

**MHS Home & School Association
Meeting Agenda
May 13, 2021 (via Zoom)**

In Attendance:

Sarah Spletzer
Gabby Winters
Deb Knowby

Marie Kramer
Mercy Varghese
Courtney Kusy

Cindy Hartson
Colleen Kutz
Susan deMedio

Jamie Gravinese
Katie Shireman

Welcome – Introductions

MHS Staff Reports

Principal – Dr. Jamie Gravinese reported:

- We will be reading the book *Just Mercy* for One Book One School. The sale of the book through the website is set up. Lt. Gov. Fetterman will be one of the speakers at the kick off, which will be streamed via YouTube and will also be recorded so it can be posted. This will be a great way to engage the kids and make them want to read the book.
- We do have summer work for some of next year's courses. She will be posting the work in about 2 weeks so students can organize their summer.
- 10th grader Lucy Wang won a bronze medal at the Delaware Valley Science Fair. She will be moving on to the Regeneration International Science and Engineering Fair next month at the state level. Lucy focused on colitis cells in mice.
- Tomorrow night will be movie night for 9th and 10th grade in the Stadium. We are not sure how many will attend yet, but about 100 students responded to a poll that they would attend. The students will watch *School of Rock*, there will be food trucks and raffle prizes. We are trying to get them back into the swing of things. Parents, please encourage students to attend.
- Next week is the Senior Event which we're very excited about. We are worried they're not going to dress appropriately for weather – they may want to bring wraps and jackets in case it is cool out.
- There will be a Junior class social at Heebner Park. There is a SignUpGenius coming around. They are having a Kona Ice truck and the Philly Pretzel Company, as well as outdoor games.
- Goal was to have something for every class.
- With Senior Event focus right now, Post Prom helped with lining up the crashed cars for the student lot. Seniors also listened to video made by Dan Dorsett and Dan Bontempo about drunk driving and the impact it has on those who are left behind. Post Prom has been awesome and really wanted to focus on the message and how to accomplish the educational piece. We wanted it to hit closer to home so they would pay attention, especially because we can't have real Post Prom.
- Reminder that next week is Keystone exams, whether students are onsite or virtual, they have to take the test onsite – there is no online testing for Keystones. We have to have our virtual kids come in and are trying to be respectful of concerns for those who have not been in. There will be 5-7 students in most classrooms with two teachers. Buses will run around 12, and will be lined up for them to get home and another set of buses will run at the end of the day. Tuesday is Literature, Wednesday is Biology and Thursday is Algebra I.
- Materials drop off. Senior grades are due on Fri 6/4, so even though there are 3 more days of school, seniors will be done with grading. This will be 3 days of undivided time to capture any lessons. Seniors are going to start handing in materials starting 6/3, also 6/4 and everything else 6/7. Underclassmen will hand in materials 6/7, 6/8, 6/9. Friday 6/11 is a virtual ½ day.

- There was an Art Reveal Monday. It was so nice to see kids talk to each other and socialize with each other, about 100 kids came through.
- We hope to have more activities like this on the horizon. Over the summer we want to start brainstorming targeted ways to celebrate seniors next year. We're here working anyway, so we will meet and organize the year to be nice for them.
- Gabby asked whether we might have meetings in person next year. Dr. Gravinese is not sure, but may depend on the pandemic team and what they've laid out for us. CDC just came out with guidance that if students are vaccinated, they can be inside with no mask. It is hard for students to understand that the school's health & safety plan is different than CDC guidance. We are waiting to hear what pandemic team comes up with.
- Graduation - students each get 10 tickets now instead of 8.

Teachers – Cara Woudenberg – Report provided:

- From the Class of 2021: The Senior Under The Stars Event will be held on Friday, May 21, from 6-10 PM with a rain date of Saturday, May 22. The event will include a sit-down dinner, Senior Superlative banquet, yearbook signing, food trucks, lawn games, DJ (no dancing), caricaturist, comedian, raffles, photographer, balloon artist and more! We can't wait to celebrate the Class of 2021!
- The Medicine and Science Club will be releasing a STEM website by the end of May that will include resources for all grade levels. More information to come.
- From the Class of 2024: A Chick-Fil-A Fundraiser is scheduled for Thursday, May 20 from 6:30 AM - 10 PM at the Audubon location. Mention the Class of 2024 and 15% of sales will be donated accordingly.
- From the MHS One Book One School Committee: The all-school summer reading selection for Methacton High School is the book *Just Mercy* (Adapted for Young Adults): A True Story of the Fight for Justice by Bryan Stevenson. The book can be ordered through the school for \$8.50 up until May 26. For more information, visit the High School website and look under Site Shortcuts for "MHS Summer Reading." Parents and community members are encouraged to also read the book along with staff and students. Lt. Governor John Fetterman will be joining us as a virtual guest speaker later this month as our kickoff presenter for One Book One School. Lt. Governor Fetterman is passionate about social justice and we are so excited to hear him speak!
- The MHS Nursing staff is working with Skippack Pharmacy to secure a date in the very near future to provide a COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic for those 12 and up of Methacton School District -- students, staff and family. The clinic will be at the Main Gym at the High School. Information will be sent out as soon as the date is secured.
- From the Family & Consumer Science Department: The Child Development classes are looking for five used infant car seats with bases to be used with the RealCare Baby program. They hope to improve the program by eliminating old and broken seats and adding Car Seat detection sensors. The electronic sensors allow the instructor to record the amount of time a baby spends in the car seat. (i.e., see if the student picks up the baby to care for it or leave it in the car seat the whole weekend.) We are also looking for newer car seats to teach the proper way of installing a car seat into the student's car. If you can help, please contact Stephanie Pilman at spilman@methacton.org.
- The Methacton High School Theatre Company is proud to present the Spring production, *Urinetown, the Musical*. Streaming begins on Thursday, May 27 - Saturday, May 29 at showtix4u (<https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/50702>).
- From the Science Fair Club: 10th grade student Lucy Wang is currently participating in the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) activities. She will find out next week if she receives any prizes. Fortunately, she was able to secure BSL1 lab space at Rutgers University for her work for this fair. In order for the Science Fair Club to participate in ALL FAIR Activity next year, they desperately need BSL1 equipment. Without it, the

county and state will not allow students to conduct Life Science research. For more information on science fair activities, please contact Bob Helm at RHelm@methacton.org.

Counseling – Cindy Hartson – Ms. Hartson reported:

- Guidance started an anxiety group for generalized or pandemic-related anxiety. There are two counselors running it and they will run it again next year.
- Dr. Gravinese wants to plan things for rising 9th and 10th graders who have never been in the high school building, something like "Destination High School." This may involve a meeting with Guidance, 20 students once a week, meet in library, talk generally about High School, do a tour. This does not replace freshman orientation. Stay tuned, this is still in the planning stages.
- Guidance also works part-time in the summer. If we're in the building, we would like to meet with students. Dr. Gravinese mentioned that a lot of kids get anxious thinking about the High School. The idea of doing programs over the summer is that students can come in multiple weeks if they want over the summer. There are a significant number of kids suffering mental health issues because of the pandemic. We need to address it and not ignore it. Kids are screaming for help. Kids you wouldn't think are really struggling. Nothing is finalized yet for orientation but looking to amp it up and do one for each class.
- There will be a survey coming from Dr. Zerbe at the end of the year, for families to select online or onsite for next year. If families select online, it will be through Brandywine Virtual Academy.
- There will be another college fair 6/7 and 6/8, Keystone Virtual College Fair, there were also dates in April.
- Senior Surveys were given out in history classes. There are still stragglers but by end of next week it will become an obligation. One of the questions on the survey asks them where they're going - if not college, what? Counselors have been busy: proctoring AP exams, meeting with students, trying to bridge the fear of coming into the building.

H&S Reports:

Secretary – Sarah Spletzer – nothing to report

Treasurer – Courtney Kusy – Courtney reported:

- Expenses 1,702.90; 2 checks of 13 have cleared; 11 checks have not cleared yet, amount of \$1,009
- As of 5/12/2021, we have \$2,614.12 with our budget still estimating \$1,500 in expenses, so we are projecting ending with \$1,100 to start off next year.
- The Student Scholarship account is at \$63,000, the Money Market account closes on the 5th of every month.
- We issued 8 scholarship checks for \$1,000 each, bringing the scholarship account from \$63,000 to \$55,071.77.

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

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

- We did School Nurse Appreciation Day on May 6 to honor our two school nurses who went above and beyond this year. We usually roll this into staff appreciation but chose to do them separately this year.
- We will be doing staff breakfast on May 24, grab and go. Hopefully left overs too. New custodian is amazing, storing H&S stuff that he's made room for and still stores for us.

District Reports:

SEA – Collen Kutz – Colleen reported:

- Unified Sports raised funds and was able to purchase a canopy tent for its events, thanks to the community for supporting.

- On May 20 we have our final presentation on financial planning for special needs children at 7p.m., this speaker has a disabled daughter and gets the struggle, his program is highly recommended

- SEA is looking for more volunteer representatives for elementary school ages. If you know someone interested.

- Find out more about SEA on SEAmethacton@gmail.com or SEA's FaceBook page.

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

- They have been helping with the upcoming Senior Event.

School Board – Report provided:

- **Recognition:** Outstanding staff and students from Eagleville were recognized at the April school board meeting. Thank you for your dedication!

- **2021-2022 Instructional & Health and Safety Plan:** The board voted 9-0 to approve the Instructional & Health and Safety Plan with 5 day/week in-person instruction for the 2021-2022 school year. Included in the plan are options for virtual learning and plans for those who choose to start the school year with virtual instruction to be able to go back in-person in January. The selection process is set to begin June 1, please stay tuned. To see the presentations, click here: [2021-2022 Health and Safety Plan](#); [2021-2022 Instructional Plan](#)

- **SOAR Program:** The S.O.A.R. Program which provides an innovative framework of mental and behavioral health support at the elementary level was introduced to the board. Set to begin in the upcoming school year, this program provides a multi-tiered level of support to our youngest learners. The presentation can be found here: [SOAR Program](#)

- **Summer Programming:** There are a number of summer programs that will be available to support and challenge students in preparation for the next school year.

Kindergarten Ready! will be a chance for the youngest learners to connect with peers and learn about their school. In addition, there will be Supplemental Programs for grades K-12, a K-6 Intervention Program and a 7-12 Course Recovery Program. Details can be found here: [Methacton Summer Programs 2021](#)

- **New Programs!** We are excited about new programs that are coming to Methacton! The Hydroponic Farm Lab is the first of its kind in Pennsylvania and will feature a hydroponic farm in a shipping container. There will be a Forensics and BioChemistry Lab where students will research, collect, and interpret data to solve problems in the areas of organic chemistry, biochemistry, forensics and nutrition. The Entrepreneurship Program will give students the opportunity to create and develop their own product or service. Thank you to the Methacton Education Foundation and to district staff who were involved for making these programs possible!

- **Full Day Kindergarten:** A proposal for Full Day Kindergarten was presented to the board. Modifications to our inclusive practices model would allow greater access to the general curriculum, reduce transitions and increase social participation. Implementing these changes will allow staff to be reallocated and the new bottom-line annual cost for full-day Kindergarten is estimated to be just over \$281,000. Details can be found here: [Full Day Kindergarten: Financials, Fit and Sequence](#)

- **Earned Income Tax Credit:** Methacton Board of School Directors voted to approve an Earned Income Tax Credit for the volunteer firefighters in our Lower Providence and Worcester Communities. Thank you for your service to our community!

- **Upcoming meetings:**

- Board meetings are now being held virtually on zoom and live streamed through YouTube.

- Work Session: Wednesday, May 19, 7:00 PM (please note the different day)

- Regular Meeting: Tuesday, May 25, 7:00 PM

Check the website for login information and instructions on presenting comments to the board at the meeting.

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

- At Monday night's meeting, the treasurer gave a report on the student loan/scholarship program and reported they've collected a significant amount of money. 3rd quarter letters just went out, Gabby will be transitioning into taking over that effort.
- Overall, Home & Schools have had income of about \$50k and output of about \$53k, and have held about 30% of last year's activities.
- Budgets are due July 1, and are up for approval at the September meeting.
- H&S can't hold or collect money at the schools anymore and are supposed to have a P.O. Box or can collect money electronically. School principals can approve money collection but money would need to be picked up right away. There will be adjustments for elementary schools.
- At the high school we started PayPal in 2019 and it was used quite a bit. We will have to put P.O. box into the budget.

Questions & Answers – as time allows

Adjournment

Dates to Remember:

May

17-28 – Keystone Testing

18-20 – Async except for Keystone

21 – Senior Event

24 – H&S Staff Appreciation Breakfast

26 – Award Ceremony (virtual)

28 – No School (In service)

31 – No School (Holiday)

June

10 - Commencement

10 – Async. for grades 9-11

15 – Last Day/4th Marking Period Ends

Next meeting in September