



**Parent Forum  
Meeting Minutes  
December 13, 2017**

- Approval of the minutes.
- CEO Update – Marie spoke to us about “Upping Employee Benefits.” They will be piloting a tuition assistant program, designed to offer teachers graduate credits toward their teaching degree. \$200 will be contributed from the school for every credit, up to 3 credits. For now, this is for graduate credit only to reach level 2 certification. Based on the results, it may be opened up to all staff. The results of this will shape a policy for the future.
  - Marie also spoke about the STEM Program – For Science, the new 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher will take over teaching science for the uppers, beginning school year 2018-2019.
  - HGS will be purchasing smart boards for the 3 pre-primary grades. Teachers were involved in the selection and are looking forward to enhancing MI learning utilizing the new boards.
  - IT Manager to redesign the HGS web site, with an April 2018 target date.
  - There are plans to fence in the 1- 8<sup>th</sup> grade playground area.
  - Golf tournament is May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 this year at Pine Hills Country Club. Barb Nivert is in charge of this

years event. Marie is looking for volunteers for this important and one time only annual event.

- Teacher Presentation – Michael Rescigno, the new 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher spoke on several topics
  - Background - He comes from Fell Charter and teaches 7-8 Math and 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA. He has a degree in 7-12 Mathematics from University of Scranton. He is also certified in Grades 4-8.
  - He Incorporates lessons of traditional teaching in ELA and math, combined with group work and group projects (mostly in ELA).
  - Use of Multiple Intelligences in math utilizing measuring tools, manipulatives, and outdoor education with computations, such as walking rate
  - Use of Multiple Intelligences in ELA utilizing mini white boards, review games, journal writing, and group projects, such as ultimate Christmas present with artistic drawing, advertising, and commercial with jingle
  - Michael is also leading the Scranton Prep Young Scholars program and tutoring for the Prep test. This year, all 5 students passed the Prep test. He initiated a Science Fair Project at Wilkes University for 7-8 graders. In the spring, there is a math contest for 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade where 1 student from each grade will be chosen based on highest test score.
  - Michael was referred to as “The Data Guy” at his last school. We have benefited from these talents as he analyzed the PSSA data and school performance profile thoroughly. Here are his findings ...
    - Howard Gardner is in top 20% of local schools in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade in terms of percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced.
    - Howard Gardner 1<sup>st</sup> out of 32 local schools in 5<sup>th</sup> grade ELA.
    - Outperformed every Scranton school in Grades

3-6, 8.

- For Science, HGS outperformed every Scranton School in 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science in 2017 (these are the only grades science test is taken).
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Science students have scored at a clip of over 90% proficient or advanced the past 3 years.
  - For math, HGS outperformed almost every Scranton Elementary School in math in 2017
  - Common Core style questions make understanding the math very difficult
  - The School Performance Profile (measured by a specific formula of PSSA scores, student improvement year on year, attendance, etc.) was a score of 61.5
  - Out of 180 Charter Schools in the state, Howard Gardner is in the top 40% for School Performance Profile.
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- Family Fun Night – at Revolution Ice Center this Saturday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 11:00am. Bring your flyer so the school gets credit!
  
  - BINGO – The Parent Forum annual fundraiser is quickly approaching! This is our main fundraiser that supports all activities throughout the year!! So far we have 12 large prizes with a goal of getting 20 in total. These prizes have a value of \$200+. If there are any businesses you frequent where you would be willing to ask for a product or service donation, it would be so much appreciated! We are in need!! We will also be asking for basket of cheer and raffle baskets in the coming weeks. Stay tuned for a sign-up genius coming out in early January!

- Teacher Appreciation Cookie Day – December 20<sup>th</sup> is the day, a basket of cookie treats if you may!! Any extra goodies will be donated to a Veterans Home in Scranton.
- New Fundraising Updates – Sandi Brady is leading the effort on a fundraiser – she had 2 different ideas that she proposed.
  - The first idea is a jar of pasta sauce that will go on sale monthly, starting in January. The cost will be \$10 and will feed a family of 6. Marinara, vodka, Alfredo will be a few of the homemade sauces you can look forward to ordering. Currently, Sandi's family sells this sauce at South Side Seafood and it's a big hit! Stay tuned for more details. The Parent Forum will review final documentation and order sheets to approve. Sandy would like to get a flyer out before the holiday. Most agreed this fundraiser is a slam dunk, easy to execute and a great value add for parents. A special thank you to Sandi and her husband for offering their skills and services by giving all profits back to the school.
  - The second idea was for a Father / Daughter dance. It was proposed to take place on February 15<sup>th</sup> at the school. Finger foods, desserts, dancing and photographs would be included in a \$30 ticket for daughters and their dad, \$5 for each additional daughter. Parents who attended the meeting felt this would exclude boys at the school. Some proposed a 7-8 grade dance instead like other schools in the area. This would offer a social experience that the school has never offered in the past. Sandi is going to re-propose this idea at the next Parent Forum meeting but will look to execute the first idea to begin additional fund raising activities.

- Treasures report: Current Balances: \$10,083.64 future earmarks totaling \$2,947.13. Anticipated balance \$7,136.51.
- Nancy followed through on researching having a Scholastic Book sale at the school. We would earn points toward books or 20% of total books sold. This seems like a great event with many benefits! A tentative date is March 19-23<sup>rd</sup> which coincides with teacher conferences. Maria is considering the event and trying to figure out a good location for it and will get back to us.