

Freedom High School PTO Meeting September 14, 2021

Welcome: Wendy Simpson, PTO President

-Welcomes everyone to tonight's meeting.

-Most meetings are virtual; may possibly do an in-person meeting occasionally, but for now this format works well. Reminder emails go out a day or two in advance of a meeting with the zoom link sent out the day of the meeting.

-PTO uses the Naviance system so emails go to everyone.

Secretary Report: Kathleen Sweeney

-Made a motion to approve Meeting Minutes from May 2021. 1st by Nikki Testa; 2nd by Diana Weaver

Treasurer Report: Jason Testa

-Made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. 1st by Kathleen Sweeney, 2nd by Nikki Testa.

Balance is currently \$5,962.73. This is higher than usual since we haven't spent much money due to Covid last year. All information can be found on *the Freedom HS website/PTO page*. Budget for this year is forthcoming.

Principal Report: Laurie Sage

-Happy to start her 19th year in the BASD as Principal of Freedom High School.

-Introduced her new administrative team.

*Ms. Leeson – Administrator for Secondary Teaching & Learning in the BASD

*Mrs. Miranda – Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction (currently out for maternity leave, returning later this fall)

*Mr. DiBilio - Assistant Principal/Student Service Administrator for students with the last names beginning A-E.

*Mr. Sawicki – Assistant Principal/Student Service Administrator for students with the last names beginning F-O.

*Mrs. Olozie – Assistant Principal/Student Service Administrator for students with the last names beginning P-Z.

-Introduction videos for each of these administrators can be found on the Freedom H.S. website.

-If you were unable to make it to Open House, there are links on the website with teacher introduction videos as well.

-Our vision for the year is Resilience and Restoration. We want to restore opportunities for what the kids missed last year. We also need to continue good practices regarding Covid.

-Introduces Cesar Velasquez and Loretta Lohenitz from the Guidance Dept.

Special Guests

Loretta Lohenitz, Guidance

-Thanks the PTO for the desserts given on their Inservice Day.

-Busy time of year; encourages parents to reach out to their child(ren)'s teachers or counselors with any questions or concerns.

-It is a time of heightened levels of anxiety due to the fact our students have been out of school for so long.

Cesar Velasquez, Guidance

-Consistent communication is key. He has seen good communication so far with student and parents.

Question: What is the best way for a parent to get in touch with a guidance counselor?

Answer: Email for general questions; a phone call for more serious inquiries.

Ms. Leeson:

-District is currently doing a survey regarding grading and assessment practices. A link to the survey can be found on the Freedom H.S. website. The survey is for parents, students, teachers, and administrator to fill out. Ms. Leeson encourages all to take part. Last day of survey is September 22. Link: <https://www.research.net/r/GradingRx-BASD>

-It will be a long process; the pandemic got the ball rolling. We have contracted experts – researchers who are experts in their field -to help us look at the data.

Ms. Karissa Strohl & Ms. Autumn Nonnemacher, Pinebrook school-based Therapist

-We address student mental health concerns. There is an increase in caseloads as students are adjusting to school 5 days/week, new social and academic routines, etc.

-We are working on a new wellness center available for student to take breaks and do activities that will help them with issues they are facing. We will be working on things such as conflict resolution, problem solving, etc.

- There is a sign-up sheet using their student ID number; remains confidential.

Question: How can a student sign up to go there? Can they just stop by?

Answer: As of right now, Freedom is getting the word out to students. A teacher can ask for a student to be seen or a student can ask themselves. Students are welcome to stop by, however, a counselor may not always be available. In that case, students can sign in with their ID # and a counselor will get back to them/check in with them.

-Ms. Sage also mentions that the Guidance counselors and the Pinebrook Therapists have team meetings to discuss students who may need help and come up with a plan for them.

Question: Is there a parent level of involvement?

Answer: A site coordinator will contact parents if a child is seen, however, PA law states that if a student is 14 or older, they can decide if they want parent involvement. If there is a serious matter discussed, such as self-harm, parents and administration is notified.

Wendy Simpson:

-Thanks the administrative staff, guidance counselors, and Pinebrook therapists for coming tonight.

New Business:

-No funding sources currently. We are looking into a Little Caesar's pizza kit fundraiser, which is a passive way to raise money. It involves buying pizza kits to be used at home; hoping to launch later this week.

-Where to find PTO:

*On the Freedom Website under the Parent & Student tab. PTO has its own webpage where you can find the calendar, meeting minutes, and guest speakers at our upcoming PTO meetings. You can also follow on Twitter and Facebook.

- PTO email address is Freedomhspto@gmail.com.

-PTO has a mailbox (not checked often) near the Main Office.

-Thank you to those who have donated funds.

-Thank you to all those who donated desserts and drinks for the Inservice Day. It was put together quickly with a Sign- Up Genius and we appreciate the great response we had.

PAC Report: Jessica Hancz

-Meeting next week. Anyone is welcome to email PAC reps with their questions, concerns, and suggestions to bring to the PAC meetings.

Adjournment

Wendy thanks everyone for coming. Next meeting is scheduled for October 12. Dr. Roy will be our guest speaker.