**Freedom High School PTO**

**September 10, 2019**

**Meeting Minutes**

Wendy Simpson, President, called the September 10, 2019 meeting of the Freedom High School Parent Teacher Organization (FHS PTO) to order at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was held in the school library. Twenty people were in attendance, to include members of the administration ( Dr. Roy, Superindent; Mr. LaPorta, FHS Principal; 4 Assistant Principals, 1 interim assistant principal), 3 executive board members, and 10 additional attendees.

Wendy introduced the new officers for the 2019-2020 year.

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Joseph Roy, Superintendent of Schools, BASD**

* Dr. Roy spoke about updates in the district.
* Reading by Grade 3 (RBG3), an early literacy program which is designed to have students at or above grade level reading by the time they reach 3rd grade. The program has shown positive results in the few short years since implementation.
* More attention is being given to the Social/Emotional Behaviors in students. Strategies are being implemented to regulate learning for issues such as society, lack of resources, as well as trauma informed care.
* Students in grades 8, 9, and 10 have each been given a Chrome Book as part of the BASD Empower initiative. This is designed for students to have access to learning resources at all times. Approximately 3000 Chrome books in 6 buildings (Middle Schools and High Schools) have been distributed so far. Dr. Roy complemented the IT staff on the job they did in making this happen.

The Chrome Books will be utilized in the classroom and at home. The software adjusts to hybrid learning, small groups, and work with the teachers. Dr. Roy spoke about “hot spots” that have been purchased by the district for students who may not have internet access at home. The long term goal is to have high speed internet access at a more affordable rate in the district and the region. This can be achieved by collaboration with community organizations.

Purchasing insurance for the Chrome books is recommended. Information can be found on the Freedom High School website: BASD Empower. Insurance needs to be purchased within 30 days of distribution.

* Dr. Roy introduced Matthew Malozi, Vice President of The Foundation for BASD

**Matthew Malozi, VP of The Foundation of the BASD**

* Mr. Malozi spoke about the mission of The Foundation:

 -Enhance opportunities for all children in the Bethlehem Area School District

 - Foster community and family partnerships

 -Support school district programs

 -Develop a collaborative spirit and supportive relationships between The Foundation, The BASD, and the Bethlehem Education Association

* Mr. Malozi spoke about outreach programs, such as Project Lead The Way, curriculum based field trips, and fundraising events.
* There has been much growth in fundraising efforts since 2014. Back then the Foundation raised $27,000. In 2019, funds raised were $288,000. By 2023, their goal is to reach up to $500,000.
* Liberty High School will be hosting a Project Lead the Way Open House to see what it is all about. This will take place on October 1, 2019 from 4:30-6:30 p.m.
* Dr. Roy added that The Foundation acts as a stimulus for teacher innovation with grant money given to approved teacher proposals.

**Principal’s Report: Mr. LaPorta**

* Introduced our 4 Assistant Principal’s
* Introduced Mr. John Ayre, who will be assisting during Mrs. Leeson’s maternity leave, and helping with student services, and the Keystone Testing rollout.
* BASD app—Mr. LaPorta will be utilizing this app to send monthly reminders with important dates of upcoming events.
* October 1, 2019- College and Career Night
* October 19, 2019- PSAT testing
* General morning announcements-These are videos run by the students of the Freedom Forum and can be found on the Freedom website. You can also find the link on the Freedom Forum Twitter page (@fhsforum)
* Theme for the school year: *Going Further: Achieving More*. This theme, designed to maximize student and faculty potential, is tied into the district’s Roadmap to Educational Excellence.
* Mr. LaPorta states that there has been an increase of volume of students in AP classes and dual enrollment courses. He is hoping to increase the volume of AP classes offered and to stimulate student interest in taking these classes as well.
* Sports Teams-Very successful in the last few years. Let’s keep the momentum going!
* National Honor Society Induction: Date changed to October 15, 2019.
* Mr. LaPorta, on behalf of the Freedom Family, sends condolences to the Caton Family.

**Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction : Mrs. Leeson**

* Mrs. Leeson spoke about the Department of Education’s PA Future Ready Index. This is a series of data points which evaluates student performance, career readiness, SAT/ACT performance, and attendance.
* Keystone results from Spring 2019 have not been received as of yet.

**Open Discussion:**

* Questions came up about dual enrollment courses and where questions should be directed. Mr. LaPorta reports that the Freedom Counselors are well-versed about which classes students can/should sign up for in accordance with graduation requirements. However, any questions about the college course themselves should be directed to the college advisor or professor.
* National Honor Society will soon be notifying prospective students who are eligible to submit an application to become a member.
* Meeting minutes are posted on the FHS website. A motion to approve the May 7, 2019 minutes was made by Julie Sabatino and seconded by Carmela Swenor.

* We were reminded that volunteers need to keep their clearances updated
* The October PTO meeting will be held at Lynnfield Community Center on October 22, 2019.

**Treasurer’s Report: Jason Testa**

* Beginning balance was $4,816.78
* Budget for the year has been set at $4,800
* Fundraising efforts are mostly with Giant A+ Rewards. PTO is looking into having a table set up at the Freedom Open House on September 19, 2019 where parents can sign up on the spot.
* Looking into bank fees, audit fees, and insurance fee to see if there is a place to save money.
* Motion to approve the budget and accept the Treasurer’s report was made by Julie Sabatino and seconded by Carmela Swenor.

**Parent Advisory Committee (PAC): Marie Brown**

* Discussed and gave feedback regarding the guide for elementary school report cards.
* Administrators receptive to parent concerns, such as student-led conferences and seminar classes.
* Next PAC meeting is September 26, 2019.

**Old Business: None**

**New Business:**

* Open House on September 19, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. Volunteers needed to work the PTO table.
* Fundraising Efforts: Giant A+ Rewards and any new ideas welcome.
* Parent Volunteers needed for the Homecoming Dance on September 28th.

**Next Meeting:** October 22, 2019 at Lynfield Community Center at 7pm.

**Adjournment:** 8:44 p.m.