

## ***Freedom High School PTO Meeting Minutes September 13, 2022, 7:30pm via Zoom***

### **Wendy Simpson, PTO President:**

-Calls meeting to order at 7:34 pm. Welcomes everyone and thanks them for joining us tonight.

-Introduces new board members:

**Kelly Burkhart, Vice President; Jessica Kalavoda, Treasurer; and Jessica Hancz, Member at Large. Kathleen Sweeney returning as Secretary.**

-The PTO has a page on the FHS website which will be updated soon. Our email address is [Freedomhspto@gmail.com](mailto:Freedomhspto@gmail.com). You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

-The PTO had a table during the Open House to get the word out about our organization. Generous donations to the PTO were made as well.

-Motion was made to approve the May 2022 PTO Meeting Minutes – 1<sup>st</sup> by Jessica Kalavoda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jessica Hancz.

### **Treasurer's Report: Jessica Kalavoda**

-Budget Proposal – expected for the 2022-2023 year is \$4,014.

Motion to approve – 1<sup>st</sup> by Kathleen Sweeney, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jessica Hancz

Activity Statement - \$3,754.54 (August 2022) + 9.00 cash donation with zero expenses paid = \$3754.54 Balance

Motion to approve – 1<sup>st</sup> by Kathleen Sweeney, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jessica Hancz

Wendy spoke about the PTO losing their main source of income when Giant stopped their fundraising support a few years ago. We have been operating on a surplus of funds and donations. Our budget this year is what we would like to do, so we are trying to come up with new ways to fundraise.

Question: Is this PTO a 5013c?

Answer by W.S. : No, it is a charitable and non-profit organization as far as banking, but we have not looked into becoming a 5013c, as it is a vigorous process and costs a lot.

### **Principal's Report: Laurie Sage**

-2<sup>nd</sup> year as Principal; 20 years at FHS.

-Introduces administrative staff:

**Amanda Miranda** – Assistant VP for Curriculum and Instruction; 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the position. Works closely with Guidance and preparation for the Keystone Exams.

**Mike DiBilio** – Assistant VP – 30 years with the BASD, AP since 2007. Works with students A-E.

**Mark Sawicki** – Assistant VP- 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the position, 19 years with the BASD. Works with students F-O.

**Robin Alozie** – Assistant VP- 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the position, 7<sup>th</sup> year with BASD. Works with students P-Z. Also is the lead coordinator for Social/Emotional Learning, Restorative Practices, and Student Assistant Program (SAP) referrals.

**Charmaine Aguilar, Dean of Students** – comes to us from the Spanish department and states it is a pleasure to be here in this new role.

**John Kaczmarek- Department Chair, Guidance** – 5<sup>th</sup> year as a counselor at FHS and is looking forward to his new role with a goal to make sure all students are taken care of.

**Ms. Sage, continued:**

-This past week we had the Patriot's Day-9/11 Anniversary Ceremony.

-Fall sports season is up and running

-Homecoming planning is in the works. The game is on 10/7 and the dance is on 10/8 from 6-9 pm in the gym. Tickets will be on sale in the coming weeks. All grades will be at the pep rally during the school day on 10/7; all grades can go to the dance if they choose.

-Please take note that October 4<sup>th</sup> is an Act 80 day and will be a half day for students; on October 5 there is no school for the Yom Kippur Holiday.

**Question:** Can you speak about the Covid Reporting Tool that is being used this year?

**Answer Ms. Sage:** Parents can go to the BASD website or FHS website and to go the "Parent Reporting" tool and fill out a google form, which asks questions such as the start date of symptoms or positive test result. You will then receive an email giving you instructions for when you can return to school.

**Question:** Can you also talk about the new BASD App?

**Answer Ms. Sage:** You can download the app and there you will be able to find links and information for everything BASD. You can tailor it to your specific needs as well by following the schools you are part of. I encourage everyone to download this.

**Question/Concern:** The 9th-grade pilot grading system. Can you talk more about this?

**Answer Ms. Sage:** This is going to be utilized for Science and Social Studies for 9<sup>th</sup> graders. On the report card, an achievement letter grade is given which will be part of what makes up a student's GPA. Something new that will be added is a number grade (4,3,2,1) which will be a scoring system that follows a rubric that reflects responsibility, effort, and engagement of the student. The idea behind this is to show a reflection of the whole child, not just the grades on a test.

***A concern by parents was that if a child was not a strong test taker but was able to improve their grades in other ways, such as homework completion, this child will not be able to get credit for their hard work. In other words, although it would be recognized on the new numerical system, this will not help their academic grade and GPA. Another concern is that it takes away any incentive for the student to \*do\* homework, if they know they will not receive any long-term, solid credit for their work. (ie, Letter grade, GPA, class rank)***

***Also stated was the idea that alerting parents to the change would have been a good idea.***

**Ms. Sage:** This has been worked on over the summer with the intent of rolling it out at the beginning of this year. Perhaps we can work on getting some parent groups together to discuss and get questions answered. We will try to link videos from Dr. Silva and Maureen Leeson regarding this new grading system. Look for that on our website.

Wendy agrees this is concern and that a larger discussion is needed.

**John Kaczmarek, Guidance:**

-Virtual College Fair emails went out today. This college fair will include up to 120 colleges and universities and will allow you to speak 1-1 or in a group with admissions counselors and other students. This is happening on Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Ms. Sage:**

-Wellness Center: Previously the planetarium, will now hold 4 offices and a calming room. This area will be a place for all counselors and mental health staff. This will give space for 1:1 counseling, a conference room area, and a peace room.

**Autumn Nonnemaker** from Pinebrook Family Answers works at FHS with SAP referrals. She is looking forward to supplying support. We also have Karla Erdman for SEL support.

**Q:** Can students go there on their own?

**A from R. Alozie:** Usually a teacher, family member, or neighbor sees a barrier to learning and will refer them to the wellness center. This can be done by going to the website and requesting a SAP referral.

**Q:** An email was sent about PSAT testing but was only addressed to Juniors and Seniors. Is it possible to re-send and alert Sophomore students and families about the PSAT?

**A from J. Kaczmarek:** Yes, we will do that. PSAT registration will begin on 9/21 during Block 2. Anyone interested in taking the exam will need cash, check, or money order for \$27 (or \$9 for students with free or reduced lunch)

The PSAT is scheduled for October 15 at 7:30am.

**Q:** Can students bring a calculator to PSAT?

**A:** Yes, an approved calculator can be brought.

**Q:** Will there be a college and career night?

**A from J. Kaczmarek:** Yes. This will be on September 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:10. Presenters will be here to share information about college, careers, and financial aid. More information should be out later this week.

Wendy thanked the administration for coming tonight.

**PAC Report (August meeting) – Jessica Hancz:**

-The covid reporting tool was talked about.

-BASD hopes to hold more vaccination clinics in the future (all vaccinations, not just covid)

-Discussed the possibility of having covid test kits in nurses' offices in the district to be sent home with students who are showing symptoms.

-Discussed hiring more nurses.

-HVAC upgrades were still ongoing at the time of the August meeting.

-New turning lanes were painted at the Freedom back parking lot.

-School safety – Dr. Roy reported getting a grant of \$327,000 for physical safety and another grant of \$327,000 for mental health safety. Some of this will be invested in door shades for the windows next to classroom doors. This process has already begun. Todd Repsher will be meeting with school principals to update their safety plans. The Safe to Say app is still up and running.

-The district will be hiring a new CFO.

-Spoke about the grading pilot program for 9<sup>th</sup> grade

-New BASD app was discussed.

### **New & Old Business, Wendy S.:**

-Thank you to VoTech for the delicious meals made for Teacher Appreciation Day back in May. The teachers and staff enjoyed it very much. Parents had been given the opportunity to donate a meal(s) for a favorite teacher and we received quite a lot of donations that way, which helped offset the cost to PTO.

-AthLife is an organization that has been implemented here at Freedom and helps support athletes who may need extra help, ranging from academic help with tutoring to providing healthy snacks. We hope to help them by having a food drive in the coming months.

### **Fundraising – Jessica Hancz**

-Shocktoberfest has given our PTO a promo code to use at their theme park. If you purchase tickets online, \$2 will be given to the PTO if you use the code Freedom22.

-Seiple Farms is also giving back money for purchases made. Please look for the flyer on social media and email.

\*The flyer must be used for the PTO to get credit.

### **Next meeting will be October 11<sup>th</sup> with special guest Dr. Roy.**

Q: Would we be able to invite Dr. Silva to this meeting to see if he'd be able to give us more information about the 9<sup>th</sup> grade pilot grading system?

A: Yes, we can definitely invite him.

Meeting adjourned 8:52 pm.