



AHS PTO GENERAL BOARD MEETING

October 20, 2015

Members present: see attached

Called to order 9:04 a.m.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Kyle Ross, SUSD Director of Instructional Technology - **AzMERIT Update**

Overview: Test is unique to Arizona, but based off testes from other states; in July a group of educators met to determine “cut scores” for each level; decisions were based on info from other states and a knowledge of what is being taught in each grade—student scores were not yet known. These levels were adopted by Board of Education in August.

- Should better correlate to other states and SAT/ACT scores
- Expect 1st year scores to be lower than AIMS as AzMERIT is more rigorous
- Scores will be released to schools in November; teachers will know school scores early in month; families will get their students’ results sometime mid-November.
- Communication will focus on explaining why scores may be lower and what schools are doing to prepare kids to do better in coming years.
- As of now AzMERIT is not a graduation requirement and results will not count for kids or schools. Not yet determined how long phase-in period will be; legislature will decide when test will “count” for schools and when/how it will count for students.

Various questions from the audience:

- How many other states have adopted this type of test? Over 40. This is essentially based on Common Core, though AZ has made some changes and uses different terminology.
- What is the commitment to this—will it be long term? TBD by legislature, but most AZ districts believe the standards are sound, so even if Common Core goes away the test may still be an adequate measure.
- Will lower scores hurt students when they are applying to universities? No. Colleges compare students within individual schools, not among schools and states.

Cindy Leonard, AONA Community Outreach Coordinator

AONA (Arcadia Osborn Neighborhood Association) is an advocacy group dedicated to preserving quality of life in the neighborhood between Thomas and Indian School Roads, 40th and 56th Streets. They provide factual information about projects and issues that affect the neighborhood. The next meeting is November 7, 9am at First Chinese Baptist Church.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Nathan Slater

- AHS made the list of top 500 college prep schools
- Enrollment has stabilized around 1,760 with average class size of 27.7
- AzMERIT continues raise questions and cause frustration for administrators. Scores will be arriving later this morning, but not sure how they will be packaged; not possible yet to know how much time it will take to get info to teachers and parents. Plan to discuss with teachers during meetings on early release day (11/4), then distribute to students on 11/5.
- PSAT next Wednesday
- Garden is underway.
- November 5—forum on education funding (see attached handout); encourage all to attend

Questions from audience:

- Is there a way to upload AzMERIT scores to naviance, so kids aren't responsible for taking home? No, too cumbersome to scan all.
- Is it possible to request that teachers not give projects and tests during AzMERIT testing? Hard to enforce, as testing window is 7 days. Not realistic for teachers to put schedules on-hold for that long.

REVIEW OF MINUTES from last meeting

Some changes needed:

- Under Guest Speakers/Technology Impact: Katie Assali said “Class set of 40 Chromebooks and Google training, paid for by AHS Dads Club”; what she said was incorrect. Change minutes to say “Class set of Chromebooks funded half by PTO, half by Dads Club. Teachers also received Google training.”
- Under Membership: Lezlie stated incorrectly that “to serve as a booster club member, you must be a PTO member.” Minutes should reflect the rule accurately, which is: “All booster club presidents and treasurers—and other officers—must be current PTO members.”

Motion to approve minutes with changes as noted, made by Francesca Thomas, 2nd by Christy Davies; approved unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS

Treasurer – Deb Stamets not present, report by Lori and Amanda

- Profit and Loss statements on table for all to review (see attached); we are encouraging all teachers to tap into Project Fund; \$14K expense shown in Project Fund is for the Chromebooks.
- Tax info turned over to accountant
- Note on booster guidelines and need for officers to be PTO members: Boosters operate under our 501c3; this is to keep us in compliance with tax regulations and to ensure they are covered under our insurance policy.

Communications – Kathy Sandler

- Future Titan Night is October 30
- We have been approved for Google Apps for non-profits
- Stats: Eblast going to 1,223 contacts, 40% are opening (industry avg 20%); website averaging 280 unique visitors each week, with spikes on eblast days—indicates parents are reading eblast and seeking more info; 300 followers on FaceBook; 161 followers on Twitter.

- Note that if you unsubscribe to eblast, you must re-subscribe on your own; question as to whether our subscription list is linked to Hopi and Ingleside; Kathy doesn't think so but can't say for sure.

Fundraising – Susan Spier

- Buy cups! We make a 50% profit.
- Fry's program is starting
- Last Chick Fil A night is October 22

Membership – Lezlie Richardson and Tracey Wasson

335 families have joined, up from last year; reaching out to families who were members last year but have not yet joined; also reminding booster officers—most have joined

Legislative Update—Francesca Thomas

Regarding education funding plan: SPC has taken the position that before any other plans are heard or considered the funding lawsuit must be settled; asking parents and supporters to tweet “#enough is enough #fund the lawsuit to governor and legislators; also can email comments. Dr. Eric Meyer will present education funding plan at next SPC meeting, 9:30 at Mohave.

Project Grad—Sue and Eleanor not present

Waiting to hear about movie fundraiser; magic-mentalist show scheduled for November 20; more info on website.

Auction—Lezlie Richardson

Some are asking, why have an auction when we are in a good position financially? We should fundraise while we can; people are willing to plan it; best to raise money for years when we may not have fundraising capacity.

- First committee meeting will be in a couple of weeks; still some holes to plug, especially in need of acquisitions chair.
- Alumni parent Debbie Frazelle is working to get alums involved in auction, both as donors and attendees.

Tax Credit—Beth Johnson

Working to get message out; Karen Treon is working on video; encourage all who can to pay by check (not credit card) to save district processing fees; make people aware of all the special programs they can direct funds to.

Community – Amy Owens

Hiking Club is going well—people other than AHS parents are welcome to join; next one is Oct 27 at Lookout Mountain.

NEW BUSINESS

Gratitude Grams: Water cooler broke, PTO replaced; small refrigerator was donated to the College & Career Center; Julie Flatley made goodie bags for C & C to hand out to college reps.

THRIVES: Rewards and enrichment

- Board agreed to fund (out of Project Fund) for 2 semesters—prizes and rewards to increase attendance; students who stay and participate can fill out a card and be entered into a drawing each quarter; prizes

will be gift cards to local businesses (ones that support us), and free items like lunch line passes, parking spot for a month, etc.

- We will also be supporting THRIVES enrichment—speakers, essay-writing sessions, etc.

Dads Club: Update on Buck & Rider event—all food was donated so 100% of proceeds went to AHS. We made about \$9,800! Money will be used for technology.

Running Booster Club: Barbara Halden will give up treasurer position; Stacey Greene would like to replace her.

Motion by Francesca to elect Stacey Greene as replacement treasurer for the Running Booster Club; motion 2nd by Beth Johnson. Passed unanimously.

Garden Club: still has many needs; looking for sponsors and donors

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.