

East Hills Middle School

Parent Association Meeting

September 4, 2024

Call to Order & Introduction of Members:

- Present: Kelly Stewart, Monica Maldonado, Lori Cowell, Mary Fiorini, Jocelyn Vlach, Ana Gonzalez-Burgos, Karen Owens, Mishanda Smith, Zafirah Singh, Quanesha Johnson, Stacey Bailey
- Call to Order: President Kelly Stewart called the meeting to order at 9:36am

Principal's Report:

- Mrs. Costanzo:
Mrs. Costanzo is the school nurse and has been at East Hills for 9 years. She will triage school related injuries, assess symptoms of illnesses, respond to emergency situations, assist students managing chronic illnesses, perform annual mandated screenings, comment students and families with medical resources, and support parents with the implementation of individualized health plans for students with medical needs.
- Mrs. Cortes, Mr. Leon, Mrs. Limpar, Mrs. Morgan:
The school counselors were all present and introduced themselves. Mrs. Morgan is the counselor for 6th grade, Mrs. Limpar is for 7th grade and Mr. Leon is for 8th grade. Mrs. Cortes handles all three grades. The counselors provide social and emotional support for the students as well as academic support. They also assist in behavioral support and career support. They can also help find outside counselor help for students, if needed. Students can privately request to meet with them through a form they can access on Schoology or just let their teacher know that they want to see them. The counselors have food boxes available all year for families in need and can also assist children with accessing the Charger Care Closet. The counselors will set up a Giving Tree around the holidays to help families in need.

- Dr. McDonald:

Dr. McDonald has been with East Hills for 10 years and runs the National Junior Honor Society. She has developed a relationship with Historic Bethlehem and places all over the Lehigh Valley for students to volunteer. Last year the students volunteered for a total of 1,030 hours on their own. Students with a GPA of over 3.75 will receive an eligibility letter with an application to join the honor society at the end of 7th grade. Dr. McDonald handles the daily announcements as well as the EHMS webpage so the Parent Association can provide her with any information they would like included in either place. Dr. McDonald will be creating a Student Lighthouse team this year to go along with the Leader in Me program that the school follows.

- Mrs. Dennis:

Mrs. Dennis is the school librarian. The library is not a class in middle school but rather is there as a resource to teachers and students. 6th graders will spend an Innovation hour in the library and will also be given the opportunity to check books out every month, although they are welcome to get books more frequently if they are fast readers. Technical support is also handled in the library. Students should take their Chromebook to the library in the morning with any issues. The first repair is covered by the district. Multiple repairs may be charged if neglect is found. Students can try clearing their browsing data and restarting their computer to help it run faster. Students will be provided with a new computer at the end of 8th grade for use in high school. The school uses Go Guardian for a monitoring program to keep kids safe on the computers. Teachers can see the students' screens and inappropriate and dangerous searches are flagged. Teachers are also informed if any searches related to suicide, weapons or sexual content are performed.

- Officer Corsi:

Officer Corsi is the new Student Resource Officer at East Hills. He will be working on rebuilding trust with students. He has been with the City of Bethlehem police for 10.5 years. He was born and raised in Bethlehem. The district has revamped the SRO program over the summer. The SRO's will not have any meetings with students in their office anymore. They will hold group meetings. There is also a body camera program now in place that will be used when dealing with children. If you have any questions or concerns about the SRO program, please feel free to reach out to the administration.

- Mr. Horvath:

Mr. Horvath is the Principal of East Hills. The school motto is "Together. Connected. Strong." The first few days of school have gone great. Middle School is a big change for the 6th graders, and they have embraced it and are doing wonderful. Please encourage your children to get involved with the programs offered at the school. Open House is Thursday, September 5th from 6-8 pm. There will be

no large assembly held at the Open House as the turnout is expected to be very large. The Book Fair will be open during the Open House as well as the students being able to visit the following week. Musical Auditions will be held 9/16,9/17 and 9/18. Callbacks will be 9/20. Students must sign up and attend only one day. Paperwork and a sign up can be found outside the choir room, Room 135. Stage Crew Interviews will be 9/11, 9/12 and 9/19. There will be an 11:30 dismissal on Thursday 9/26 due to Teacher In-Service. The Charger Challenge will be held on October 17th. This is the only fundraiser for the school every year. Mr. Horvath provided a reminder that the Charger Care Closet is stocked with clothing, essential items and school supplies. Please reach out if your student would like to access it. The school offers many extracurricular opportunities for the students to get involved in. PIAA sports are only available for 7th and 8th grade students as PIAA rule is that students can participate for 6 consecutive years (2 in middle school and 4 in high school).

- Mrs. Braun

Mrs. Braun is the Vice Principal of East Hills. She discussed what the Charger Block is used for. It can be used for either intervention or enrichment, depending on the student's needs. Wednesdays are also used for reteaching and/or reassessment. Parents can view grades in both Schoology and ParentVUE this year. Mrs. Braun will send out an EHMS Connections Newsletter by email every Monday letting parents know what is happening at school that week. She is also responsible for all the digital signage around the school and takes pictures of the students to upload to the signs.

- Mr. Tannous

Mr. Tannous is also the Vice Principal of East Hills. He explained a little about the Framework of Citizenship, which is basically teaching the students to be good citizens. He also went over the Leader in Me program, which is teaching students to have good relationships with others. He reminded everyone that both pickup and drop-off of students is only to be done from Chester Road, unless there is an extenuating medical circumstance, or the child has a heavy item to bring to school that day. The new cell phone policy requires phones to be in bags all day and not out. Multiple violations will result in detention. Smart Pass has been a little glitchy this year. This allows the students to sign out electronically from class. They have 4 minutes to go to the bathroom and are allowed four trips a day. Breakfast is free for all students this year. The first dance will be held on September 20th from 6-8 in the gym. Students enter at the 6th grade entrance, and it is \$6. Students should be picked up from the school dance at 8pm sharp and the dance is only for East Hills students. Mr. Tannous will be retiring on or before December 2nd. Garrett Podhyski will be taking his place.

President/VP/Treasurer/Committee Reports:

- President's Report –
 - You can sign up to volunteer at the Book Fair here - <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094DAFA923A1F9C52-51101814-fall#/>. Volunteers must have their clearances on file with the East Hills office.
 - The Charger Challenge will be held on October 17th. The goal is to raise enough money for the students to go on field trips this year. We will be using Pledge Star for donations this year.
 - School Dances
 - September 20 – Grades 6,7,8. Hosted by Leader In Me (6-8pm)
 - October 18 – Grades 6,7,8. Hosted by National Junior Honor Society (6-8pm)
 - November 15 – Grades 6,7,8. Hosted by Athletics (6-8pm)
 - February TBD – Grades 6,7,8. SRO Dance with other middle schools
 - March 14 – Grades 6,7,8. Hosted by Mathcounts / Dance & Step Team (6-8pm)
 - May 30 – 8th Grade Farewell Dance in Cafeteria (6-8:30pm)
- Vice President's Report – no updates
- Secretary's Report – no updates
- Treasurer Report – Monica reviewed the budget for this year. Included in the budget is money for Teacher Appreciation Week, DJ for the 8th grade farewell dance, 6th, 7th and 8th grade lunches, money for teams, and for the Lamp of Learning ceremony at the end of the year.
- Committee Reports –
 - Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)– We have two representatives that will alternate attending this monthly meeting and will pass along the information to us.

New Business:

- HELP NEEDED– The Parent Association is currently looking for someone to help with the following positions. Please reach out for more information or if you are interested in helping.
 - **Charger Challenge** - Looking for someone to manage day-of details (on Oct 17) and volunteer sign ups. Truly, it's just checking with administration ahead of time to see what they need from us that day (cases of water, tables set up, etc.), creating a sign up genius for volunteers, and being present on the day of. It is a half-day of school, so everything takes place between 8 and 11:30am. Kelly Stewart will manage the marketing and pledge website. Monica Maldonado will purchase the prizes. Together we can make it successful!
 - **School Dance Snacks** – Connect with the host of the dance that month (the five dances that happen at EHMS; not the SRO dance in February) and find out what donations are needed. Create a sign up for the requested donations.

- **Book Fair** - The librarian has offered to set up the first Book Fair this year as we have no Chairperson. In order to have a second fair in the Spring, we will need a chairperson. They will connect with Scholastic about the dates and create the sign up genius for volunteers. Since Mrs. Dennis is managing this book fair, she has a better sense now of all that needs to be done. She said it's not a ton, but it's a lot for her to think through and do alone during her regular work day with kids in and out.
- **Teacher Appreciation** – Help arrange lunches and help to make Teacher Appreciation Week special for the teachers. There is a budget to pay for most items, although we do also do a sign up for donations from parents like drinks and desserts.
- **Guidance Chairperson** – Need someone to work with the Guidance office to coordinate needed donation items for the Charger Care Closet (ongoing) and the Giving Tree (in November/December).

Open Discussion:

- n/a

Meeting adjourned at 10:59 am

Next Meeting is October 2nd at 9:30am.