

High School Council Meeting Minutes from Tuesday, June 2, 2015

The minutes from the meeting on May 5, 2015, were approved.

David Quattrone, Superintendent's Report

Since our last meeting we had a Board election, the budget passed and the new turf project was approved as well. We had three times our normal voting turnout and we thank the community for its support and interest in the issue on both sides. An important part of engaged citizenship is treating each other respectfully. I believe it is time to take a step back and begin closing the divide created from this contentious issue. For the sake of our children, who watch how we behave toward others, we should be respectful of the diversity in opinions on the subject.

We had 50 people attend the school-family innovation event and we had two Thiel Fellows that spoke on their own innovative projects including a solar panel system that is driven by water. The auditorium will not be ready for graduation and we are disappointed. Dr. Quattrone showed slides of the progress on the project and where we are in the construction process. Original windows were uncovered that had been paneled over in the 1960's and original woodwork is being restored. The new side lobby will be a high value space for events and ceremonies and ties into the original arched doorways at the side entrance. The brick and stonework is being done now to match our original materials as closely as possible so that it looks original to the building. Completion should be in early July.

A question was asked as to why the front entrance is now closed during the day to students. Students can come in at the beginning of the day and after school is dismissed but not between 7:50-3pm because it is a safety precaution that was tightened up after the recent lockdown drill.

Ann Meyer, Principal's Report

We are hoping to bring the Thiel Fellows back to speak to our high school students because their message was powerful...being curious, persevering, making mistakes and overcoming them to become successful in the end. Both speakers were inspirational.

The Scholastic Achievement ceremony is next Thursday and will be at The Reformed Church on June 11th. On June 15th the school wide and grade awards will take place. Grades 9/10th grades start in the main gym with 11th grade in cafeteria and seniors in the Multi-Purpose room for grade level awards. The entire school then goes to the main gym for the school wide awards. Yearbooks will then be distributed after the larger awards ceremony and the senior video will be shown around noon. Locations will be announced soon.

Next year, we will unveil our first innovative classroom as a result of the research and recommendations of our Innovation Fellows – Mr. Doyle, Ms. Allen, Mr. Meyer, Ms. Flood and Dr. Lutter. The focus of the group was to determine how we create a cognitive approach and physical space in the classroom that promotes innovative learning. The group visited the I-Lab in Chappaqua and Avenues, a school that's K-12 in Manhattan with plans to develop campuses all over the world. The Innovation Fellows also toured the Google offices in NYC and evaluated how

they structure collaborative and innovative spaces. We contacted the I-Lab architects and they toured our facilities. Our constraints were that no walls could be removed and it would require minimal construction. They selected two classrooms to be transformed. Changing the physical space can't be in isolation so teaching in the rooms has to change as well. We have engaged some professionals to help us change our instruction in those classrooms and 24 high school teachers volunteered to attend workshops to begin exploring how they can teach their classes within this new model. Classrooms A312 and A311 were selected as the first innovative classrooms.

The new designs take the classrooms from single desks in rows to collaborative small group spaces as well as larger roundtable, board-type spaces for larger group discussion. There are some divided spaces by glass doors that are connected visually but can be used for small group work in private. We are looking at Chrome Cast to broadcast student work real time through projection without the need for smart boards. A simple white board is all that's needed. Some walls will be white boards so students can write directly on the wall, as are the glass partitions. The capacity of each room is 34, higher than the current rooms when using desks. The colors are taken from the stained glass windows in our library. The tables are high so that teachers aren't looking down on students – everything is at eye-to-eye level. Chairs are designed for movement and schools using the design say that kids can focus on work because they have movement while sitting. The first will be on line in September and the second will be ready in January.

The faculty needs to think about how to use these spaces to teach more innovatively than just lecturing students. The focus is on increasing modalities of learning, student-centered learning and technology integration. Faculty will be allowed to sign out the space so that we can get as many teachers using it as possible and then more classes will be transitioned to be innovative workspaces. The library plans mirror this same use of space so they will be integrated into this new learning style. The furniture is flexible and configurations can be reoriented to accommodate different sized groups and can be customized for a particular lesson. Students will be able to bring in their own laptops and plug in to the system.

Anne Abbatecola, Guidance Report

We are working with rising seniors now and on May 20th we had an essay workshop on writing essays for college and English classes are working with students as well on the same topic. Most of our juniors have a really good draft going now. The personal statement essay is often the biggest stumbling block so having a solid draft this early is a positive step. Brag Sheets have been coming in and please get them in if you haven't already. Counselors work over the summer to draft recommendation letters.

Freshman Transition Leader selection is underway and we will have a great group in place for next year. A presentation will take place with a representative from Kaplan to discuss the changes that are taking place on the new SAT. The current 9/10th graders should attend because the changes will affect them. The presentation is Thursday in the Multi Purpose room at 7pm. The annual My Road workshop will be this Thursday and Friday and is an important step in self-realization and developing interests in academics and careers down the road. Seniors need to give their final college choices to Guidance if they haven't done so already. Summer assignments will be coming out shortly – don't procrastinate!

Karen Peterson, Athletic Department

Spring seasons are over for most teams. We had three golfers attend States and Jimmy Purdy played thru the state quarterfinals in tennis. Girls lacrosse is went to the state semifinals in Cortlandt. We also have 14 girls in track and one boy heading to states at SUNY Albany. Spring sports awards will be next Tuesday at 6:45pm in the main gym. Fall athletic information is up on the athletic website so check it out if you have a fall athlete and remember to get health clearances in early!

Grade Reports

12th Grade – Graduation material is due. Need parent volunteers for senior week.

11th Grade – Promenade was successful with the help of sophomore parents.

10th Grade – Had our last bake sale. Nothing else coming up.

9th Grade – No report.

Rose Crawford, Athletic Council

We are wrapping up and have elections next week at the same time as SFL elections.

Nominations for officers have already taken place and the vote will be next week during Social Studies classes.

Annette Adamiyatt, SFL

We are working on allocating leftover funds for charities. Next year we will have preplanned dates for dances and the first will be the Thursday night of Homecoming week.

The next meeting is next year!! Thank you everyone for attending and happy summer!!

Jill Pytosh, PTA

We sold out tickets to the benefit as of this week! Please go on line and bid for auction items if you are interested – we have great auction items. High school clubs who want to sell on MD weekend are welcome to set up tables. Please check with Jill if you are interested.

The next HS Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5th.