

BROOKDALE HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION, INC.

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 7, 2015

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

Board of Education Representative: Dan Anderson was introduced as the new President of the Bloomfield Board of Education. The HSA congratulated Mr. Anderson on becoming elected as President of the Board. Mr. Anderson stated that the district is on the right track and that he is a graduate of Northwestern University. He has worked in the past as a music teacher for 26 years and would like to keep the arts in the district and put a creative/artistic aspect into ISTEM. Bloomfield had passed resolution in October for parents to have the option for their children to be opted out of the PARCC. This states that a parent can refuse to let child take the test and that the parent's decision would be respected. However, the State said that school districts do not have to provide children opting out of the PARCC with alternative activities while the test is taking place. Delran, New Jersey, had passed resolution against PARCC and the Common Core and Montclair considered this as well. Bloomfield was the first district in New Jersey to pass such a resolution. He strongly encourages that parents read about the Common Core and the PARCC and let their legislators know their feelings about it. He suggested that parents look up Diane Ravitch and Chris Riftkin. He expressed concern that public education is going to be replaced with charter schools and this is the crisis in education today. He would like both educators and parents to be involved. A parent asked if he was in favor of PARCC. Mr. Anderson stated that public schools are being judged in only English and Math and not on the sciences or the arts. David Coleman came up with the idea of the PARCC, Bill Gates promoted it, and Arnie Duncan wants it to be used. He said that teachers are not involved with the creation of the PARCC test and it is not a reliable test. He would like a more authentic way of assessing students. A parent asked what grades will be taking the test. He stated that grades 3-12 will be taking the PARCC test. Some districts have done away with both mid-terms and finals because of PARCC testing. A parent stated that Glen Ridge did away with mid-terms and finals because they did not want to lose instruction time. Mr. Fleres stated that the building principals have received very little information and that the State has not helped with providing building accommodations. He stated that every principal in Bloomfield has met to discuss this issue. Mr. Anderson stated that eventually the PARCC may count for graduation and if a student will go on to next grade level. A parent asked if the PARCC would replace the NJASK. Mr. Anderson stated that the PARCC will replace the NJASK and that the NJASK was not as high stakes. A parent asked if the PARCC would eventually go away. Mr. Fleres and Mr. Anderson stated that too much money is involved and that it is a business model idea that does not work. Mr. Fleres stated that both he and the district have no choice in administering this test. He stated that parents must write to the legislature. Mr. Anderson stated that the PARCC test is difficult for a small child to take on a computer and that simple math problems are written in complicated ways causing language issues. A parent asked if anyone has filed a petition. Mr. Anderson stated that there had been a hearing in Trenton about how difficult the PARCC is. A parent stated that parents should sign letter of support against the PARCC. Mr. Anderson stated that public education is being threatened and that charter schools are test factories where children are kicked out if they cannot do the work and are put back into public schools. We are making good headway on this issue and Bloomfield is looked upon as a leader regarding this issue.

Faculty Representative: Mrs. Pico thanked the HSA and the parents for all of the holiday gifts. Ms. G. stated that the Student Council sold 1000 smencils and that it is the most that has ever been sold. All of the proceeds will go towards the Sixth Grade field trip to Philadelphia, PA.

Principal's Report: Mr. Fleres reported on important events that are happening at Brookdale School.

a. School Beautification: Mr. Fleres stated thanked Mollie Smith with school beautification during the holiday season.

b. School Websites: Mr. Fleres stated that both he and Linda Colucci of Special Services made a presentation on inclusion with the public schools at a national teacher's conference in Florida on December 5, 2014. This news is presented on the school website.

c. Brookdale Family Night: Mr. Fleres stated that this event was a big success and will be done again in the Spring. He thanked the parents for their support and there was no homework assigned for that night. He is trying to have the district become involved in this activity. The Student Council sent cocoa to all of the families for the night.

d. Coffee and Conversation With the Principal: Mr. Fleres stated that there were over thirty people who had attended the event and that he would like to do another event like this in either February or March. He had very nice conversations with the parents.

e. Talent Show: Mr. Fleres stated that parents must be involved in talent show this year by monitoring their children and if this is not done, then the talent show will not be taking place. Lack of supervision leads to an unsafe environment. If a child is signed up for the Talent Show, then the parents must be present at rehearsals for the entire time.

f. Parking: Mr. Fleres stated that both the faculty and staff now will need a parking pass in order to park in the parking lot because parents have been using it to drop their children off in the morning. Both he and Officer Falco policed this and anyone without a parking pass will be ticketed for safety reasons. He did state that parents may use the parking lot for Before and After Care.

g. Holiday Gifts: Mr. Fleres thanked the parents and the HSA for gifts and for the holiday giving tree.

f. Class Parties: Mr. Fleres stated that the Holiday class parties were a big success and that there were no issues. The nurse is putting together another list of approved foods.

g. PARCC: Mr. Fleres stated that the schedule for the PARCC is being developed and will be given out as soon as possible. Every teacher will provide a week's worth of work for the students not taking the test.

h. Holiday Concert: Mr. Fleres thanked Mr. Fries, Mrs. Artha, and Mrs. Stambolian for doing such a great job.

i. Cold Weather: Mr. Fleres asked that the parents dress their children appropriately for the cold weather. The students have to arrive at or after 8:20a.m. to enter on cold days. He follows a 32-degree rule when having students outside for recess.

A parent stated that the police officer was too strict during drop off time. Mr. Fleres stated that a parent parked illegally and was almost hit. Another parent praised Officer Falco for his work.

Treasurer's Report: Monica Lutz presented the budget. Our current budget in the checking account as of December 31, 2014, amounted to \$36,212.63 and that the total holdings amounted to \$5,660.00. Total

sales from the Holiday Gift Shop amounted to \$8,802.19 and from the Poinsettia sale amounted to \$684.00.

Secretary's Report: Minutes were approved from the previous meeting of November 24, 2014.

Items on the Agenda:

- a. **Basketball Uniforms:** Rafael Jimenez stated that the basketball uniforms were distributed. The Games will start on Saturday at Oakview or Demarest Schools. All basketball events will be posted on twitter for our school and teams. A parent stated that the Bloomfield High School Softball Booster Club will be selling refreshments at the games for their fundraiser to raise money towards their trip to go to Florida. A parent brought up a concern about parking space problems during the games. A parent stated that no one should wear earrings during the games and that a tee shirt should be worn under their uniform.
- b. **Calendar Raffle:** Jody Polidoro asked parents to turn in stubs and that less than 1000 are now in. A flyer had been sent home. Please turn tickets in by January 28th. A parent asked how the raffle works. Jody Polidoro asked everyone to refer to the paperwork.
- c. **Spirit Wear:** Rafael Jimenez stated that there have been 15 orders so far and that Monday is the cutoff date to order.
- d. **Casino Night (Beefsteak):** Monica Lutz stated that this event will take place on Saturday, April 18th from 6-11p.m. at the Essex Manor. It is presently under a new management and renovations will be done. More details will be coming out soon.

The Thank You Roster:

- a. **Holiday Gift Shop:** Thank you to Kami Lacki, Gail Dolan, Michelle Kelly, and all of the volunteers.
- b. **Poinsettia Sale:** Thank you to Reagan Stulbaum, Coreene Olaya, Amanda Pinales, Bonnie Luque, the Fifth Grade parents, Jerry Manley at Wakefern Food Corporation, and to ShopRite.
- c. **Holiday Parties:** Thank you to all of the class parents and teachers.
- d. **Holiday Giving Tree:** Thank you to Jody Polidoro.
- e. **Concert Christmas Tree and Holiday Wreaths:** Thank you to Mrs. Stambolian and Mrs. Artha.
- f. **School Beautification:** Thank you to Mollie Smith and all of the volunteers.
- g. **Smencils:** Thank you to Ms. G., Karen Rizzi, Cheryl Pavliv, and the Sixth Grade students.
- h. **Holiday Gift Basket and Staff Gifts:** Thank you to the parents and the HSA.
- i. **Family Donation:** Thank you to the Marotta family for their generous donation.

- j. **Book Fair Chair:** Thank you and welcome to Jennifer Guidea for volunteering to be the chairperson for this event.

Upcoming Activities:

- a. **Small World Day:** Will be taking place on Friday, February 27, 2015.
- b. **Casino Night:** Will take place on Saturday, April 18, 2015.
- c. **Spirit Wear Deadline:** Monday, January 12, 2015
- d. **Calendar Raffle Donations:** Wednesday, January 28, 2015

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

The next HSA meeting will be held at 7:00pm on Wednesday, February 11, 2015.

Respectfully submitted by Nicole Bornemann, HSA Secretary, on February 8, 2015.