

NEW YORK STATE CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS, INC.

-Branch of the National

H.B. Thompson Middle School

President and Co-President: Karen Ostrick & Tara Ginsburg

February 9, 2023

The meeting came to order, at 7:49pm with a quorum present. An attendance was taken by sign in sheet. We had distributed the minutes via email from our last PTA meeting in January for review. No one had comments, changes, or questions and the minutes stand as approved.

Treasurer's PTA Funds Report: Danielle Kurtzer: As of 1/22/2023:

Opening Balance, 12/22/2022	\$ 54,900.26
Income/Deposits	100.00
Expense/Cash Disbursements	<u>-0-</u>
Checking Balance	\$ 55,000.26
Saving Balance as of 1/22/23	<u>6,246.46</u>
TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 1/22/2023	\$ 61,246.72

All balances were reconciled to the bank statements. The books were reviewed and found to be in order by Nina Grieco. Thank you, Nina.

Correspondence: Kirsten Zollo - None

President's Report- Karen Ostrick / Tara Ginsburg

Happy February everyone!!! We know we told everyone in this past newsletter that Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow which if anyone loves spring definitely got their hopes down. But.... New York City's Staten Island Groundhog Chuck made his prediction for early spring so maybe we will get lucky!

Speaking of luck, these kids had an amazing January to kick off the new year! We would like to thank Shira Zatcoff and Liz Wolkoff for starting multicultural week off so strongly.

They brought in "Music of the Earth" which the children were engaged and entertained with. It was so fun to watch! Also, a special thank you to our amazing Multicultural Exposition parents and exceptional organizers, Ms. Classen and the HBT foreign language staff as well as our own PTSA representative Farrah Mozawalla.

We can tell you that the kids came in with a great appetite to eat AND learn all about the countries that were represented there. We saw a lot of happy faces! Based on our last meeting's vote, the PTSA was able to provide fruit, water, and coffee to all our incredible parents and staff who were at the event. Don't forget to check out the photos and videos that are posted on Instagram, Facebook and our PTSA website.

We are so proud of all the participants in this year's National PTA Reflections program. It was a true honor to see each child get called up and receive the recognition that was deserved. Thank you to Liza Oyaga for a great turnout with HBT. Liza will go over the theme for next year in her report.

Nominations are officially closed and being reviewed - A special thank you to Linda DiGeronimo for chairing and the rest of our amazing nominating committee, Min An, Amanda Schlan, Nina Greico, Xu Zhang, and Liza Oyaga for putting together the 2023/24 slate...we know it was not an easy task! Thank you again! More details will be shared in the committee report.

Council has a busy February and March planned, which is always so exciting. We have performances from the Syosset High School for Legally Blond coming up, the Harlem Wizards playing against the Syosset School District and a Pantry Drive for St. Edwards called "Re-Stock the Pantry" ... more details will be given the committee reports.

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Staff Recognition is coming up very soon in May. Our committee chairs will have an update on this for you at our next month's meeting so stay tuned. Thank you in advance, Adrienne Ashkin, Linda DiGeronimo, and Susan Suriel. We know it will be great.

A Friendly Reminder to our 8th grade parents – please watch your emails to start preparing for your 8th grader's transition to High School. An email already went out this week. We try to include a summary of items (but not all the information) in our weekly blasts. This information will include valuable resources to facilitate the course selection process, along with information concerning on-line opportunities to preview course offerings and have a clear understanding of programming choices for your rising 9th grader.

It leads us to our new business for tonight. We would like to make a motion to add a line of \$100 for the HBT PTSA to purchase a page in the yearbook for 2023 and all future years. Historically the yearbook had not been open to parents or PTSA purchasing pages in it, but as prices have increased that opportunity has been created. It would be lovely for our PTSA to also have a page letting all the graduates know we are very proud of their accomplishment in moving up to high school.

As a final reminder, we are still working on our HBT awards committee so once again, if you are interested, please reach out to us for details. With that, we will hand it off to Mr. Bonanno and his team for their report.

Principal's Report: Presented by Mr. Bonanno, Mr. Harrigan, Mr. Naraine and Ms. Waters

Mr. Bonanno – Hi everyone, welcome. We will work on the calendar next year and try to avoid having so much scheduled in one week (School Board Meeting, Parent Teacher conferences, PTSA meetings, etc.).

Staff Updates: Have some good staff news – Brian Bridgwood, one of our day custodial staff is retiring and his last day is tomorrow. Jeff Lilien had retired during the holidays. We know how great they have been all year. They and the rest of the staff appreciate the breakfast brought in by parents to show their appreciation of the staff as well. Mrs. Song returned from maternity leave last week and Mr. Gelfner who was substituting for her has went back into retirement. Ms. Leidner returned last week, and Ms. Rossi is returning next month. Ms. Cetinkaya went on maternity leave and is ready to have a baby in early March. Ms. Musto who works in our wellness center is also due soon. Great to have such good news.

Multicultural Week - It was amazing and hope you saw the pics on Instagram and our website. We will continue to build from there and all of the kids had never seen one like it before. It was by far the best combination of parent and child involvement.

Trips - 7th grade – The trip to see West Side Story at the Argyle Theatre is on 3/15 – Those who are staying behind will go through their normal day schedule.

8th grade – A trip to Queens is booked for some cultural items for 3/3. South Woods did the trip last week and it went great. Spanish students in 8th grade will have a trip on 3/22 (which was moved from the original date). This will explore Spanish entertainment and food in Huntington.

Birthday Wishes - Ms. Verre has been very busy with birthday wishes collection which is available until Tuesday 2/14. Please bring in any birthday party supplies.

PS I Love You Day – The school is decorated in purple hearts. This day was started by 2 girls who went to the Middle

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School in West Islip and their father committed suicide. He was a volunteer firefighter, local coach, etc. The girls started this organization to bring awareness to mental health issues and remind people how important they are, who their support people are and who they can chat with if having issues. The staff have spent a lot of time over the last 2 weeks alternating between crafty things and reminding them that they are never alone. During advisory, kids have been making lists of friends, adults, and school people they can go to. Tomorrow everyone will be dressed in purple and Dr. Rogers will visit a few classes as well.

Attendance – It is slowly getting better and the late arrivals in the am is getting better. The drop-off circle is still busy later, so please either take the bus or get here earlier to avoid your children being late.

Chromebooks – Frustration on both sides with broken chromebooks. Acknowledging several factors in play:

Bags we received were not as good as earlier ones pre-COVID. Many have broken straps, etc. which are helping to cause issues with broken chromebooks. The process to send out is not as quick as before, so we need patience.

Kids are getting careless. A lot of screens are cracking, etc. The district is trying not to charge people understanding accidents can happen, but kids need to be aware of being more careful.

Games – Kids are accessing games during school on the chromebooks. School is constantly reviewing programs to monitor access and restrict gaming websites. One is blocked, another pops up.

School is considering shutting off access at night between 12am and 6am. There should be no need to be on Chromebooks at this time.

** All of this will go out in emails.

Parent Questions/Statements:

(1) Allergies during 8th grade party – Can we have someone from the venue be a point-person whom the kids can check with during the party if they have any questions as to what is in the food and/or provide list of ingredients beforehand.

(2) 8th grade trip – Similar comment with regards to trip to the restaurant and allergies – The restaurant is super accommodating. Knowing what is in the items would be helpful for parents and children to discuss and make appropriate choices.

(3) Question – Amount of workload prior to vacation. The day before vacation the school is at about 60% of capacity. Therefore, not much will be done the day before vacations since many are gone.

(4) What do the kids do when not on a trip? – Kids will go through their normal schedule, and it will usually focus on completing catch-up work, focusing on prior work and questions, etc. The only time that is more difficult is when so many are gone for multiple days in D.C.

Standing Committee Reports

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8th Grade Committee - Dana Kuropatkin / Gabby Platz / Liza Oyaga / Adrienne Ashkin (Read by Tara Ginsburg) We wanted to remind the 8th grade parents that the deadline to place an ad in the yearbook is March 1st. You can order the yearbook and the ad at yearbookforever.com. We will design and sell lawn signs celebrating the 8th graders in March. This will help raise funds to cover the yearbook breakfast and any added expenses to make the commencement and the yearbook signing special. We will have the link to pre-order the lawn signs ready to go live on March 1st and parents will have until March 31st to order the signs. We will not be able to order extra signs so please make sure you order within the month of March. The yearbook breakfast, which is fully sponsored by the PTA, is currently scheduled for the 21st of June. We are also working on organizing the commencement with South Woods. We will have more news about this by April. General committee meeting date is coming soon. Feel free to reach out to the Committee Chairs for more information - they are Dana Kuropatkin, Gabby Platz, Liza Oyaga and Adrienne Ashkin.

Curriculum Enrichment - Liz Wolkoff / Shira Zatcoff (Read by Tara Ginsburg) Curriculum enrichment had two great assemblies in January. Our 8th graders learned about meteorology from weatherman John Marshall. Then, we had Music of the Earth for the entire school to kick off our first in-person multicultural week in 3 years. Coming up in March, our 8th grade students will be seeing "From the Fires: Voices from the Holocaust." And Ryan's Story, an anti-bullying presentation, will be coming for our 7th graders. We are hoping to plan a few more assemblies before the end of the school year.

Nominating Committee – Linda DiGeronimo the Nominating Committee has finished collecting nominations for the HBT PTA for the 2023-24 school year. We will be meeting next week to finalize the proposed slate, which will be emailed out to PTA members two weeks before the March meeting.

Membership – April Sontag- Thank you to all parents, students and staff members that joined the PTA. Thanks to all of you, we have met our membership goal for the year. Just a reminder that if you would like directory access, you must be a PTSA member (hint hint, Bar Mitzvah parents). It's never too early to join. Look out for the special membership rates that will come out this spring.

Parents Night Out – Liza Oyaga / Pam Bahiri (Read by Karen Ostrick) Looking to do a parent's night out. Working on getting a date together, will be offsite and will be an activity. Stay tuned and hope everyone can attend.

Reflections - Liza Oyaga (Read by Linda DiGeronimo) We had a very successful Reflections Program this year. Out of the 30 entries submitted, 7 students were selected by judges to compete in the first round of the Reflections Program at the Nassau Regional level. I am happy to announce that 2 out of the 7 entries from HBT moved on to be judged at the State level. Darren Tsai- moved on in the category of Photography and Emma Ming moved on in the category of Visual Arts. On Feb 6th, Syosset School District held a Reflections Program Award Ceremony at Southwood's where the 7 students from HBT received outstanding achievement certificates. There were over 100 entries across all Syosset schools and 22 moved on to compete at the state level. Next year's theme for the Reflection Program is "I am hopeful because...."

SEPTA - Jennifer Poitrimol - Our next meeting will be virtual via **zoom on Tuesday, February 28th** at 7:45pm. The presentation for the meeting will be "Preparing for your CSE Meeting - PPS Admin Team". Be on the lookout for the google form to sign up for the meeting. All existing members will be getting it in their email. A list of all meeting dates, locations and topics are on some of the tables.

What is SEPTA? SEPTA: Special Education Parent Teacher Association, SEPTA is a district wide PTA whose primary

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February 9, 2023

role is to promote acceptance and inclusion of all by providing resources and support to parents, teachers and children who receive special education services through an IEP, 504 Plan, related support services such as resource room, counseling, speech, occupational or physical therapy and students who are twice exceptional or gifted.

If you are not a SEPTA member and would like to attend the meeting, please email syossetnysepta@gmail.com to have your name included in the SEPTA meeting invite. Better yet, become a member!! It's never too early – see the membership forms and QR codes on the table or see me after the meeting. Please know that your membership goes directly to support our scholarships for deserving graduating SEPTA students.

SEPTA is also hosting virtual Yoga sessions on certain evenings. There are separate sessions for adults (\$10 each) and children (free). The next session is February 13th for adults and May 12th for grades k-6. See the flyers on the table for more information or sign up directly on Memberhub. <https://syossetsepta.memberhub.com/store>

School Supplies – Irina Sedighi Read by Karen Ostrick This year we are switching vendors to 1st Day School Supplies. Additional information about this vendor may be found at <https://1stdayschoolsupplies.com/index.php> once the system is live. We look forward to a very smooth process for both parents and staff for the coming year. This is a vendor that works with several of the elementary schools in the district and the feedback we have is that customer service and attention to detail is a priority. We intend to market to the parents and be ready for ordering by April. The deadline for ordering will be May 31, 2023, as we would like to have the supply kits delivered to the home before the end of this school year.

Council Committee Updates:

Budget - Jessica Goldberg (Read by Tara Ginsburg) Budget Information Sessions are taking place on March 13 and April 18. All information sessions take place at 8 pm, right before the Board of Ed meetings. These information sessions are really very helpful to understanding the upcoming District budget. Detailed information about the upcoming budget vote (including budget presentations from information sessions) are posted to the district website - [2022-2023 Budget Information](#). As a reminder, the Annual District Election and Budget Vote takes place on Tuesday, May 16, 2023.

Communications Conference – Pam Bahiri – None

Cultural Unity – Farrah Mozawalla – None

Health, Nutrition & Safety – Gabby Platz (Read by Karen Ostrick) Refer to Arts in Education section for the details on Ryan's Story.

Parent Resource Group – Xu Zhang – None

School & Community – Shany Park St. Edwards food drive - "Restock the Pantry" - February 1st - March 1st – There is a drop box in the lobby, or you can go online and order directly. Flyers were on the table with the link to order and with a list of supplies needed.

Scholarship Fund - Jessica Goldberg (Read by Tara Ginsburg) Donations can **still** be made to the Fund, members can advertise their business by taking an ad in the musical playbill or you can congratulate their child, friend of family or neighbor who may be participating in the musical by purchasing an ad. Legally Blonde (March 9-March 12). Check your emails for the flyer.

Ways and means - Linda DiGeronimo Tickets for the Harlem Wizards game will go on sale online on February 15 at 9pm. The link will be sent out once the flyer is approved by the district. We are still looking for PTA and staff volunteers for both games.

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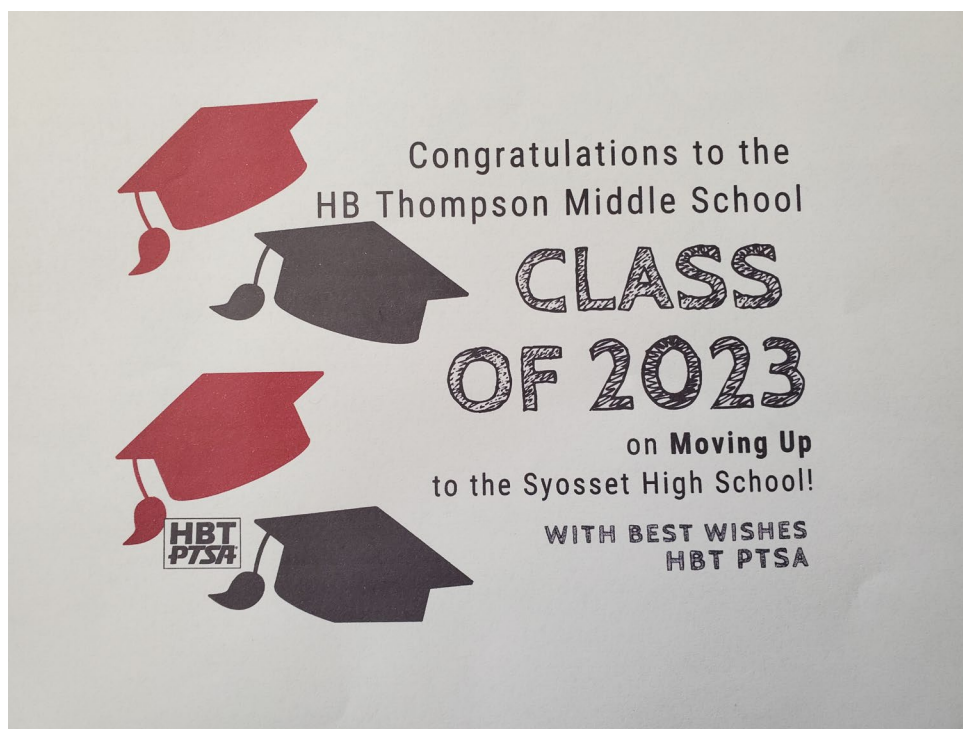
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New Business – Budget Modification - Karen Ostrick - As many of you know, from time to time, we need to vote at our PTSA meetings. In order to vote we will need a quorum of 14 members. Please remember that you may only vote if you have a PTSA membership for this school year. As Co-Presidents, we can only vote together as one vote. Traditionally presidents do not vote unless there is a need to break a vote that is tied. When we conduct a vote, a motion will be made. If the motion is coming out of committee it will not need a second. As mentioned during the president's report, we would like to make a motion to add a line of \$100 for the HBT PTSA to purchase a page in the yearbook for 2023 and all future years. There was no discussion, and more than 14 members raised their hand in favor. No one opposed or abstained. The motion is passed unanimously.



I. Dates to Remember – read by Tara Ginsburg

Finally, we are up to our dates to remember. Please keep an eye on our dates to remember in our weekly updates, Facebook and Instagram for any additional date changes between now and our next meeting.

- **February 13** - SEPTA Yoga and Meditation Class
- **February 13** - Harlem Wizards visit HBT 6th graders.
- **February 15** - Harlem Wizards Tickets, 9pm - On Sale!
- **February 20-24** - School Closed
- **February 28** - SEPTA Meeting - via Zoom
- **March 9-12** - Legally Blond - SHS production
- **March 13** - Board of Education and Budget Meeting, 8pm, SW
- **March 14** - **PTSA Meeting, 7:45pm HBT Cafeteria**

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There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.

Recorded by Jennifer Poitrimol, Recording Secretary

Attendees:

Karen Ostrick	April Sontag	Roseanne Ruppel
Tara Ginsburg	Shulian Liang	Shany Park
Mr. Bonanno	Linda DiGeronimo	Brian Grieco
Mr. Harrigan	Jennifer Biondo	Jack Ostrick
Mr. Naraine	Kirsten Zollo	Jennifer Palaganas
Ms. Waters	Rachael Lee	Samantha Newman
Jennifer Poitrimol	Nina Grieco	Melissa Capie
Michelle Verre		

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HBT PTSA's General Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Meeting Date:

Name	Student Grade	Contact Email
Melissa Capie	7th	melissa.capie@gmail
Linda DiGerolamo	6, 8	ladipierzo@gmail.com
April Sontag	7	april.sontag@portfolio shop.com
Nina Grieco	7	Ninagrieco@gmail.com
Shulian Liang	8	SL-Zheng@yahoo.com
Rosanne Ruppel	8	Rosand Paul@aol.com
Shany Park	7	shanyparkland@yahoo.com
Brian Grieco	7	brian@cesumcapital.com
Jennifer Brondo	6	jted@hotmail.com
Kirsten Zello	7	kirsten@RopedropIsrael
Jennifer Portimof	7	jportimof@gmail.com
Jennifer Palaganas	8	jennykp922@gmail.com
Rachael Lee	6	hyeryunii@gmail.com
Samantha Newman	8	sambudnick1@gmail.com
Michelle Verre		