.

**6th, 7th, 8th grade team building** Due to Covid restrictions the Hale team building event has changed and evolved. State guidance for middle schools is that there should be no field trips due to the bus transportation. So, Hale will come to Thurston, instead of students going to Hale. The school will pay for the event, and a grant to fund it will not be needed.

**Eight grade dance and movie.** The state is offering guidance on Proms and dances. Because of current restrictions, we are not able to host a dance. In addition, the logistics for hosting a movie for 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be prohibitive (the late start, late ending, the need for chaperones, the need for distancing within the tent).

**8th grade Graduation Events** – The committee is actively working on this and there was a discussion regarding next steps.

**For eighth grade graduation** we are considering keeping up high school staging, or re arranging seating. There are still ongoing discussions about capacity for graduation. Mike will get Denise Collins and Debbie Peterson (8<sup>th</sup> grade advisors) to reach out to PTO with ideas for ways the PTO can support the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation. Mike may be leaning on PTO for some sort of gift bag or snacks for a possible Promotion Day event. Or, maybe some type of field day event. PTO is waiting to hear from leadership about how we can be supportive in implementing an 8<sup>th</sup> grade event. Perhaps the week leading up to Promotion Day, there could be special theme days or special food like in senior week.

**Teacher Appreciation Week** A flyer went out requesting that parents drop-off food or make a contribution via Paypal. Alana will get the drop-off procedure from Jenn Gleavey. Parent volunteers will set up and clean up. There is now limited space in the annex for pick up and drop-off because lunch is distributed through the annex.

**Jerry Craft books** have been ordered and paid for. About 70 students and other adults participated in the Zoom Author visit.

**TMS HS student-led clubs update.** 60 kids are signed up. Robotics and coding clubs are overbooked. Karen McCaskill is figuring out how to moderate and accommodate all the interest. Clubs will start after spring break.

**Anything else** we can help support or think through creatively?

Mike's sharing: Mike will be sending an email out the week after spring break inviting parents to an information night regarding the daily school schedule for 2021-22. Mike's plan has been in the works for a few years. Thurston hired a scheduling consultant to look at how to make the class schedule more efficient. They have spent 20 hours or more working with consultant to give students a better Thurston

experience. Questions explored by the consultant included: how much time should we dedicate to advisory model and meeting? How do we make sure all students on each team have all the same teachers? How do we make consistencies around x-block? Students were making so many transitions, they were losing 32 minutes a day. The new proposed schedule will allow for more flexibility for students and staff, better collaboration, a teaming structure that makes sense so all students have the same teachers, and a social/emotional experience that addresses what students need. The consultant will come and talk to parents for a meeting and explain what to expect. For next year, there will be a dedicated advisory block for social/emotional learning, and for having safe structured conversations regarding DEI. Students will maintain exploratory classes (music, art, drama PE, engineering, computer science, etc). They will still have three exploratory classes a semester (vs having trimesters). Students will have three 70 minute classes a day, making for fewer transitions, and a more manageable day, and with more time in class. Student feedback is that the current schedule has classes that are too short and too hurried. The new model will be more similar to what they had in elementary school and what they will have in high school. Lunch will continue to be 30 minutes long. The last component of their schedule is an idea from the scheduling consultant. It is called WIN block (an acronym for What I Need). WIN block will be very good for students with an IEP because they will have more access to things they need. There will be a team of support teachers that available during WIN block. Site council and staff are excited about the innovative new schedule.

**Westwood Day** – In September, the PTO plans to participate in Westwood Day with a booth. We will sell swag, have give-aways, get dues paid (\$50 per family), get parents interested in committees. HongMei will get application for Westwood day booth. Rebecca and HongMei will be at the booth to take memberships. HongMei will get credit card machine. Alana has information about t shirts and decals for ordering them to sell.

**Teacher Appreciation new initiative** Parent Tammy McGowen approached the PTO with a new idea that is being implemented at Downey and can be replicated at TMS. A (free) snack cart for teachers. Tammy could put it together. PTO budgets money to have snacks available for teachers. PTO supports this idea. Pam will gather the cost information to implement. Alana can order stuff.

**Writers book** for 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Mike said that he would follow up with 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA teacher/team leads on "Writer's book as gifts to 7<sup>th</sup> grade students for Writers/Authors Workshop".

**8<sup>th</sup> grade Events** - (Dawnmarie and Julie P.) The T-shirt fundraiser raised \$1500 for 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The Bamboo fundraiser over vacation week for 2 nights is expected to raise \$200-300. There was more discussion on ways that the PTO could compliment Promotion Day through various ideas. (IDEAS: T shirts to be signed, themed music piped over loud speaker during class change, Panera lunch brought in one day, tailgate with donuts in the morning). Alana will draft an email to set expectations about what 8<sup>th</sup> grade special events can be. Julie and Dawnmarie and Alana will plan this.

**Treetops, Amazon smile** - Hong Mei will send out info for this as people head to treetops in spring.

**WHS Speech Club** outreach fundraising program involving middle school students. There will be a flyer out within a week and a parent information session Apr. 29, Thursday, 7-8pm.

**Submission for next Principal's Newsletter** Mike reports that there have not been regular newsletters, and he has been blasting out information as it comes. The TMS Office will let PTO know when next newsletter is coming out so we can keep the parents informed.

**Treasurer.** HongMei will check on new leads for next year's treasurer. Alana will plan to get a budget going forward. Alana will meet with accountant this month for filing W-2, EZ990 for state, and federal taxes.

