

MINUTES

Howe Elementary PTA 2021-2022

Date Sep 14, 2021 | Meeting called to order at 7:01 pm by Michele Rowland

In Attendance

<u>In-Person (Howe Auditorium)</u>	<u>In-Person (Howe Auditorium) continued</u>
Michele Rowland	Kari Maloney
Heather Hathy	Alisin McKown
Amy Grella	Andy Murrin
Michelle Murray	Jennifer Palastro
Aimee Danley	
Emily Smoller	<u>Online (Zoom)</u>
Steve DiTommaso	Amy Grella (PTA Second Vice President)
Heather Moore	Denis Skorskiy
Shana Slaybaugh	Diane Mittereder
Megan Truong	Kassandra Wadsworth
Thomas Truong	Olivia and Dylan and Jojo

Introduction of Board Members

Michele Rowland introduced herself as the PTA president, Dr. Murray as the principal of Howe Elementary and the Third Vice President of the PTA, Steve DiTommaso as the PTA Treasurer, Heather Hathy as the PTA First Vice President, Emily Smoller as the PTA Corresponding Secretary, Aimee Danley as the PTA Recording Secretary, and Amy Grella as the PTA Second Vice President.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the May meeting were reviewed and approved. A motion to approve minutes was made by Heather Hathy and seconded by Emily Smoller. All present voted in favor. APPROVED

PTA Officers Reports

Treasurer's Report – Steve DiTommaso

- The budget will be available on our website at: <https://howe.mtlsd.org/pta/budgets> with additional line item details. A budget review will be completed by December.
- Balance Update

- The PTA has a bank account at First National Bank as well as a PayPal account to collect and move funds. This balance update reflects the first two months of the fiscal year, which runs from July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.
- First national bank had a balance of \$12352 at the end of June
 - July transactions were a \$10 payment and \$0.20 earned in interest
 - July Revenue was \$0
 - The only transaction in August was \$0.22 earned in interest
 - August revenue came from the PTA membership drive and is still in Paypal account, to be transferred this month to First National account. Current balance is from 109 PTA memberships (@\$15 each) = \$1635, less \$80 in PayPal fees
- Brief Budget Presentation
 - Beginning cash - \$12352
 - Balance less carry-over - \$6138
 - Carry over expenses, including pending receipts for spring 2021 activities and cash on hand for starting next school year's activities/budget (total cost of carry over is \$6214)
 - Estimated Revenue 2021-2022:
 - Membership – net of \$1155 (estimated 136 paid members, less PTA dues/fees)
 - Activities – net of \$8350 from Howe Spirit Wear, Sunny Funny Fair, Read-a-thon, etc
 - Estimated Expenses:
 - Educational expenses -\$12781 (science fair, geode man, Howe's Got Talent, etc)
 - Charitable expenses - \$550 (angel fund, books, etc)
 - Administrative/operational expenditures - \$2312 (bulletin boards, hospitality, teacher appreciation)
 - The balance was spent down to zero, with every penny accounted for, and excess funds were added to the school enrichment line item in the education expenses category
 - In tonight's meeting, a motion was made by Dr. Murray to approve this budget and Steve seconded. All present voted in favor. **APPROVED**
 - Thank you to Steve and the previous treasurer Denis Skorskiy for keeping great records and for their efforts to create such a smooth transition in the role of treasurer!
- Audit Report (Amy Grella)
 - Completed this August by Amy Grella, Joyce Divine, and Tim Kellner
 - Audited all transactions and identified that having two people signing off on cash would be a best practice. Also, resulted in ongoing discussions of how best to handle money with the Sunny Funny Fair.

VP Report – Dr. Murray

- Thanks to all for coming and thank you to Michele Rowland and last year's board for their creative efforts to bring fun to a challenging year. Activities included a Halloween costume flipgrid, a jack-o-lantern contest, and bagged lunch for Teacher Appreciation instead of the usual sit down lunch.
- **Please think about joining our active PTA as a volunteer!**
- Friday is 5th grade trip to Camp Guyasuta, which is a trip that happens twice in the year for these students, once in the fall and once in the spring. 5th graders will work on team building and problem solving and have fun on the ropes course and zip line. The PTA paid \$1000 to subsidize this trip, with the final out-of-pocket cost per child being \$10. 5th graders will continue to fundraise throughout the year in order to help pay for the spring trip and several other activities designed to make their last year at Howe special. This will also mark the first field trip since the covid-19 pandemic began!

- Update on Maker Space – This space is a place for STEAM activities that focuses on developing collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills. It was not able to be used much last year, but is now being actively used again. In the past, a PTA parent has volunteered to help curate supplies. At tonight’s meeting, Amy Grella volunteered to do this role, thanks, Amy!
- At the beginning of November, the PTA has traditionally hosted a family fun night, which has been to watch a movie and have snacks in the auditorium. With pandemic restrictions, Dr. Murray is open to suggestions for what to do. A movie outside was suggested and Michele will check in with Family Fun Night chair.
- Dr. Murray was asked if Spooky Story Night be happening this year. This was traditionally done as part of the read-a-thon, which has moved to later in the year, so this is something to think about.

President Report – Michele

- Updates from PTA Council
 - This is a monthly meeting of the PTA presidents from the all of the Mt Lebanon schools.
 - One update: any events with food will need to use either prepackaged food or food served directly from a vendor (for example, a food truck)
 - This has significantly impacted the planning for the Sunny Funny Fair, since pizza by the slice and donuts were traditionally served by parent volunteers.
 - The Sunny Funny Fair committee has been working hard to find creative ways to work within this, so please come to the fair, buy lots of tickets, and eat lots of food!
- Committee Updates/Vacancies
 - **If you are a committee chair or homeroom parent, please be sure to sign up for a PTA membership!**
 - Committee vacancies:
 - Reflections
 - Spirit Center
 - School supplies
- Thank you to Hospitality Committee and Bulletin Board Committee
 - Thanks to the Hospitality Committee Chair, Laurie Cerci, for the staff luncheon, first day of school balloon banners, and the kindergarten Coffee and Kleenex events. Students, parents, and staff felt welcomed and celebrated, thanks Laurie!
 - Thanks to the birthday Bulletin Board Committee Chair, Cristina Danley, for creating fun displays to celebrate our students’ special day!
- Reimbursement Reminder
 - If you are on a committee, please submit reimbursements in a timely manner. The form to submit your receipts can be found here: <https://howe.mtisd.org/pta/forms>
- Go-Zone Reminders
 - Please remember to only cross the street in the crosswalks
 - Please do not park your vehicle and leave it in the Go-Zone
 - Please only pull into the green area for pick-up/drop-off, as the blue area is for handicap vehicles and the yellow area is for buses. If you find there is no space available in the green area, please do a loop around the block or park on a nearby street and walk to pick up your student.
- How to Find Us
 - <https://howe.mtisd.org/pta>
 - There is also a Facebook page, but it is used primarily to post pictures of events and not for official communication

- Some classes have a group Facebook page, these are private pages and are not monitored by the PTA or school. Please feel free to direct any questions about PTA events, volunteering, etc to Michele (michele.rowland29@gmail.com) or Dr. Murray (mmurray@mtlsd.net) directly.
- The PTA received several Thank You cards from school staff expressing their appreciation for gifts received/events. These were read at the meeting and the kind words were much appreciated by all.

Chair Reports/Recent Activities

PTA Membership Committee

- To date, there are 117 regular members 19 faculty that have signed up as PTA members.

Sunny Funny Fair

- This is an outdoor even taking place Oct 2 from 11-3. There will be 29 games (hospital, jail (with “police” in costume), bottle ring toss, dunk tank), a cake walk (no making cakes, cakes must be purchased), art, raffle baskets, and food (Molly’s, Vocelli’s, Mineo’s: individually wrapped chicken tenders and potato wedge, quarter subs, 30 small pizzas).
- A paper went home with a QR code that links you to the sign-up genius where donations and volunteers are being coordinated. **Help is needed with games, food, etc.**
- Using membership toolkit to sell all day tickets was suggested
- Is there a rain date or back up plan for rain? There isn’t usually. Something to think about.

Homeroom coordinators

- Kelly Lauth and Cyndi Benzel (Chairs) have all classrooms covered
- Holiday parties will be organized so activities will be more consistent between classes within a grade.

Corporate rewards/box tops

- Chair was not in attendance

Odyssey of the mind

- Chair was not in attendance, but please contact Leah Haywiser (rebaticus@comcast.net) if you have an interested student or want to coach, judge, or volunteer.

Spirit wear

- There will be a small amount of inventory at the Sunny Funny Fair, PTA make a small profit on sales of spirit wear. Attendees of the SFF can also order there. There will be hoodies, sweatshirts, and long sleeve tees as well as stickers for water bottles, laptops, etc.
- There is also the design-a-shirt contest for the 3rd 4th 5th grade to create one of the options for spirit wear.

5th grade committee

- No update

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

None

Announcements

- No School Thursday 9.16.21
- 5th Grade Camp Guyasuta 9.17.21
- Howe Picture Day 9.22.21 (Make Up 10.13.21)
- Sunny Funny Fair 10.2.21
- No School Monday 10.11.21
- A parent brought up a concern about kids eating on floor and that, with a shortened lunch period, they have the additional task of cleaning their tray. The parent was particularly concerned about hygiene with eating on the floor, even with towels to sit on. The parent asked if the auditorium or other spaces could be used to give seats to students while still providing proper spacing.
- Dr. Murray stated that she understood the concerns. She explained that over the summer a committee of teachers and staff met and tried many different scenarios to meet safety/space requirements. For every space where students eat, a staff member must be present, and there are lots of logistics to consider with lunches, including, timing, available staff, proper distancing, etc. This plan was the best one that the committee identified. The auditorium was not identified as a good space for this due to the difficulty of cleaning it after students have eaten there.
- The parent was advised that the PTA does not influence or make decisions about the school's lunch plans, and it was suggested to pass along his concerns to Dr. Irvin or Dr. Steinhauer, if he wished to do so.

Next Meeting

Oct 13, 2021, 7 pm

Motion to adjourn was made by Steve and seconded by Shana at 8:27 pm, and was passed unanimously.