

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
April 4, 2023

The meeting came to order at 10:05 am with a quorum present (majority of the board - 14 members - Section 4 of Article 11). Attendance will be taken by sign in sheet. Flyers were left on the tables regarding upcoming events in our district.

I. Approve minutes from the March 2023 meeting:

We had distributed the minutes via email from our last PTA meeting in March for review as well as copies on the table today. No one had any comments, changes, or questions. The minutes stand as approved. Thank you.

II. Treasurer's PTA Funds Report: Danielle Kurtzer: As of 3/22/2023: (Read by Karen Ostrick)

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Opening Balance, 2/23/2023 | \$ 51,515.15 |
| Income/Deposits | 1,556.41 |
| Expense/Cash Disbursements | <u>-0-</u> |
| Checking Balance | \$ 53,071.56 |
| | |
| Saving Balance as of 3/23/23 | <u>6,247.14</u> |
| | |
| TOTAL Cash on Hand as of 3/22/2023 | \$ 59,318.70 |

All balances were reconciled to the bank statements. No uncleared transactions or deposits in transit. The books were reviewed and found to be in order by Jennifer Poitrimol. Thank you, Jen.

III. Correspondence: Kirsten Zollo – Letter from The Syosset Scholarship Fund (Read by Jen Poitrimol)

The Syosset Scholarship Fund, Inc.

January 31, 2023

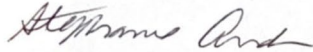
H.B. Thompson PTSA
98 Ann Drive
Syosset, NY 11791

Dear HBT PTA:

On behalf of the Syosset Scholarship Fund Administrators and the Syosset High School seniors, who will be the beneficiaries of a PTA-STA Scholarship, I would like to thank you for your generous donation of \$100 to the Syosset Scholarship Fund, Inc.

Again, thank you for your support!

Sincerely,



Stephanie Avidon
President

Your contribution to this organization is tax deductible.

IV. President's Report- Karen Ostrick / Tara Ginsburg

If April showers bring May flowers. What do May flowers bring? ALLERGIES!! Thought we would start with a fun one today and wake everyone up at 10am. 😊 So, with that, welcome to our April Meeting. Thank you for attending today, we know daytime meetings can be tough. We would like to give a big shout out to the administration and curriculum enrichment committee for helping to organize the "Ryan's story" presentation. It was a very necessary subject for the 7th graders to hear. Once again, if you or anyone you know from HBT has any questions regarding it, please reach out to the HBT guidance department. We wanted to kick it off with our T-shirt Fundraiser. We are selling our HBT Logo t-shirts to **incoming students** next year. The sale has already begun so check out the MemberHub store. There is limited supply so order early. For anyone that has ordered through our MemberHub site we will be distributing at the school as we get orders so keep a lookout for that. If you have any questions please reach out to Jen Biondo. If you ordered T-shirts you will be able to pick them up after break. Jen will discuss our other ongoing spirit wear fundraisers. We are busy planning for the end of year with spring events and planning for our 8th grade events. Thank you to everyone who continues to support our various fundraisers. They go directly to fund our events here at the school. As we begin to plan for next year, please be on the lookout for committee sign-up sheets. Helping plan these fundraisers and events help create wonderful memories not only for our children but for us as well. You get to meet other wonderful HBT families while working together to plan these events. Please know that our committees are made up of plenty of working parents, so the flexibility and opportunities are there. Although, you do need to be a member to participate or chair a committee. We are also heading into awards season. If you would like to nominate a parent, teacher or staff member who has contributed to the PTSA this year or over the years, please let us know! We are always especially interested in acknowledging our 8th grade parents that are leaving the HBT family! We will be having a vote later on in this meeting. The vote is whether or not we will support the 2023-2024 School District Budget. Please note that this is not the actual vote for the budget (that takes place at polling locations on Tuesday, May 16th). This vote is for whether our unit, the HBT PTSA, supports the District's proposed 2023-2024 budget. The results of our vote then get communicated to the Syosset Council of PTAs and they accumulate the results of all the units in the district to determine whether Council can say its member units support the budget. With that, I will hand it off to Mr. Bonanno and the assistant principals for their report.

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

Mr. Bonanno – Happy spring everyone and good morning. Thank you Ms. Verre, Ms. Pross, Mr. Bostrom and others for attending and helping us get to a quorum.

Roads - The road construction continues to be tough and the administration is giving kids the benefit of the doubt this week on late arrivals. Hopefully we will be back to normal when we return from break. Again, it would be easier if everyone took the buses.

Play – Seussical the Musical, Jr. – It was a great success and it was great to see how many kids got involved. A lot goes into it between staff and children and great to see everything come together.

Spring Sports - They are underway and many evenings it is still freezing out there. It's not pleasant, but hang in there.....it will warm up!

Last day before break – Trying to get a good balance of instruction and meaningful time even with the absences. If there is a movie being played, there is a curricular expectation to it. There can be tests, different things, etc. on the last day before break. On average, there are approximately 20% of students absent and/or signed out early. It is always a balancing act to not make it a wasted day for those that remain in class.

May 4th – Is orientation night for the incoming 5th graders. Therefore, there is an early start time for the PTSA meeting – starts at 7:00pm.

Mr. Naraine - ELA exams are on the 19th and 20th (Wed and Thurs when we return from break), and we are off Friday for Eid. Please note that this year, Part I includes writing (used to be just multiple choice). These are unlimited time tests and some kids want to do well and therefore can take much longer to take them than necessary/valuable. The window to take the tests is 8-10:30. On Part II last year, some went all the way to 12:00. Some movement had to be done to accommodate those taking longer to take the tests (had to move from classroom to classroom for the wave).

Opt-Out – Please send any opt-out emails now (HBT clerical email address). The sooner, the better so that they can plan accordingly. If opting out, classes begin at 10:30. If students arrive at regular time, they will be seated in the cafeteria until 10:30, when classes begin.

Mr. Harrigan –We had Ryan's Story last week. It was a very powerful presentation and it is especially hard for parents to sit through. It is good to see how impactful it is for our students as well. For the past few months, there have been no reports on the "Sandy Hook App". We reminded the students of it and tied in Ryan's story with the app through Advisory. We reminded the kids of the app for the ability to make anonymous reports. Students are now seeing it again as a place to go and have since seen an uptick in reports again. They were told to use it when they are concerned for their own mental health, concerned about friends, concerned about cyber bullying, etc.

7th grade – book day – All students have been reading Count Me In and the author, Varsha Bajaj came in to do the presentation and will be meeting with smaller groups of students throughout the day.

Parent Questions/Statements:

- (1) **Sports/Golf Team** – If there is no bussing available for a particular sport (relying on parent transportation), if the parents cannot drive them to certain outings, will it be held against them (the child)? *Answer – No.* The coaches are aware of those situations and lack of attendance will not be held against the child.
- (2) **Lunch** – There is a concern over the quality of the food. One incident the parent heard was that the cafeteria was selling expired chips (2 for 1), etc. Chicken is also sometimes undercooked (child not feeling well after eating). *Answer – With respect to the chips, they weren't expired, but the "best by" date for Doritos was that specific day they had the sale.* If there is ever an issue with the food, we ask the children to show us the problem so they can rectify it. The staff will follow up to ensure the chicken is appropriately cooked. **Follow up (next day) - All of the**

chicken, which is Tyson, is pre-cooked, so there's definitely no raw food. We will just keep letting kids know if they have any concerns to speak up here!

VI. Standing Committee Reports

A. 8th Grade Committee - Dana Kuropatkin / Gabby Platz / Liza Oyaga / Adrienne Ashkin (Read by Adrienne) (Read by Karen Ostrick)

We are selling 8th grade graduation lawn signs through April 11th. Pick up will be in May, most likely at HBT after school, but we will send an email out with details. More information coming soon on the date. Lawn Signs Link -> <https://hbt.memberhub.com/store> and the 8th Grade Breakfast will be on 6/21.

B. Curriculum Enrichment - Liz Wolkoff / Shira Zatzoff (Read by Liz)

Last month, the Arts and Ed had two programs...one for our 8th grade and one for our 7th grade. Our 8th graders had a theater presentation from Theatre Three of From the Fires: Voices of the Holocaust, which traces the life of Rachel Gold, a Berlin teenager and her experiences from 1937-1945. It shows her life through the reign of Hitler and the persecution of the Jewish people. The presentation coincides with their Social Studies classes beginning to study the Holocaust as well as antisemitism. This presentation was incredibly moving for all of the kids and it is one that is presented all over Long Island at synagogues, churches and community centers and we were lucky to be able to book them into our curriculum in person this year.

Our 7th graders last week had a presentation which was sponsored by the Syosset Council of PTAs. This one was called Ryan's Story and was presented to us by John Halligan who lost his son to suicide in 2003. It was an inspirational presentation which showed kids how to make positive decisions and changes in their lives in order to reduce cyber bullying, bullying in general, how to treat others with respect and how to use their voice to stop others from getting bullied and stand up for themselves. In May, our 6th graders will be meeting Darren Sardelli who not only grew up on Long Island but still lives here and will present an Assembly called the Power of Words. He will spend part of his day in small groups in our library with our 6th graders and their English teachers. He is an award-winning poet and author who has written over 25 books. His message is how to empower and educate with poetry. His two most popular books are Galaxy Pizza and Meteor Pie and What If? His poems have been featured on Radio Disney. We look forward to spending the day with him.

C. Membership – April Sontag (Read by Karen Ostrick)

Many thanks again to parents, students, and staff members that supported the HBT PTSA by being a member. Not only are you supporting the many programs and efforts by the PTSA that our children love, you also gain access to the student directory. It's never too early to sign up. Be on the lookout for the membership specials for the 2023-2024 school year.

D. SEPTA - Jennifer Poitrimol

We look forward to seeing everyone at SEPTA's April meeting IN PERSON at Walt Whitman Elementary School on Thursday 4/27/23 at 7:45 pm. We will have two presentations: (1) Understanding Students with Autism and How to Support all Students Behaviorally - Will McCabe and Marissa DeGrottole and (2) Dr. Ann Winter, OTR/L, OTD, Certified Pilates Instructor, Certified in Pilates for Neurological Conditions, Now offering 1:1 Therapeutic Pilates classes for teens and young adults. Members, make sure to pick up your membership discount cards at the meetings or at the office of your local school. We are inching closer to our goal - please still join, as it is never too late and your dues help fund scholarships for our SEPTA graduating students (discount cards are good thru 10/2023). The more members we can get this spring, the more scholarships we can distribute in June! Check out our newsletters (for members only) that have great information from places like Tommy's Friends Speed Friending and how to access services via "The Front Door" with the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). Lastly, our next Parent Group meeting is on Wednesday, April 19th at 8:00pm via zoom. Membership forms and QR codes are on the tables.

E. School Supplies – Irina Sedighi (Read by Karen Ostrick)

The school supplies electronic order forms through 1st Day school supplies are ready to go and will be sent out after we return from break. They will be available for all students entering 6th, 7th and 8th grade with lots of optional items. Please remember this is a fundraiser as well as an effortless way to get your school supplies.

F. Spirit wear – Jen Biondo

Our next spirit wear sale will be in May from 1st Place Sportswear. Information will come out about ordering after the May PTSA meeting. Incoming students will have spirit wear available starting now on the MemberHub site. There will be a lot of different styles of clothing and accessories for reasonable prices. Everything is HBT-related and will be ongoing on a monthly basis.

G. Staff Recognition - Adrienne Ashkin, Linda DiGeronimo, or Susan Suriel (Read by Karen Ostrick)

Our outdoor "Appreciation Luncheon" to our teachers and staff will be held on May 24th and we are asking for your help via donations! Thank you to everyone who has already donated. We want to ensure our staff of 175 people can get the best lunch and gifts as possible. Please share the contribution link that we have sent out via email with all your HBT friends so that no one misses out. We are only at 80% of our goal - please use the following link to donate:

<https://hbtmsdonations.memberhub.gives/staffrec23>

H. Council Committee Updates:

1. Annual Budget Vote & Trustee Elections - Jessica Goldberg

The final Budget Information Session is taking place April 18 in South Woods Middle School. 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 under [2022-2023 Budget Information](#). You can search for it on the website or use the link in this month's minutes. As a reminder, the Annual District Election and Budget Vote takes place on **Tuesday, May 16, 2023**. Should there be more than three candidates running for the Board of Education this year, Syosset Council of PTAs will host an in-person **Know Your Candidate Forum** on [Wednesday, May 3 at 7:30 pm](#) in the South Woods auditorium. Everyone in the community is encouraged and invited to attend. It will NOT be streamed. As a 501(c)(3) the Syosset Council of PTAs must ensure the forum is nonpartisan. For that reason the forum will cover a broad range of issues, each candidate will be given equal time to present their views on the issues discussed and the moderator will stay neutral and will not imply approval or disapproval of the candidates. To further ensure the process is nonpartisan and to limit the Syosset Council of PTAs interactions with the candidates prior to the forum and election, Syosset Council of PTAs will not develop or work with the candidates on candidate biographies. A one page flyer with candidate names and ballot positions will be distributed in late April. Candidates will distribute their own biographies and campaign materials using their own platforms.

2. Communications Conference – Pam Bahiri – None

3. Cultural Unity – Farrah Mozawalla (Read by Tara Ginsburg)

Syosset Council of PTAs Cultural Unity Committee will be holding the second annual Celebration of Culture program. We invite all students in the district to help us celebrate the many cultures in our community by submitting a piece of literature, art, digital art, photography or dance/music composition that shares what culture means to them. Feel free to share a special holiday, occasion, tradition, toy, food, or anything that is special to you. Each entry will earn a ticket into a raffle where there will be a number of random winners for a gift card prize. There will be an in-person showcase at the end of the year to see all the wonderful entries. Deadline is April 24.

4. Health, Nutrition & Safety – Gabby Platz – None

5. Parent Resource Group – Xu Zhang – None

6. School & Community – Shany Park – None

7. Scholarship Fund - Jessica Goldberg – None

8. Ways and means - Linda DiGeronimo – None

VII. Old Business – None

VIII. New Business – Annual District Budget Vote of Support – Tara Ginsburg / Karen Ostrick

As many of you know from time to time, we need to vote at our PTA/PTSA meetings. In order to have a vote we will need a quorum of 14 members. Please remember that you may only vote if you have a PTSA membership for this 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 a committee it will not need a second. The person making the motion will explain their motion briefly and then we will ask if there are any questions or discussion. We will restate the motion and conduct the vote accordingly. *We will vote by a show of hands.* VOTE: HBT PTSA Support of the Annual District Budget: In order for a council to take a position on the district budget in the name of the council, an instructed vote is required. Each unit's general membership takes a vote and each unit then has one vote on the council. If there is a dissenting unit their vote can be listed as such. We need to take a vote now on whether our unit supports the proposed Syosset District 2023-2024 budget. Please note this does not ask for nor does it need to indicate how you will personally vote on May 16. We voted on the HBT PTSA supporting the proposed Syosset District 2023-2024 budget? It was a unanimous vote in favor. The HBT PTSA voted to *support* the proposed Syosset District 2023-2024 budget. We will report our unit's *support* at the April Syosset Council of PTAs meeting.

IX. New Business – Tara Ginsburg

We have received some concerns from people about the safety of the campus. We will keep monitoring it every month. The team here at HBT is working to enhance the safety of the campus. There are some challenges, as the parking lot is technically a public road. Concerns have been raised about people walking on the grounds during school hours, walking their dogs, the fencing (or lack thereof) around the campus and the lack of a true vestibule to keep the security guard safe and separated from within the building.

X. Dates to Remember – 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.

- April 5 - End of 3rd marking period.
- April 6-14 - School Closed
- April 11 – 8th Grade Graduate Lawn Sign Sale Deadline
- April 17 - PTA General Council Meeting, 7:45pm SHS
- April 18 - Monthly Board of Education Mtg and Final Budget Information Meeting #3 at 8pm, SW Auditorium
- April 21- School Closed
- April 24- Celebration of Culture submission Deadline
- April 27- SEPTA Meeting, Walt Whitman, 7:45pm
- April 28 - HBT PTSA Parent, Teacher or Staff Award Nomination Deadline

