



## NHS PTO Meeting Minutes—September 16, 2021

The first PTO meeting of the new school year convened at 7:05 pm. Sarah Baker presided. The first order of business was to elect a new executive board of directors. The proposed slate included:

Judy Petraske and Mary Ellen Wall - Co-Presidents  
Sarah Baker - Vice President  
Howard Hershoff - Secretary  
Lauren Carnes - Treasurer

A motion was made to accept this slate of officers and vote them into office. The motion carried and the vote was unanimous. Congratulations to the new PTO Board of Directors.

### **Welcome and Update - Sarah**

Welcome all to an exciting new school year. The PTO would like to thank Cara Davis and her amazing crew of volunteers for spending several days planting and cleaning up several sites around the school to provide a beautiful welcome for the students and faculty. As a welcome back treat for the faculty, Mary Ellen and Judy organized food from On Rye Deli and an ice cream social during the Professional Days leading up to the first day of school. Over the summer, the Board directed the use of funds from the budget to purchase a portable sound system. Cross functional teams will use the new sound system at a variety of events throughout the school year.

### **Budget Report**

The Treasurer Board position is still in transition. A detailed review of the budget will be presented at the October meeting. Dues are coming in through Venmo.

### **Grant Requests**

Jess Johnston has requested \$85 to create and print a class photo for each of her students to enhance camaraderie and as a memento of their time in class together. Ms. Johnston will write a personal note to each student on the back of the photos. A motion was made to approve the grant and it passed unanimously.

### **New business**

- Spirit: Friday athletics include soccer 4pm and football 7pm come and celebrate community. And the snack bar will be open. Spirit week is coming up culminating in Homecoming. There will be a pep rally, many outdoor activities, superhero costumes, as well as pirates and mermaids. Saturday will have a Homecoming dance. In keeping with Covid regulations, vuvuzelas will be replaced with cow bells. The Homecoming committee consists of Kristy Dasetti, Karen Driscoll, Sarah McDonald, and Jess Chase. Twenty different gift cards have been secured for a raffle. Buy a ticket to the dance and get a raffle ticket. Tickets will be sold on campus Tuesday through Friday of Sprit Week.

- Beautification: Cara Davis will continue the campus beautification projects and is looking for volunteers to help out. Project ideas include wall murals, signs, and flags. A budget increase is also requested. The library will be contacted to determine what landscaping options might be able to be shared.
- Norwell Cares: Freshmen will meet with peer educators. Sophomores will be divided into small groups to help with nature trail clean up working with the Conservation Commission and the Nature Conservancy. Other groups will work at the Cushing Center, The Cushing School, Jacobs Farm House, and the Historical Society. Juniors will visit the elementary schools.
- Quiz Night: It's back! Venue and dates to follow.
- A PTO table will be available at the open house to direct dues payment to Venmo (@NHSPTO)
- The PTO will present at the next School Committee meeting 10/4

### **Principal's Report - Marc Bender**

Thank you to the PTO for all its support for the school. It has been a very busy first few days at school. During the ninth grade orientation, senior leaders participated helping the freshmen adjust to a new school. In addition to tours of the building, there were individual stations for the students to visit to help in the adjustment. Parents and guardians joined their students in one of four breakout sessions to discuss the transition and to emphasize organization.

On the first day, enthusiasm, spirit, and excitement were palpable. During the first couple of days, classes were shorter to accommodate school photos and sessions on setting expectations. The idea was to recreate a sense of belonging and community. Stronger connections yield better results. As part of their professional development days, the teachers challenged themselves to come up with ideas to increase the sense of belonging. When we have a sense of belonging, we do better academically. Take risks. It is okay to make mistakes as long as we learn from them. Following through on this camaraderie, an effort will be made to reignite traditions and a sense of spirit for which the school has been known.

An advisory session on the second day started with the Hello Program developed by the Sandy Hook Promise focusing on supporting one another and ending social isolation. On the third day we remembered the events of September 11, 2001 and tasked students to talk about that day with their parents and guardians to get their impressions of the day.

The second week of school began the full day academic schedule. On Wednesday a Co-Curricular Fair was held during which students could become familiar with all of the clubs, sports, and activities the school offers beyond the classroom. Hundreds of students attended. They were reminded that it was important to participate in activities outside the classroom. Academics represent only half of the total high school experience. And, of course, the all important assigning of parking spots took place.

Watch for an email this week to remind everyone that next Thursday (9/23) we return to the in-person Open House; an exciting evening to meet with your student's teachers. There will be a video presentation available a few days before to take the place of the auditorium presentation as upon arrival we will be going directly to the first classroom on the schedule your student will provide to you.

### **Open Discussion:**

Mary Ellen Coffey discussed an issue involving some students having difficulty signing up for special accommodations at the upcoming SAT. Please direct any questions to Mr. Bender. The PSAT is October 13.

**Next PTO meeting is in person at NHS Community Room on October 4 at 6pm**