

Masterman HSA Board Meeting

Thursday, 2.7.2019

Attendees

Judy Mester, Michal Leventhal, Michael Hoffberg, Andrea Shuster, Barbara Dallao, Kristin McKeown, Marjorie Brunner, Celmouth A. Stewart, Madhu Narula, Natasha Andjelkovic, Amy Weidner, Fritz Dietel, Reshma Bennur, Megan King, Sam Khalifa, Suzanne Hatfield, Michelle Brown-Nevers, Alecia Burke, Ray Maisano, Liza Herzog, Avigail Milder, Tina Kluetmeier

Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm.

Motion made by Barbara Dallao and seconded by Andrea Shuster to approve meeting minutes of January. The motion passed and the meeting minutes were approved.

Principal's Report: - Jessica Brown provided the following report, read by Judy Mester

- There will be an opportunity to hear from a number of mental health professional from Jefferson Hospital and The Light Program who will be discussing topics such as stress management, anxiety, how to speak with your children and monitoring social media. Addendum: the date will be Thursday, February 21st in the IMC.

Barbara Dallao asked for input from Ms. Brown regarding information in the newspaper stating the SDP supports the Outward Bound (peer-counseling) program in the City of Philadelphia. The question was repeated: will the school take on the cost of this program at Masterman?

President's Report: - Judy Mester

- Judy presented that the MHSA received a request from the Office of Inspector General as a review of MHSA's records in December. The due date for the period of the past 3-years to be provided to the OIG was January 16th. Further information about financial reports was requested and due by February 3rd. This information was provided and the MHSA is waiting to hear back from the OIG.
- The Nominating Committee put out a call in the newsletter asking for anyone interested in serving on the Executive Board to please reply to the Nominating Committee by Feb 23rd.

Officer's Reports:

Vice Presidents' Report:

Kristin McKeown reported:

- Auction tickets are now on sale.
- The play needs volunteers to help make costumes.
- The last of the Staff Grant requests have been ordered, namely Chromebooks and receipts are coming in.

Barbara Dallao reported:

- SAC update as both an elected member of the SAC and the HSA representative to the SAC:
 - The District recommends that every Principal have a school budget meeting, akin to a strategic planning meeting, with its constituents every year in preparation for developing the school's budget. The School Budget Meeting will be hosted next Tuesday, February 19th at the next SAC meeting 4:45-6pm in the Library. All are encouraged to attend.
 - The Principal must also provide a School Improvement Plan which can be found on Masterman's website. Go to "About". If you click on "Students" you can see all the clubs listed for both Middle School and High School and review the full budget as well.
 - The School Progress Report is available on the Office of Family and Community Engagement page of the School District website.
 - SAC elections are upcoming. They are on 2-year cycles.
- The Middle States Colloquium was held last week. Masterman is involved in a 7-year cycle called Middle States which is a distinction similar to being a Blue Ribbon School. A school has to be invited to participate and must meet certain criteria in order to receive accreditation, which Masterman has received. Masterman's topic in Middle States is about building community. In year 5 (this year) the school must hold an open meeting, inviting other schools to attend. The theme was "Continuing Excellence". Private schools and Central High School attended the program as well as a Middle States Committee person to oversee the progress made.

Treasurer's Report - Andrea Shuster

- Andi Shuster reported that since the District's approval of the funds MHSAs budgeted to pay for new technology for the school (\$70,000.00), Chromebook carts were ordered and computers are on order by the District. The District must order the equipment, HSA funds the purchases.
- The Year-End Campaign was very successful, budgeting for \$15,000.00. \$26,000.00 was raised in total.
- Membership Drive budgeted for \$80,000.00 and this amount will be reached as checks continue to arrive.
- Andi is working on Administrative costs and monies coming in for the Auction.
- Andi stated that the MHSAs pay for the Take the Lead program for the 11th grade, a ballroom dancing instruction through the Physical Education Department. Andi reported that tomorrow, Feb 8th, there will be a performance by the 11th graders to the High School at 1:37pm. 11th grade parents are invited to attend. The program will take place in the gym.

Recording Secretary's Report - Michal Leventhal

- Michal Leventhal reported that the latest version of the Calendar was provided at this meeting. There are still some dates to be determined and as they become finalized they will be posted in the newsletter. All MHSA meetings are on the Calendar.
- There was an addition made to the Bylaws under the Rooftop and Open Spaces Committee. This Committee was approved by the Board last year and was added to the Bylaws at that time. The description of the Committee was pending and is now included in the Bylaws under Section 11.5.11.

Committee Reports:

a. *Academic Affairs* - April Meidt provided report that the Coffee with the Principal had a great turn-out on January 11th with over 50 people attending. She sent a thank you to Ms. Brown and the counselors. Jeanette Dumas was working with the counselors on College night, held last evening, February 6th.

b. *Auction* - Natasha Andjelkovich reported that:

- the Auction has kicked off ticket sales with already \$2400.00 raised.
- \$22,000.00 has been raised in total revenues including tickets, sponsorship and pledges.
- The Committee is working with Rodeph Shalom on a Wifi plan.
- Early bird prices for tickets are good until March 2nd.
- The deadline for donation of items is March 15th. For sponsors the deadline is February 28th. Donations of food are always needed.
- To contact the Committee use the following email address: auction@mastermanhsa.org.
- People can donate additionally toward the matching pledge on the ticket sales page.

c. *Beautification* - Fritz Dietel reported that the Spring Clean Up Day's date is either going to be April 27th or May 4th and confirmation is pending Ms. Brown's approval.

d. *Business Liaison* - Celmouth Stewart reported on the following:

- A PDF of the current brochure was sent to committee members and to Avigail Milder for review and feedback/input. Avigail asked if a meeting could be scheduled for an in-person opportunity to brainstorm about the messaging of the brochure. The recommendation was also made to reach out to the community to find parents/family members with skills in this area including copywriting. Barbara Dallao recommended including students in the process.
- Stu reported that the photo shoot is on hold until the brochure becomes more ironed out.
- Stu reported that the electronic list of business sponsors and partnerships was sent to Judy Mester, President for review. The goal would be to update the list every 6 months and to add alumni and entertainers.

e. *Communications* - Mike Hoffberg reported on the following:

- the Directory is going for layout tomorrow or Saturday and then to the Printer after proofreading.
 - The question was raised as to why the Directory is coming out so late and why not electronic. The issue lies in the fact that the information is not provided by the school, the MHSA must compile information from the Membership form, organize the data

including opt-out information. The goal is to have the Directory out by Thanksgiving and we will work toward this for the next year. The current goal is to have the Directory out asap.

f. *High School Liaison* – Madhu Narula reported:

- Junior Prom information is being solidified and that once formalized there will be a parent happy hour held near the location of the prom.
- The committee is also beginning to prepare for the graduation reception. Barbara Dallao added that she has provided the SOP for High School Graduation reception preparations.
- The Soph Hop will be held March 29th.

g. *Hospitality* - No new report

h. *Library* - No new report

i. *Logo* - Reshma Bennur reported:

- There was a meeting held last Friday, February 1st with the Student Government Association, with whom MHSA has a partnership. The students are permitted to sell merchandise and receive a portion of the profits for SGA sales. The meeting was helpful to streamline the process.
- Students will sell merchandise at the play and will make a profit which will support the play. MHSA proceeds will be donated to the play as well.
- The students want to redesign the Logo of Masterman. MHSA invited them to present their design idea at the March meeting, or thereafter.
 - Avigail Milder recommended that it is time to modernize the dragon mascot image and provided several versions of images readily available upon a search. This would also be timely for the Business Liaison Committees' brochure.

j. *Membership* - No new report.

k. *Middle School Liaison* - Jane Lim Shah provided report that she is working on the 8th grade graduation reception and requested that 7th grade parents reach out to help with this event by emailing her. Ms. Conzelman volunteered her class for extra support. Donations will be needed and Jane will send out a Sign Up Genius.

l. *Orientation* - No new report.

m. *Rooftop and Open Spaces* - Avigail Milder reported:

- There is, as yet, no update on the roof repair project, only knowledge that the SDP has been to the building for observation.
- MHSA has heard from the District's legal department with guidance regarding the proposal provided by the Schrader Group. The MHSA President is permitted to sign the proposal in order to fund the assessment by the vendor but the vendor must obtain permission to enter the building from the District and provide a certificate of insurance. The Schrader Group is expected to complete these two requirements by the end of this week. Once completed the MHSA can sign the proposal and the Treasurer can write the check. Judy Mester asked that the vendor send a W-9 to the Treasurer.

n. *Social* - Michelle Brown-Nevers reported that the International Family Dinner, held January 17th, was very successful with over 200 families in attendance. There was student participation with performances by the Junior Class under the Take The Lead program funded by the MHSA, a Pep Dance, Korean Fan Dance and Indian Dance performance by Dosha. There was a parent speaker on Immigration as well, which connected with the theme. The committee will have a debrief to review what went well and what could be improved.

- New plans for social events may include a movie night for February or March to honor Black History month or Women's history month. Another possibility is a roller skating event. Details to follow.
- Michelle solicited for volunteers for the Social Committee which does most of its work on-line or by telephone call.

o. *Staff Luncheon* - Barbara Dallao reported that May 10th may be a possible date for the luncheon but that this still has to be confirmed with Principal. This year's luncheon will not be a potluck due to the lack of ½ days after the Auction. The committee is proposing catering the event instead and is looking for input on the potential cost of doing this.

p. *Student Activities Fundraising* - Janice LaBella provided report that she is working toward getting permission to hold the Fundraiser in order to raise funds for substantial MHSA scholarships for graduating seniors.

q. *Teacher Liaisons* –

- Ms. Brunner said that the Middle School is anxiously awaiting carts for the Chromebooks.

Ad Hoc/Select Committee Reports -

Nominating Committee: Andi Shuster reported that the Nominating Committee has put a call-out for nominations and has made progress to date with a partial slate. Calls and emails are going out to current Committee Chairs/co-chairs to ask about interest in serving on the Executive Board. This could open positions on committees and it is the responsibility of the President to appoint those positions. The Nominating Committee is charged with providing a slate to the Board at the March 7th meeting. The members of the Nominating Committee are:

Andi Shuster

Dawn Levi

Camille Duchaussee

Judy Shelton

Anna Padula LaRosa

Old Business -

New Business -

A discussion was held on the topic of Enrichments for students at Masterman. Parents/family members supported the concepts that class trips accomplish many important tasks including:

- Sparking interest in new areas

- Bonding with classmates
- Learning how to navigate the city
- Exposure to different modes of transportation including walking, buses, subways
- Exposure to the city as a “learning lab”
- Learning organization of time
- Learning how to be more self-sufficient
- Being outside and using all the senses

The following questions were raised:

1. What is the reason for denying trips in middle school, in high school?
2. What is the rationale for limiting outside-of-classroom learning, for not allowing access to external resources?
3. Is there a District or State-wide rule/requirement regarding in-class instruction time?
4. Is the goal that less teachers go on less trips?
5. Is it time to take a fresh look at how the school day is scheduled?
6. Are there communication issues that preempt parents from chaperoning?
7. Why are there no high school trips permitted?
8. Why are high school students not permitted to enjoy much needed down-time outside of the classroom to alleviate stress?
9. Why are there no longer trips in 7th grade?
10. Does the School Improvement Plan include this as a topic of importance for the students? If not, why not?
11. Why was a Chess Teacher refused (one who already teaches at other schools and has clearances)?

The messaging parents and families are receiving is that academics are provided at the sacrifice of social enrichment and fun and that it is impacting our children’s well-being.

Participants in the discussion supported the following concepts:

1. Experiential learning is as valuable as in-class time.
2. Support for a more nurturing environment that considers the whole student.
3. An enriching environment is needed beyond core class learning.
4. It is an unusual opportunity to have use of the city we live in as the classroom and should not be wasted.
5. There is a need to consider alternative ways to deliver on the curriculum, if not consider a more varied, while rigorous, curriculum.
6. Huge amounts of homework exist in the High School with no time for socialization which puts too much pressure on these students. The stress is enormous and mindfulness training is pointless when the root of the stress lies in the weight of the pressures placed.

Recommendations for parental input on these issues included:

1. Distribute a survey to obtain more parent/family input from the community.
2. Raise the issue of enrichment and curriculum to the SAC for guidance and consideration of a curriculum and enrichment committee.
3. Attend Strategic Planning Meetings for the School and MHSA.
4. Attend the SAC meeting about Budget, School Improvement Plan February 19th.

Announcements -

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm EST.

Notes

Action Items - President to frame the above questions for review by the Principal in order to have an extended discussion next Board Meeting, March 7th.

Next Meeting Agenda Items - Agenda to be finalized

Michal Leventhal, Recording Secretary