

Holmes PTO Exec Board Meeting Minutes February 12, 2024

Principal Update

- Souper Bowl of Caring resulted in collecting more than 1,000 items of food for Person to Person. The team of classes with the most cans won extra recess.
- Kindness week will kick off with an assembly on February 12. Classes are reading *The Sound of Kindness*, and teachers will talk to students about how to create kindness. DHS students created a video for elementary students to talk about kindness and their experience in elementary school. The video was shown during the Kindness Week assembly. Student Council created hearts with all student, teacher and administrative names and hung all around the school.
- H Factor is taking place in March. Would like to help students participating in the H Factor navigate not practicing their act during school so that other students aren't feeling left out. Want to ensure it's a positive experience for everyone.
- New state legislation on reading instruction includes a strong push to no longer use the Teacher's College program and to ensure all components of reading instruction is included (Holmes is compliant). Programs approved by the state include Basal readers so that everyone is reading the same book, but a district-wide committee is in place to figure out how to use the required program and also incorporate components from the Teacher's College program as well. The goal of the committee is to help maintain integrity to whatever is decided. The new state-mandated program will be in place for 2025.

Co-Chair Update

- Budget (Final Vote at BOE Meeting tomorrow, 2/13 at 7pm) – continue to encourage parent outreach.
- HHR funding has been approved and projects are moving forward. The goal is for work to begin the day after school ends and to still be on track for a two-year project.
- CDSP Nominating is hoping to have reps from all schools.
- A mental health organization has reached out to ask CDSP/PTOs to sponsor an event that will focus on belonging and identity development and take place at the Darien Library. Sponsorship would not be financial, rather the organization would like to use PTO channels to spread the word to encourage attendance.
- A signup sheet went out to exec board for Holmes attendance at upcoming BOE meetings (2/27 and 4/23).

Vice Chair Update

- After February break the nominating process will start to secure the slate for next year. Emails will go out to room parents with information on end of year collections.
- Room parent help with March Art Show – help send out information on opening night for parents to attend with students to showcase artwork.

Treasurer Update

- Enrichment STEM program with DHS was an unexpected expense and treasurers are inquiring whether charge is out of cap as it was an equal expense to all schools. Supplies/materials for the program have been ordered by the schools in the past, but this year each school had to pay individually for supplies and the expense was higher than expected. Inquiring about discrepancy in pricing versus when items were purchased by schools last year.
- Treasurers are working with CDSP on costs related to school events and have submitted an inquiry into costs/pricing for SSO and police.

Enrichment Update

- The upcoming author visit will include a small group lunch with the author. Committee working to determine best way to have students selected for the lunch and brainstormed creating a raffle to determine which students get to meet with the author, or potentially incorporate Mrs. Carsten's literary club. The PTO and Paula will give more thought to the best way to organize. Treasurer will help set up book order form through Membership Toolkit or have Barrett Bookstore handle orders.
- Looking into having an Irish step dancing company come in to perform around St. Patrick's Day. The performance may require a small donation.
- Feb 28 and 29 – Dance China is performing for students

Fundraising Update

- Annual Appeal relaunched with 3/11 deadline. Participation is currently at 25% and would love to see more families participate to reach goal.
- Spring Cocktail Party ticket sales are now open Membership Toolkit, and there is an incentive to purchase with raffle of a massage gift certificate. The Fundraising Committee is hoping for assistance with cultivating silent auction prizes and wine pull donations.
- Upcoming events include a March paddle event at MSX and a yoga class for Holmes parents.

Special Education Update

- CDSP is asking if schools can make it clear that parents can attend meetings in person or via Zoom. Holmes is very clear in communications that meetings may be attended either way. Holmes also is on top of tracking to ensure that students are receiving services.

DEI Update

- Conversation with Paula, Co-Chairs and DEI Committee to discuss frequency of big events such as Heritage Night and Outdoor Movie Night. Proposing doing these events every other year (trading off) to keep it fresh.