



Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 6, 2017

A general meeting of the Demarest Home & School Associate was held in the Demarest Elementary School cafeteria on Monday, November 6, 2017 with 31 members and visitors in attendance.

- I. Call to Order: RaQia Randall-Bouchard called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.
- II. Officer Attendance:
 - a. Present: Both Co-Presidents, Secretary
 - b. Absent: Treasurer, Immediate Past President
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - a. A member indicated that the dates for the Five Below mini-fundraiser were incorrect in the October minutes. The dates will be corrected to December 13-15.
 - b. The minutes were approved, pending that correction.
- IV. HSA Co-Presidents' Report: RaQia Randall-Bouchard and Tracy Pitynger
 - a. Both Co-Presidents expressed their amazement that so many events have already occurred, including the Pumpkin Patch, Rita's, the Fun Run, to name a few. They encouraged members to stay involved through the holidays and into the new year. They're aware that the schedule is busy, and members aren't expected to participate in every event, but member participation is vital.
 - b. The October Bloomfield HSA meeting was canceled and will be rescheduled. The Co-Presidents asked members to share vendor information with them for discussion at the next Bloomfield HSA meeting. They will email committee chairs to remind them to provide that information. Vendor information will be shared with other Bloomfield HSAs to explore the possibility of better discounts on goods and services. The Co-Presidents will provide information obtained during that meeting at the next Demarest HSA meeting.
 - c. The Co-Presidents were proud to report that Brookdale School HSA had contacted the Demarest webmasters about the Demarest HSA website. Brookdale HSA was impressed with the website and requested assistance with their website. Demarest HSA webmasters will be helping them update their website. Watsessing HSA has also expressed interest in assistance with their website.
 - d. The Co-Presidents explained that comments on the website are received and reviewed by the webmasters prior to posting. Questions are forwarded to the Co-Presidents and other appropriate persons. The web team is also working on filtering spam from the website.
- V. Treasurer's Report: Mrs. Pitynger for Laura Clifford
 - a. Balances
 - i. Primary Checking Account Balance: \$71,478.72
 - ii. Savings Account Balance: \$21,952.77
 - iii. LGCCC Account: \$4,000
 - iv. Raised for next year:
 - b. Mrs. Clifford has a lot of paper available for flyers and other documents. Please contact her if you need paper.
- VI. Secretary's Report: Eileen Lucier
 - a. A thank you card for the Pumpkin Patch was received from Mrs. Tice and the third graders.



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- VII. Board of Education (BOE) Representative's Report: Jill Fischman
- a. Ms. Fischman reported that seven of the nine BOE members attended a conference in Atlantic City, New Jersey to receive certified master board member credits. They attended classes and learned a lot about running a successful school board.
 - b. We are almost at the end of the first trimester and grades will be going out soon.
 - c. If members haven't already done so, she encouraged them to sign up for PowerSchool.
 - d. Ms. Fischman reported that the changes to the elementary school schedule have been implemented district wide. The intent is to maintain continuity between schools and to lessen the stress for children who change schools.
 - e. Bloomfield's two inclusion classes have had a successful start to the school year.
 - f. Joe Carretta, the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, is leaving the Bloomfield BOE. He accepted a new position elsewhere in New Jersey. The BOE will miss him.
 - g. The last BOE meeting ran until 10:30 p.m. Ten candidates were interviewed. Mike McLaughlin was appointed to the open position.
 - h. The BOE budget process is in full swing. More information will be available later in the year.
 - i. Ms. Fischman stated that \$800,000 was allotted for security doors. The doors are still being installed at other school. The process is going to take some time to complete.
 - j. The BOE has processed or is almost done processing new staff members.
 - k. New, more energy efficient lighting is being installed through the district energy saving program.
 - l. Ms. Fischman provided information on the Bloomfield BOE website hacking that occurred earlier that day. She clarified that the Bloomfield BOE website itself was not hacked. Rather a parent company was hacked. No data was breached.
 - m. She informed members that the next BOE meeting would be November 14, 2017.
 - n. Ms. Fischman reminded members that the next day was election day. She stressed that members should educate themselves on the candidates and vote based on good information. She strongly encouraged members to do research and to vote.
- VIII. Principal's Report: Mary Todaro
- a. Mrs. Todaro expanded on the website hacking situation and indicated that an emergency virtual backpack was distributed with information.
 - b. For the Veterans Day program, 5th and 6th graders wrote essays. A 6th grader, Adrian Reyes, won the essay contest and will be recognized at the Veterans Day Parade Ceremony.
 - c. Parent-Teacher Conferences are upcoming shortly. During the conference, teachers should inform parents of: (1) their child's strengths; (2) areas where their child needs support; and (3) how parents can support their child's education. If parents need to change their conferences, it's important that they contact the teacher to cancel or reschedule.



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- d. The Halloween celebration went very smoothly and was wonderful. The children appreciated the party and treats.
- e. Mrs. Todaro reported that attendance has been excellent but tardiness is a serious issue. She implored members to do whatever they can to get students to school on time. If the school can be of assistance, please contact Mrs. Todaro.
- f. The Virtual Backpack goes out on Thursdays, but documents must be submitted by the close of business on Wednesdays. It's time consuming to get all the information in, so it needs to be on time.
- g. A member asked if parents would meet with just the home room teachers for 6th graders. Mrs. Todaro confirmed that was the case and encouraged parents to make an appointment with any other teacher they'd like to talk to.
- h. Another member asked about the Class Dojo. Mrs. Todaro explained that not every class uses Class Dojo. All of 3rd grade uses it, but it isn't mandatory and other grades use it at the teacher's discretion.
Tom Heany added that parents can sign their children up for it on their own, if they wish, and that it's free. He uses it for chores with his youngest daughter.
- i. Another member asked about the status of Demarest's security doors. Mrs. Todaro and Ms. Fischman confirmed that all the doors have already been installed in Demarest and have already been used during a drill.
- j. A member asked for follow-up on whether children can have a snack in the afternoon. Mrs. Todaro reported that teachers felt it would be too time consuming due to allergy concerns, so it will not be permitted. She has also talked with Maschio staff and asked that they check on children and how much they've eaten.
- k. Maschio has implemented a policy regarding pizza on Wednesdays. Children who have a negative account balance will not be given pizza for lunch. They will be given lunch, but it will not be pizza. This is a Maschio policy rather than a Demarest or Bloomfield BOE policy.
- l. Free and low cost lunch does not continue automatically from year to year. Families must re-apply each school year.

IX. Teachers' Report

- a. No report. Teacher Representative Lorajean Tice was absent due to illness.

X. Committee Chairperson's Reports

- a. Fundraising: Tricia Rowold

- i. Mini Fundraising

- 1. A.C. Moore: Thank you to all who participated. The HSA raised \$52.90 during this event.
 - 2. Rita's: Thank you to all who participated and volunteered. Special thanks to Mrs. Todaro for her participation. The prize wheel raised \$75. The profit from sales has not yet been determined.
 - 3. Barnes and Noble: The fundraiser will be November 8 and will coincide with the Read-a-thon. Storytime will begin at 6:30, followed by a talent show. Vouchers were distributed today. The voucher is good all of November 8 and can also be used online.
 - 4. Five Below: The dates have been confirmed as December 13-15.

- ii. Major Events



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1. KidStuff Books: Thanks to all who purchased books. The amount earned is not yet available. A small number of local books are available for purchase until early December. Please contact Laura if interested. The cost is \$25 per book.
 2. Fall Clothing and Toy Drive: Thank you to all who donated and volunteered. The amount earned is not yet available, but the clothing truck was as full as it had been in previous years, and a van load of toys and baby items were donated to St. Ann's in Newark.
 3. Fall Catalog Sale:
 - a. Silver Graphics: Paper orders for Silver Graphics are due on Wednesday, November 8 and online orders are due Monday, November 13.
 - b. Baking Mix: Baking Mix orders are due Monday November 13.
 4. Tricky Tray for Kids (Dena and Louanne): The Tricky Tray for Kids is on November 17, 2017 from 6 p.m.-9 p.m. in the gym. Please note this is not a "drop and go event." Parents must stay to supervise their child. Tickets will be sold on a first-come-first-serve basis and will be available until November 12, 2017. Entry fee will include tickets, a slice of pizza, drink, and a prize. Additional tickets will **not** be available for purchase. There will be a 50/50 for parents. They have approximately 100 prizes right now. All children will win a prize of some kind. Tickets are still available. Please note that relatives can attend even if they don't attend Demarest.
 5. Breakfast with Santa: There may be a conflict for this event. An update will be given at the next HSA meeting.
 6. Chili Cook-off: This will be scheduled at the end of January 2018. A lot of work needs to be done leading up to the event, so volunteers will be needed soon.
 7. Fun Run: T-shirts were distributed in late October. Thank you for your patience. Profits will be reported at the next meeting.
- iii. Special Committees
1. Book Fair: Ms. Rowold reported a Book Fair meeting was held today, just before the HSA general meeting, but only two people attended. If members are interested in volunteering, please contact her.
 2. Holiday Shop: The Holiday Shop will be December 7 and 8, 2017 at Demarest. Students have the opportunity to select and purchase gifts for family and friends. Volunteers wrap as many gifts as possible. If time is short, they will wrap the gift(s) for the person most likely to help the student with such things.
 3. Read-a-thon: The Read-a-thon began today and ends November 13, 2017. Students should log their reading on their Read-a-thon forms. Money and forms are due on November 17, 2017. Students can participate even if they don't collect pledges. The



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primary goal is to get students to read. Raising funds is secondary.

4. Tricky Tray: The Tricky Tray will be April 27, 2017 at the Forest Hill Field Club. Wicker baskets are still needed for the prizes. Committee members have begun soliciting businesses for prizes. If members are interested in assisting with this, please contact committee chairs. So far 25 letters have been mailed to businesses, with one donation already received.
 5. Spirit Wear: Tylene Longyshore reported that Spirit Wear orders have arrived and been processed. Members have been emailed with instructions on how to pick up their orders. The orders took longer than anticipated due to the size of the order and a shipping issue.
- b. Membership: Mrs. Pitynger for Aislinn Cholet
- i. Mrs. Pitynger was unsure of how many members have signed up for the HSA. An update should be available for the next meeting.
- c. Newsletter: Mrs. Pitynger for Amy Deputato
- i. Mrs. Pitynger relayed that the text for the newsletter is ready to go and thanked members for contributing. Once approved, the newsletter will be distributed via the virtual backpack.
- d. Programs: Dawn Pekar
- i. Mrs. Pekar stated that the next program will be on November 8th and the topic will be Benjamin Franklin.
 - ii. The December program will be holiday related and will be related to "Elf on the Shelf."
- e. Special Services: Nicole Dyer Foncello
- i. Mrs. Foncello informed members that the next SEPAC meeting will be on November 8, 2017 at 6 p.m. in Room 305 of Bloomfield High School. The topic will be bullying, including school policies on bullying and what to do about it. In addition, a certified parenting coach will be available at the meeting.
- f. Sixth Grade: Gina Roman
- i. Ms. Roman reported that so far \$1,205 have been raised for Sixth Grade events and activities. The Prize Wheel raised \$201 at the Fall Social. The Bake Sale will be tomorrow during elections. The next fundraiser will be the DARE basketball game at the end of February. Usually the game is either parents or alumni versus police officers.
 - ii. Mr. Heaney suggested selling candy at the Bake Sale. His HSA had success with that.
- g. Basketball, 2nd-3rd: Mrs. Pitynger for Amy Deputato
- i. The registration packets are being updated.
 - ii. 2nd grade coaches are needed.
 - iii. The clinic will run on Mondays from January to March. 2nd grade clinic will be from 5-6 p.m. and 3rd grade from 6-7 p.m.
 - iv. Please reach out to Amy if interested in coaching or participating.
- h. Basketball, 4th-6th: Mrs. Pitynger for Kevin Clifford



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- i. The district meeting occurred last week. The coach's meeting will be held on Wednesday November 8, 2017. Registrants will be contacted shortly after that, and practice schedules will be provided.
 - ii. Registration is officially closed, but late forms are being accepted so parents can still register their children for now.
 - i. Fall Social: Mrs. Longyshore and Mrs. Pitynger
 - i. Mrs. Pitynger reported that the Fall Social was a success and a lot of fun. Some middle school students who were Demarest alumni even visited.
 - ii. The new craft area was a big hit with students.
 - iii. Thank you to all the volunteers and participants.
 - iv. There were some issues with tickets due to an email error. Mrs. Longyshore contacted each affected person individually to rectify the situation. The Fall Social was oversold but was not crowded or a safety hazard.
 - v. The feedback received regarding previous Fall Socials was very much appreciated and helpful. The committee welcomes comments and suggestions for next year.
 - j. Pumpkin Patch: Dena Miller
 - i. Mrs. Miller reported the Pumpkin Patch was a success. All volunteers who signed up were in attendance, and members who hadn't signed up also volunteered.
 - ii. A Demarest father took photos of each class. Mrs. Todaro has them and will distribute them.
 - k. Recess Activity Program: Laurie Kessler
 - i. Mrs. Kessler requested volunteers for the Recess Activity Program. Volunteers can sign up for one day, a full week, or whatever works for their schedule and would be helpful and very appreciated.
 - ii. Mrs. Todaro stated that the classes have rainy day bags with various activities for days when recess must be held indoors.
 - i. Walk to School Day: Joann Schuster
 - i. Ms. Schuster shared that Walk to School day was a success.
 - ii. A new chair will be needed for 2018.
 - iii. She delivered donuts and coffee to the Bloomfield fire house to thank them for their time.
- XI. Old Business
- a. The HSA kitchen clean-up is complete. Members were asked to maintain it in a clean condition from here on out. (Check perishable expiration dates and discard expired items, clean/wash equipment and supplies and return them to the proper place, etc.)
- XII. New Business
- a. Mrs. Longyshore was approached by a parent about the possibility of Demarest HSA hosting a presentation by a local psychotherapist to discuss mental health issues and drug use in children. It would consist of a presentation and group discussion focusing on identifying the signs of mental health issues and drug use in children. The event will be free and for parents only. Though not endorsed by Demarest School or the Bloomfield BOE, it could be held at Demarest, pending submission of required forms. Mrs. Longyshore asked if members were interest,



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and a majority raised their hands to indicate yes. The presentation will be scheduled for later in November.

- b. Tom Heaney and Jessica Salinas both introduced themselves and indicated they were running for BOE. Each gave information on their background and what they would like to do as BOE members. They encouraged Demarest HSA members to vote and to keep involved in their children's education.

XIII. Announcements

- a. Next HSA Meeting: December 4, 2017 at 7:00 pm

XIV. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm