



## HASTINGS HIGH SCHOOL PTSA/SEPTA Parent Meeting

Wednesday, April 3, 2024  
8:30 a.m. - VIRTUAL

### MINUTES

*The next PTSA/SEPTA meeting is May 21, 2024 in person and the last meeting of the year.*

### Meeting Structure for 2024-2025

- This year we did something different. Administrators met with PTSA leadership to address the fact that the BOE moved their meetings to 6 pm, which would have required PTSA meetings to be at 5PM. Administrators and PTSA/SEPTA decided to hold 8:30 am meetings and to alternate between virtual and in-person meetings this school year.
- Feedback has been that 8:30AM works for administrators and attendance has been higher on Zoom than in person. Alternatively, the PTSA and SEPTA have received feedback that 8:30AM doesn't work for everyone. We need to figure out a "healthy mix" that may require a blend of mornings and evenings. HHS administrators already have a lot of evening events that they attend, and we should be cognizant of night commitments for HHS administrators as conflicts could arise.
- Parents in attendance expressed a preference for alternating between mornings and evenings. One parent expressed a preference for virtual meetings because it's easier to join from work. Another expressed a preference for a mix of in-person and Zoom. The meetings will not be recorded, but the PTSA reminded parents that the meeting minutes are posted quickly after the meeting and available on our [website](#).
- To give feedback on this issue, please email our VP's Kefira at [kwilderman@ptsahastings.org](mailto:kwilderman@ptsahastings.org) or Cynthia at [cbrent@ptsahastings.org](mailto:cbrent@ptsahastings.org).

### Science Leave/Update

- Mrs. Thompson is on leave because her 12 year old son was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma and she'll be out through the end of May. Staff has been moved around and Jan Melillo has assumed Ms. Thompson's classes. Ms.

Melillo is considered by the state to be “highly qualified” to teach Living Environment because she has been a co-teacher in the class for 23 years and is certified in Special Education. Ms. Thompson expects to return in June.

- School Counselor Ms. White is on an 8-10 week medical leave and is being covered with additional compensation by Ms. Quigley and Ms. Shaw.
- The school anticipates retirements to include Ms. Hardesty, who is retiring in December 2024. Mr. Adipietro emphasized that he and Ms. Hardesty are leaving because it is the right time to go and not because they are unhappy or have been asked to leave. They are both looking forward to their next chapters.
- The Director of School Counseling also is retiring and the position will likely be filled by someone from outside because no current counselors are certified administrators.

## **SAT/ACT Testing at HHS**

- We used to offer the SAT in Hastings and Ms. Melillo was the facilitator. The facilitator is employed by the College Board and the pay is minimal. The district supplemented the pay to entice teachers to assist.
- When HHS hosted, they had to open seats to the public and there was no process for guaranteeing that HHS students could be tested at HHS and the majority of students were from outside.
- We were audited and the College Board who sent a rep to monitor the testing conditions and cited HHS for numerous violations. Ms. Melillo decided to stop coordinating and we haven't been able to find another coordinator.
- The District is not considering a school day SAT because it's disruptive to the entire building which includes FMS.

## **International Trip Feedback**

- The Italy trip was very successful; fifteen students went on the trip. A parent reported that “It was wonderful! Magistra was so thorough and attentive to detail. Thank you!”
- The Spanish trip to Mexico also was very successful. A parent reported that the “trip to Mexico with Senor Lopez was also incredible, thank you!” Another parent seconded that feedback.
- A French trip is planned for next year.

## **Student Summer Reading/Work**

- Teachers are being asked to start thinking about assigned summer work for students. There is usually required reading for English and each grade level is assigned something different but relevant. There also may be summer work in honors or college level courses (AP and SUPA). Mr. Adieptro will continue to have conversations with teachers about the relevance of summer work. If summer work is assigned, it should be part of the curriculum in September. Science Research definitely requires work over the summer.

## Course Request/Recommendation Overrides

- Most students have met with their counselors regarding course requests and some departments have required recommendations from teachers for courses based on what students can handle. Especially for honors, AP and SUPA, or courses which require a prerequisite.
- Students can take courses for which they are not recommended. There is a course override form (ask your counselor for the form). This form acknowledges that a student wasn't recommended, but the student/family understands that if the student struggles and drops the course, the grade continues with them when they change levels. It also requires the student to discuss with their current teacher why they weren't recommended. The student does not need the teacher's approval, but does need to obtain the feedback so they can make an informed decision. Teachers must sign to confirm they had the conversation and should be prepared to explain, to admin, why a student was not recommended. If a student has requested multiple courses, this will trigger a further discussion with their counselor to ensure they understand the challenges with their coursework options.

## PTSA Announcements

### Screenagers Under the Influence - April 18, 2024, 7-9PM @ FMS Auditorium

- The PTSA is co-hosting a showing of the movie which addresses vaping, drugs, and alcohol in the digital age followed by an expert panel discussion for parents. Register [\[HERE\]](#).

### HHS Staff Appreciation Lunch - May 21, 2024

- The PTSA is seeking contributions towards catering the HHS lunch. We also need three volunteers to set up from 10-11AM and two volunteers to clean-up from 1-2PM. Please contact [Lisa Heinlein](#) if you can volunteer on 5/21/24 and contribute \$ [\[HERE\]](#).

### PTSA Grants Funded -

- **HHS Olympics Lunch** - HHS Student Union grant for pizza and sandwiches for the entire study body during the event.
- **Transportation for the Senior class trip to Great Adventure.**

### **Tutor Survey -**

- In 2019 the PTSA conducted a “Tutor Survey” to collect data on the subjects in which students are using tutors and why. We are conducting that survey again over the next few weeks and hope that families will take the time to respond. Please do a separate response for each of your students in grades 7-12 and recent graduates. A link to the survey is [\[HERE\]](#). Please respond if your student does NOT use a tutor. This information is being provided to inform the district.

### **Go Fund Me for Ms. Thompson -**

- You may be aware that Ms. Thompson is on leave because (as she informed her students) her son recently was diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing treatment. Thank you to everyone who already has contributed to the collection to assist Ms. Thompson’s family with meals and anything else they need. We’ve collected approximately \$3,000 from more than 50 families and have purchased a \$400 gift card to Best Buy to gift to her son to choose a device to distract himself over the next few weeks and Ms. Gagliardi is bringing the remainder to Ms. Thompson in cash at the end of the week along with a card from everyone who has contributed. Going forward, a GoFundMe has been established and anyone who wants to contribute can do so using the link [\[HERE\]](#).

### **Yellow Jacket Booster Club Del Caraballo Memorial Tournament Fundraiser -**

- Along with Saint Matthew’s CYO, the Booster Club is holding an 18+ 3 on 3 memorial tournament to honor Del Caraballo. Register your team by May 1st with the link [\[HERE\]](#). Proceeds from the day will fund a scholarship for a Hastings HS senior who plans to pursue a career in service. The cost to enter is \$175 per team.

## **SEPTA Announcements**

### **SEPTA Conversation on April 18th at 8am,**

- Please send any items you would like to see raised by email to [rhiannon.platt@gmail.com](mailto:rhiannon.platt@gmail.com) before April 10th.

### **SEPTA Scholarship Award**

- Seniors are invited to apply for the scholarship, please remind your students to submit their applications by April 11th.

**SEPTA Trivia Night -** is on April 19th, tickets are on sale now.

***Thank you to all who attended and we look forward to seeing you at our next and final meeting!***