

MHS Home & School Association
Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2021 (via Zoom)

In Attendance:

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Dr. Gravinese | Mercy Varghese | Marie Kramer | Cindy Hartson |
| Susan DeMed | Karen Lutz | Alex G. | Katie Shireman |
| Shane Bone | Deborah Knawby | Sophia Pham | Sarah Spletzer |
| Michelle Petko | Gabby Winters | Courtney Kusy | |

Welcome – Introductions

MHS Staff Reports

Principal – Jamie Gravinese – Dr. Gravinese reported:

- The Department of Health called and gave us the green light for our Senior Event. We are super excited about this, and we've met with class sponsors, and Dr. Kochenour and Dr. Spiewak, the minute the final approval comes in we will send out the Save the Date. We're hoping to have ticket sales March 22 – May 8, then seating decisions and food choices.
- We have our tutoring center up and running after school with 4 tutors, covering pretty much any of the subjects. We filled the appointments last week This week there are a few cancellations but we think once it's up and running, more kids will use it.
- Senior spotlights will be posted on FaceBook and Twitter in April and May.
- There will also be a Senior parent forum coming up so she can share out information.
- Winter sports are over, with the exception of swimmer Tommy Gibbs competing at states.
- North Montco Tech recently held its SkillsUSA program, winners representing Methacton were Cam Steiner in Diesel Equipment Technology, Addison Zick in Automotive Computer Estimating & Total Loss Evaluation, Jason Bruton in Architectural Drafting and Thomas Damiani in Drafting.
- Lower Providence Township is looking to redesign and re-envision part of Ridge Pike, and are putting together the "Ridge Pike Challenge." Methacton art students will be participating and there will be a reveal for the community on May 10. This is a good opportunity for kids to potentially make an impact.

Teachers – Cara Woudenberg – no report given.

Counseling – Cindy Hartson – Ms. Hartson reported:

- Kudos to the NMTCC students on the SkillsUSA program.
- Underclassmen are in the process of selecting courses for next year. Counselors will be meeting with students one-on-one. We are happy to be connecting with them and helping to guide them through the scheduling process.
- Pending board approval, we will soon be offering a new business course. The district has received a donation to run a course similar to Shark Tank including entrepreneurial skills and the legal side of starting a business. This would be an elective for next year.
- PSAT scores are out. Sophomores are encouraged to set up their CollegeBoard accounts. We will be going over the results soon. There is information about the national merit scholarship and a wealth of additional information included with the results.
- Scholarships for seniors – on Monday and Tuesday, Guidance will be zoom-bombing every English class. There is about \$16,000 in scholarship money available just for eligible MHS students. Once we have shared the information with students we'll post the

summary document on the Google classroom. The money is out there - we want students to apply.

- There is a college fair coming up through PACAC, email just went to all sophomores and juniors. There will be many colleges. Check dates and times.
- Question was asked: how many scholarships can a person apply to? Answer: as many as they want.
- H&S also recognizes 8 "most improved" students. We will need 3 parents who are not senior parents to review name-blind transcripts and list of activities that students have done outside of school. Guidance has a good list going right now, and should be able to forward the list to H&S soon.

H&S Reports:

Secretary – Sarah Spletzer – nothing to report

Treasurer – Courtney Kusy – Courtney reported: nothing has really changed from last month. We have been tightening up the budget items to try to fund this year. We tried to do our no-frills fundraiser and got a little bit of a response. We might send out another message on that.

Vice President – Gabby Winters/Michelle Petko – nothing to report under VP.

Presidents – Mercy Varghese/Marie Kramer – Mercy and Marie reported:

- 3 mini-grants were turned in. The deadline was today. There may be more in the mailbox as of today. With the extra funding we may be able to do all 3 that were turned in.
- We also received two very nice thank you notes from students who received the \$100 improvement awards last year.
- We're doing elections for board members. We will be voting at the April 8 meeting. Nominations are: Co-Vice Presidents: Katie Shireman and Susan DeMedio; Corresponding Secretary: Jessica Fox; Recording Secretary: Sarah Spletzer

District Reports:

SEA – Colleen Kutz – Colleen reported:

- There will be a Covid Compensatory Services discussion next Monday 7:00-9:00 p.m. Register on the MSD website and click on SEA.
- We just wrapped up a 4-part series with other school districts. It was very well-attended, with over 90 MHS staff and parents attending in addition to others. We have access to recordings from this program on the dashboard.
- We have another workshop coming up 3/25, from 7:00-9:00 p.m. on Executive Functioning. This program is made possible by grant from MCC.
- SEA is always looking for members, especially elementary parents for longevity's sake. We're all very supportive of one another, we meet socially, it is a great group.

Post Prom – Gabby Winters/ Lisa Coupe – Gabby reported:

- We are working closely with the class of 2021 and its advisors on the Senior Event. We have no specific details yet but we are planning the event and details will come after Dr. Gravinese's announcement of the event.
- Dr Gravinese added that she can't thank Post Prom enough for their help with the Senior Event.

School Board – Report provided: The following took place at the February work session (2/19) and voting meeting (2/26):

* Security Camera Upgrade Recommendation was presented that would replace our current (10 year old) system and provide increased coverage, higher resolution and clarity, and allow interaction with local police if needed. This recommendation was approved by the board.

* A very preliminary timeline of considerations around the Arrowhead project,

which has been named "Arrowhead Forward" was shared with the board.

* There was a presentation on Unified Sports, an inclusive athletic program which pairs students with and without intellectual disabilities and is sponsored in part by the Special Olympics. Spring Track and Field would be the first program to run at the high school, with Winter Bocce and Fall Soccer possibly following if the program is successful. The board, administration and high school staff worked together and quickly to make this happen under a tight turn-around time. The recommendation was approved by the board, coaches have been identified and trained, and team recruitment notifications have been sent out at the high school.

* The Methacton Education Foundation presented a check for over \$9500 for third grade coding (will benefit all elementary schools).

* Dr. Sosnovik presented the district's 3 Year Technology Plan which includes a badly needed upgrade of the district phone system.

* An update to Policy 214, Class Rank, was discussed. The update would eliminate class rank beginning with the Class of 2020 and only provide it upon request to institutions or scholarship committees. The recommendation was based on a comprehensive report from High School Principal Dr. Sorgini which involved surveys to parents, students and staff, meetings with class officers, surveys of other districts in Montgomery County, and information from colleges that Methacton students attend. Class rank can negatively impact a Methacton student's overall college application. For example, of 404 students in the Class of 2018, 130 received an "M" award for cumulative GPA of 93% or greater, but only 40 students ranked in the top 10% of the class. Eliminating class rank will also cut down on ultra-competitiveness among classmates and will allow students to try classes which would have previously negatively affected class rank. The Policy will be on the agenda for "Second Reading" (approval) in March.

* Finally, the 2019-2020 School Year Calendar was approved. It is very similar to this year's calendar, with a student start date of 8/28/19.

The next board work session is Tuesday, March 19th at 7pm and the regular meeting will be Tuesday, March 26th at 7pm. Both meetings are in the High School LGI room. We welcome your attendance, participation and feedback. Thank you!

MCC – Gabby Winters/Michelle Petko – Michelle and Gabby reported:

- At the MCC meeting on 3/10, we went over the SEA presentation as well as the MEF contributions to the district;
- We were lucky enough to have Dr. Jeanine Darby from the DEI task force present as well. For additional details, the DEI now has a public page. They are getting the community involved with workshops for kids and parents. The DEI is a non-profit organization.
- We also discussed nominations for the Home & School Boards in all the schools, making sure each school was putting out their nomination requests, etc., and getting people interested in open positions.
 - Applications were received for the Student Loan Fund.
 - Lastly, we talked about the bus driver breakfast. Last year this was not able to happen. Eagleville will host this year, with the money they still have from last year. This will be held in May and will be COVID friendly, with prepackaged food.
 - Dr. Gravinese added that the DEI taskforce is still looking for recipes for its cookbook, that we are going to bring back One Book One School for next year and that the book will be that young adult version of *Just Mercy* and that the Methacton Awards Night will be held May 26, virtually.

Questions & Answers – as time allows

Adjournment

Dates to Remember:

March 31 – No School (Holiday)

April 1, 2, 5 – No School

April 8 – H&S Meeting – 7:00pm

April 8 - 3rd Marking Period Ends

Next meeting 4/8/21 7:00pm

Via Zoom

(Look for Konstella announcement on our webpage for registration link).