



Bellaire PTO Meeting – November 18, 2021

Meeting Minutes (Meeting conducted via Zoom)

Call to Order: President Judy Cheng called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Judy Cheng welcomed all those in attendance and asked for participants to sign in for Title 1 documentation.

Attendees were also asked to review the minutes from the 9/23/21 general meeting (these were distributed via email prior to the meeting). There was a motion to accept the 9/23/2021 minutes as presented. The motion received a second and the meeting minutes were approved.

VP of Communications: Nisha Lobo thanked parents for attending the first parents' coffee yesterday morning. More informal events will be planned for the spring semester. She also encouraged everyone to join the PTO and to sign up for the PTO newsletter. Links for PTO membership and to subscribe to the PTO newsletter are on the Bellaire PTO website.

VP of Membership: Kelly Bluhm thanked those who have already joined the PTO and recognized the growing list of corporate partners. The membership team hopes to further increase the number of BHS families that have joined the PTO. Currently, there are just under 200 members (approximately 10% of BHS families). She encouraged additional donations and reminded those attending of the goodies that go with paid PTO membership (for example, a BHS visor or baseball cap at the \$100 level). For families that donated at the \$500 level or above, invitations for the December 13 event with Mr. McDonough will be distributed soon.

Judy Cheng reiterated the call for donations, reminding those attending that the financial gifts are tax deductible to all money received goes to help the school and our students.

VP School Relations: Rachel Berger noted that the Homecoming dance was a huge success. The committee will be looking into other venues for the coming year in hopes of increasing the number of students that are able to attend. She also noted that the Mr. Bellaire event (for senior boys) will be coming up in March. Details will be coming soon.

Secretary, Parliamentarian, Past President: no formal reports.

President's Remarks: Judy Cheng reported on the status of the Teacher Grant program. There were a large number of applications this year. Teachers submitted proposals for a grant with a \$3000 maximum award. The committee was able to spend all of the money that had been budgeted for the grants. The applications were diverse and grants were awarded in the areas of athletics, fine arts, yearbook production, and general academics. The committee was pleased to be able to distribute funds across all areas of the campus and student activities. Judy reminded those in attendance that there will be a run-off election for the District V HISD trustee position (currently held by Sue Deigaard). She encouraged everyone to go out and vote.

Judy also gave a brief report from the Treasurer (Keith Desrosiers). In his notes, Keith mentioned that reimbursement requests have been coming to his attention. Corporate donations have already exceeded expectations for the year by over \$1500. The Bellaire PTO's primary means of raising funds is through individual memberships and business sponsors. Continued support is requested.

Principal's Report: Mr. McDonough thanked everyone for attending the meeting and was happy that the first parent coffee was successful. He also reminded participants of the upcoming run-off election for the HISD District V Trustee position and the importance of getting out to vote.

The end of October included the "snapshot" date for identified BHS students. This data is used by the state to finalize school budgets. The BHS enrollment was just below what the administration had projected, but the numbers should allow the school to meet its overall budget. Mr. McDonough noted that HISD as a whole lost enrollment this year. He also noted that BHS did not have any unexpected staff turnover.

Mr. McDonough has asked teachers to hold off on any new assignments that would be due on the Monday or Tuesday after Thanksgiving break. He feels that it's important for students and staff to have the period for relaxation and recharging. This will also be the policy for the upcoming winter break.

STAAR related issues: Retesting for students that were enrolled at BHS last year will take place in December (for students who did not take the tests in school). Teachers are providing tutorials for students needing to review class material from last year. Also, students identified as being subject to HB4545 (either did not take a STAAR exam or did not pass an exam) will be required to complete 30 hours of tutorials. The administration has been hosting Accelerated Learning Planning Committee meetings with students and their families to schedule tutorials. Those tutorials will likely be in the spring. Questions may be addressed to Mr. McDonough or the student's assigned counselor.

Athletic teams are in action. The football season is complete. Volleyball and Boy's Cross-country teams won district titles. Girl's Cross-country finished 3rd in district competition. The school has also hosted swimming competitions and several fine arts performances. There has been a lot of club activity during Cardinal Hour, as well. The cast has been set for High School Musical – The Musical (performance in late January).

Also, a reminder that final exams are after winter break. A schedule should be finalized soon.

Additional Comments: Judy Cheng asked some questions that had been raised at the parent coffee.

- 1) How does the school address a student's mental health needs?

Mr. McDonough: Every student has a team, but every student should also have a "go-to person" that they feel could be approached with problems or emotional concerns. All BHS faculty and staff have been trained on how to get kids the help that they need. Students have counselors and Assistant Principals assigned to them alphabetically. The school also has a social worker and a nurse on staff. He feels confident on staff's ability to get kids to the right person and additional resources are available if needed.

- 2) What is the appropriate response time for a counselor?

Mr. McDonough: You should receive a response within 48 hours. In a crisis situation, response time should be shorter than that. If the response is delayed, parents might loop in the student's Assistant Principal or the lead counselor (Patricia Magilke).

- 3) What if students are considering dropping a course?

Mr. McDonough: Students should be encouraged to talk with their teacher and get assistance before deciding to drop a course or drop down in course levels. Teachers should have at least 2 days / week available for tutorials during Cardinal Hour. If your student needs help in asking for help, parents may need to assist them in writing an email or role-playing the discussion. It is possible to drop a course after the initial drop period (with administrative approval). However, the administration wants to know how the student has tried to get help. If possible, students should consider finishing out the semester and either dropping down a level at the semester break or changing courses at that time (to preserve credits, when possible). Teacher recommendations on options can be helpful to students and their parents in making that decision.

- 4) Senior activity schedule?

Mr. McDonough: Prom is on the BHS calendar, subject to district approval. Normally by this time, the school would have held a senior meeting outlining upcoming events and dues schedules. Graduation dates have not been set by the district. As soon as BHS is notified, the information will be pushed out to students and families.

- 5) Changing a course level?

Mr. McDonough: Student can change a course level at the start of each semester. Students that are planning to do that in January should contact their counselors for a schedule adjustment.

- 6) Construction update?

Mr. McDonough: Currently, construction is on schedule. Demolition is complete and piers for the parking garage are starting to be placed. By the first day of school (August 2022), the parking garage, front door, and build out of the administrative space on S. Rice should be completed. Student areas should be completed at that time, with a possible move in to the administrative offices 6 weeks after the start of the 2022 academic year. Once the parking garage is done, the temporary parking ("Pebble Beach") along Ferris will be torn up and construction begins on the track / athletic space.

- 7) Where can students be in the school if they don't have a 7th period?

Mr. McDonough: There are designated areas on the first floor for students to sit during the 7th period. There is a small courtyard available, plus the first floor dining space (new academic building). Some students also wait in the College Center. Staff discourages students from

moving about the building if they are not in class. Their student id should have a designation for off-periods.

Judy Cheng thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a good Thanksgiving break.

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Minutes submitted by Anne Kayl, Secretary

DRAFT