

BROOKDALE HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION, INC.

MINUTES OF MEETING

September 11, 2013

The Brookdale Home and School Association was called to order at approximately 7:05 pm. Board members in attendance were Mike McLaughlin, Marlene Matulac, Monica Lutz, Jenn Harvey, and Nicole Bornemann.

Introductions: Mike McLaughlin introduced the Home and School Association's role at Brookdale to the parents and how it provides so much of a benefit to the school community. He introduced both himself and Marlene Matulac as Co-Presidents, Monica Lutz as Treasurer and Jenn Harvey as Assistant Treasurer, and Nicole Bornemann as Secretary.

Board of Education Representative: Emily Smith (President of the Bloomfield Board of Education)

Emily Smith stated that there will be two very important Board of Education meetings regarding the selection of a new Superintendent of Bloomfield Public School District. The first meeting will take place on September 17, 2013 where the three candidates will be asked questions from the different organizations and staff from the Bloomfield schools. This meeting will be a stakeholders meeting that will be open to the public, but that only representatives from selected groups will be able to ask questions. The second meeting will take place on September 25, 2013 where the public will be allowed to submit their written questions and place them into boxes. Those questions will then be pulled out of the boxes and be asked to the candidates. Also, each candidate's resume will be made available to the members of the public.

Secretary's Report: Minutes were approved from the previous meeting of June 21, 2013.

Treasurer's Report: Monica Lutz presented the budget. Our current budget in the checking account is \$20,651.31 and that the available funds for the Home and School Association amounts to \$15,414.96. The profits from the Fun Fair totaled \$3,880.90. Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success.

Testing Resolution via Board of Education Representative Dan Anderson:

Dan Anderson introduced himself to the parents of Brookdale School and stated that after retirement he decided to run for a position on the Board of Education because of his concern over high-stakes standardized testing. He reported that he is against the practice of high stakes standardized testing because it does not provide an accurate assessment on the creativity or the intellectual abilities of the child. He stated that the use of the computerized PARCC would make it appear that students who are doing very well academically look as though they were not doing well. This might lead the state of New Jersey to become more in favor of charter schools. He is

looking to put together a forum on preventing the use of high stakes standardized testing as a determining factor in evaluating public schools. Mr. Anderson would like the new superintendent to agree with his ideas on how to provide high stakes testing. He also stated that high-stakes standardized testing does not test what children really need to know and that these tests are not based on how children really learn. A parent asked when these test would be taken by the students and it was explained that the PARCC would be given to students from Kindergarten through the Twelfth Grade. It was explained that the PARCC is only a pilot program and that it is replacing the NJ ASK. One major problem with the PARCC is that computers would have to be brought in the schools in order for testing to occur and this is too expensive for school districts to pay for. A parent expressed concern that there would be no time for learning to take place and teachers/principals would be judged on the results of this test. Mr. Anderson stated that the question about the PARCC should be addressed to the candidates up for superintendent at the public forum on September 25, 2013. A parent expressed concern about the teacher's only teaching to the test and that we need to evaluate what is really going on when it comes to standardized testing. Mr. Anderson stated that 35% of a teacher's evaluation is based on SGO's (student growth objectives) and that this will have even more weight later on. Mr. Anderson stated that Montclair will be having a forum on this topic on October 6, 2013.

Old Business:

- a. Brookdale Home and School Association has given three SMART Boards to the school.
- b. **Fun Fair-** Thank you to Laura Haraka, Karen Rizzi, Tina Gallina, Monica Lutz, Anne Touchard, and all of the many volunteers for making this event a great success.
- c. **First-Day Folder Stuffing-** Thank you to everyone who volunteered to come in during the school day to stuff the first-day folders.

The teachers and a former student left thank-you notes expressing their gratitude to the Brookdale community. Mrs. Goldsworthy, Miss Kelly, and the entire faculty/staff thanked the HSA for the teachers luncheon. Ms. Rizzo thanked everyone for the gift given for her retirement. Grace Fucci thanked everyone for the scholarship and that she would use it to attend Boston College.

New Business:

a. Membership: All funds that come in from families paying their membership dues help with all HSA events. \$4,300 came in last year from families paying HSA dues. Marlene Matulac stated that class mothers should rally the parents in to pay HSA dues and that parents would obtain voting privileges at HSA meetings for doing so.

b. Back to School Night: Back to school night will take place on September 17, 2013 beginning at 7:00pm. Marlene Matulac stated that parents should sign up for parent-

teacher conferences and that money collections for both HSA/ class party dues should be turned in as well.

c. Open Chairperson Opportunities: Marlene Matulac stated that there still are a few chairperson opportunities that are available to run hospitality, co-chair the holiday gift shop, the talent show, co-chair for teacher appreciation day, and for the Fifth Grade Car Wash. Please email either herself or Mike McLaughlin if interested. Mike will also send out information about these opportunities and that it is a great way to become involved at Brookdale School.

d. Open Class Parent/Liaison Opportunities: Marlene Matulac stated that there are still class parent and liaison openings for Mrs. Lehansky, Mr. Alban, Mrs. Goldsworthy, and Ms. Schimmenti. She also requested that parents pay class parent party dues and HSA dues on Back-to-School Night. She also requested that class moms should check off addresses/phone numbers for the phone directory on Back-to-School Night.

e. KidStuff Sale: Gail Dolan stated Kidstuff is a coupon book that would cost a total of \$25.00 to purchase and it provides parents with coupons for restaurants, stores, and places to go. The fundraiser helps the school earn money and gives something in return to the parents. A flyer was sent out to parents to order and sell the books. She requested that parents send in checks instead of cash and that the books are ready to be sold. The fundraiser ends on October 1, 2013. A parent asked if they would be able to order books for different counties and Gail stated that parents would be able order books from Morris, Essex, Union, and Sussex counties.

f. Mum Sale: Marlene Matulac stated that Sharon Drucker is in charge of the event and that flyers will be sent home soon about purchasing mums.

g. Innisbrook Sale: Jenn Vigna stated that the sale will start on September 16th and that all checks should be made out to Brookdale Home and School. Also, she stated that Brookdale should come out and support the Bloomfield football team on September 13th.

h. Shop Rite Flyers: Marlene Matulac stated that parents have until September 30th to participate.

i. Bloomfield Life Subscriptions: Marlene Matulac stated that there will be a flyer that would be sent out to receive the paper and that the school would receive money for parents purchasing a subscription.

j. Passive Fundraising (box tops, Target, etc.): Tina Gallina explained the process for contributing to Box Tops for Education and that a flyer will go out the week of September 16th. Parents will be able to register online and that by participating the school will receive funds. All boxtops should be placed into a plastic sandwich bag and place their child's name, teacher, grade, and to check if the expiration dates are valid.

Mike McLaughlin stated that there are various fundraisers that can be used to raise money for the school such as Target where in the past 5% of parents have participated in it and have helped raise money for the school. A parent recommended a fundraiser through amazon.com where the school would receive funding at 15%. A parent asked about the fundraiser involving discarding printer cartridges was about and it was stated that cartridges are placed in a box for recycling where the school receives a check once a year.

Faculty Representative: Mr. Fleres states that Ms. G. was unable to attend the meeting and that she apologized for not attending. He stated that she thanked the parents and that the school year will be a successful one.

The Brookdale HSA presented Mr. Fleres with a gift to congratulate him on the new addition to his family.

Principal's Report: Mr. Fleres

Mr. Fleres thanked everyone for the well wishes and gifts. He stated that everyone has been so gracious and it is much appreciated. He stated that both he and the staff are excited to be back. The teachers have been working all summer to ensure that the school year will be a successful one. He is in full support of not having high stakes standardized testing but does feel that it is a necessary evil. He supports Mr. Anderson on the issue of high stakes testing. He also takes standardized testing seriously and wants to make it as calm of an experience as possible for the students. He would like to have a positive notion to testing and is looking to have a pep rally this year. Mr. Fleres stated that parking is a safety issue and that parents should not park and leave their car on front of the school to pick up their child because it is a safety hazard. He stated that if a parent leaves their car there, they will receive a ticket if a patrol car is present. He also asked that parents not park in front of the school or double park in front of the nail salon because it is a safety issue. Mr. Fleres stated that there is a new classroom downstairs for the Second Grade and he wanted to thank the parents for understanding about waiting for class sections. He had been working since May for class sections and shows a concern for the students at Brookdale. He thanked the school secretary, Mrs. Minnici, for coming in to make phone calls to parents letting them know who the child's teacher was. She was not paid for coming in and she informed parents quickly. The old gym is now a fully functioning classroom for the Second Grade and the HSA is willing to match the BEF to put in a smart board. Brookdale School will

be fully functioning with smart boards in every classroom throughout the school once the basement classroom receives one. This will happen very soon with thanks to the HSA and the BEF. He also stated that there are three sections for the Third Grade and he would like to thank the parents for understanding on the delay. He stated that the parents put in a grassroots effort to pursue additional sections. Mr. Fleres welcomed the new staff members at Brookdale as Ms. Quinn who came from Franklin School and is placed as a Kindergarten teacher. He stated that she worked as a team player in starting a new position. He thanked Ms. Perucki for working along with Ms. Quinn until she begins her maternity leave. Ms. Perucki is not being paid at this time to be here and that she represents the type of dedicated teachers that we have here at Brookdale School. He stated that Mrs. Schimmenti will be the teacher for the third section for Second Grade and will be in the new classroom. Mr. Fleres stated that at this time, there is no more class space that is available at Brookdale School. A parent addressed the concern about Mrs. Schimmenti's class being in the basement and that it is a safety hazard because it is separate from all of the other areas of the school and that there are no windows. Mr. Fleres stated that a safety plan will be discussed for the parents on Back-to-School Night and that there are exits for fire safety. He also stated that a trailer would have to be put into place if the classroom was not available. The parent expressed concern about safety and location.

Mr. Fleres stated that test scores are filtering in and that he is very proud of what he has seen. He stated that there are some peanut free tables in the lunch room and that he has placed in certified staff that are trained on a peanut free cafeteria. He and the teachers thanked the HSA for the smart boards. He asked that everyone check for updates on the school's website. Ms. Luca has done a terrific job updating the website. He stated that the school has a twitter account and there has been positive feedback. He also stated that it can be used to inform parents of an emergency if one should occur. He thanked the children for participating in the first day of school video. There has been a lot of positive feedback regarding the video from the Independent Press, Bloomfield Life, and the Patch. The link to the video is on the patch, the school's website, and the school's twitter page. A parent asked a question on what had happened to Ms. Perucki and it was explained that she was cut because of the budget. A parent asked about lunch cards and it was explained that he would reach out to Chartwells regarding lunch cards. He also stated that he has an open door policy and welcomes any parent who has any concerns.

Mike McLaughlin thanked Pamela Malcolm for helping provide the gift to Mr. Fleres. He encouraged everyone to sign up for paperless. Mr. Fleres stated that going paperless has saved the school money. A parent inquired about edline and it was explained that it is very important that parents sign up because Homework Now will be replaced. Instruction for edline will be given to parents as well as the codes. Mr. Fleres stated that the new teachers websites will be up and running very soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Nicole Bornemann, HSA Secretary, on September 15, 2013.