

# Freedom High School PTO Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2023, via Zoom

## Wendy Simpson, PTO President:

-Welcome everyone and thank you for coming.

-Makes a motion to approve the December and January Meeting Minutes; 1<sup>st</sup> by Jessica Hancz, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lori Walker.

-Treasurer's Report: Last month was \$3754.54 + a \$20 donation = \$3774.54 total.

PayPal account = \$753.11.

-Makes motion to approve, 1<sup>st</sup> by Kathleen Sweeney, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lori Walker

## Principal's Report: Laurie Sage

-Winter sports are finished; spring sports are underway, with some scrimmages happening this weekend.

-Mr. Greg Vennemann from BASD Proud Parents has an active chapter at FHS. Has sent out a survey to students to see their interest in signing up for Advocacy Day in Harrisburg on April 26. So far, 31 have shown an interest in attending.

Q: Will parents be included in Advocacy Day?

A: Yes, you can reach out to Mr. Vennemann about that. Also, their next Advocacy Day Prep meeting is on March 29<sup>th</sup> via zoom. At Freedom, our goal is to encourage the students to be student leaders.

-We are in the planning stages for graduation at Stabler Arena.

-We hosted a Career Fair for 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. 45-50 businesses were here.

-On March 29<sup>th</sup> the Moravian Scholarship winner will be announced.

-My visit with the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be happening in the next 2 weeks at Broughal and East Hills Middle Schools. We talk to them about life at FHS and answer their questions. Some 9<sup>th</sup> graders will come along to give feedback on their experiences.

-On April 17 8<sup>th</sup> grade will come to Freedom for about 4-5 hours for a tour, activity fair, and lunch.

-Easter Holiday is Thursday 4/6 thru Monday 4/10.

-FHS Theater Company's Beauty and The Beast on April 20-23.

-Wellness Center has opened

Q: Do you have the contact information for the 8th-grade parents to let them know that our PTO meeting in April will be about transitions from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 9<sup>th</sup> grade?

A: Yes, Ms. Sage will send information to the Broughal and East Hills Principals to let them know.

Q: In regard to graduation and the seniors' pictures that will be shown as they walk across the stage, can they send in pictures that were taken somewhere other than Christmas City?

A: Yes, they are welcome to do that. Just have them email it to me. We are also offering an opportunity for seniors to get their pictures taken on March 22<sup>nd</sup> if they have not had their pictures taken yet.

Q: Will information regarding transitions also be sent to private school students?

A: Yes, separate letters will be sent.

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Q: How are accomplishments that are announced at graduation determined?

A: It is a vetted process that focuses on their next steps and significant awards/scholarships received.

**Special Guest: Mike Faccinetto, BASD School Board President:**

-14 years on the school board, and 12 years as president.

-Mentions he now has a freshman at Freedom who is involved in soccer, choir, and theater.

-Big changes happening in the district. First, with the retirement of Stacy Gobert in August. She did a phenomenal job, and the district is in a much better position financially because of her. In her place, we have Harry Aristakesian who is a breath of fresh air and is fiscally prudent.

-Russ Giordano from Human Resources will retire this June. Russ has been a big advocate for the District and its Employees, and he will be sorely missed. Stay tuned for word on his replacement.

Joe Anthes, former principal at William Penn is now Director of Related Arts.

Maureen Leeson became Director of STEM and has played a large role in the new report card rollout, which will be a full-scale rollout next year.

\*\*A parent voiced concerns over the parent survey that was sent out regarding the new report card format. She notes that it was sent to parents yet was presented to the board (approved?) before the survey results were due. This parent also noted that the survey was quite "skewed" in its format and was also wondering if the results would be shared.

\*\* Another parent voiced concerns over the lack of time teachers have been given to be trained on this new report card system. Mr. Faccinetto reported that inservices and B-flex hours will be given for training and will be built into their schedules next year.

Q: Will it be a full rollout next year?

A: Yes, there will be training for staff and informational videos for parents in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, who will be part of this rollout. The elementary school report card will not change. Ms. Sage notes that we are seeing a process and there will be some growing pains.

Q: Will there be parent education on what is included in the college transcript so they know that the new grading system will not pass along anything other than the letter grade?

A: Mr. Faccinetto said he will take note of that and pass it on.

-Basd Proud Parents is expanding its network and getting students involved.

-The Level Up Program is no more. It had been a great way to help the underfunded. Covid funding goes away this year.

-The new Wellness Center at Freedom has received a lot of good recognition in the community.

-The new Girl's Wrestling sport is exciting to have; Coach Laubach stepped up to coach and has been a great help in getting it off the ground. They had a great first season.

-Reminder that Primary Elections are in May and please vote.

-The Foundation Dinner is next week on 3/21. This is a wonderful evening to see what we produce at the BASD.

-Feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns. [mfaccinnetto@basdschools.org](mailto:mfaccinnetto@basdschools.org)

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Wendy thanks Ms. Sage and Mr. Faccinnetto for speaking with us tonight.

**Old/New Business:**

-No PAC report due to a canceled meeting in February. The next meeting is Thursday, March 23.

-April PTO meeting will be about transitions – both 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 12<sup>th</sup> to college.

-Community Service opportunity at the Spring Garden Carnival on 5/12 from 3-8 pm. Students would help with running games, prizes, etc.

-We will need to hold elections for PTO officers for next year.

**Discussion/Miscellaneous:**

-There are a lot of concerns about the new report card, the skewed survey questions, and the lack of teacher training. One concern was brought up about the lack of office hours to allow teachers time to assess/reassess a student.

-Another parent suggested the idea of bringing back Parent-Teacher conferences.

-Wendy will reach out to Ms. Leeson about coming to the next meeting to address some of these concerns. She wants to make sure we are getting our concerns addressed.

The next meeting is Tuesday, April 11, 2023 via Zoom

Meeting adjourned