

Minutes

Homestead Parent Club Meeting

March 10, 2016

Start time 11:13 am

Present: *Kathy O'Shaughnessy, President; Heather Wilcox, Incoming President; Elizza Wesner, Secretary; Cindy Volk, Joelle White, and Fanchon Sykes*

Welcome by Kathy O'Shaughnessy, president. Since ISTEP testing was taking place in the Community Room, the meeting was moved to room 303.

Park Ginder, Principal

- Thank you to the Parent Club for the recent Teacher Appreciation Luncheon. It was very well received and appreciated by the staff and faculty.
- On March 8, 2016 the seniors attended a Mental Health presentation in the auditorium. The guest speakers comprised the Dean of Students from IPFW, a Peer Mentor from IPFW, Dr. Eric Norman, PhD, and Dr. Kelly Hutner, clinical psychologist and SACS parent.
- Jennifer Bay, Assistant Principal, and Kathy O'Shaughnessy, Parent Club President, were instrumental in organizing this event.
- One of the topics covered was the anatomy of the brain and how it relates to the development of teens and young adults. Another topic covered coping mechanisms and how to handle stress in college.
- Unfortunately, there was not enough time to cover many of the areas in depth.
- Mr. Ginder highly recommends parents to read How to Raise an Adult by Julie Lythcott-Haims. While at Stanford University, she was the Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Freshmen and Undergraduate Advising.
- Four Flex Days are planned for the 2016-2017 school year: August, October, September, and November. The Flex Day in August will take place eight days after the first day of school so the teachers and staff can participate in Technology Device Training. New computers will be rolled out to students and staff next school year.
- For the October Flex Day, Mr. Ginder would like to do something different in addition to the clinic based workshops. He has invited Dean Shareski to speak to the Homestead, Summit, and Woodside staff. "Dean has had the opportunity to speak to a variety of education audiences both nationally and internationally. His passion remains helping teachers explore the affordances of technology for learning. Dean believes humor and humility go a long way in supporting and advocating transformational practices in teaching and learning". (visit <http://www.discoveryeducation.com/what-we-offer/professional-development/speakers-bureau/dean-shareski.cfm>)
- Mr. Ginder asked the Parent Club to provide a \$2,500.00 grant towards Mr. Shareski's speaking fee. He asked for a commitment within 30 days.
- Mr. Ginder's challenge: How do we better connect Homestead and families? How do we increase attendance at Parent Club Meetings and how do we draw a more diverse crowd to the meetings? How do we reach families with special education needs? How do we connect with families in varying socioeconomic backgrounds?
- We need to increase community awareness. What topics can we offer at a Parent Club Meeting? We need a hook.
- Can we increase our reach at registration by handing out more flyers? Can we reach different people at a football game?

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Guest Speaker, Davita Mitchell, Student Support Specialist and Mentor

- Davita's role is to work with new SACS students to help them acclimate to the SACS culture. This culture includes the high academic rigor compared to other school districts, the limited diversity, and the varied socioeconomic households.
- She is responsible for meeting with counselors and staff at all nine SACS schools.
- Since her first day on the job, January 20, 2016, Davita has met with 25 students at Homestead.
- These students are referred to her by counselors, teachers, and by other students. She also sits in classrooms and observes students.
- Davita explores the student's areas where they are struggling, where they are thriving, and she offers ideas for them to get connected at Homestead. She emphasizes the importance of Homestead's rigor because it prepares them for college.
- She is planting seeds of success in these students' minds.
- She asks them, "Do you feel good about yourself?"
- Davita would like to have a Diversity Training workshop for the Homestead faculty and staff. She would like to begin the training with, "What is your definition of Diversity?" This is a broad topic.
- She is working with a group of students who are interested in starting a Diversity Club at Homestead.
- Davita is a life-long resident of southwest Allen County. Her children graduated from Homestead where they thrived in an academically rigorous environment among a very diverse group of friends.
- She can be reached at dmitchell@sacs.k12.in.us

Business Meeting, Kathy O'Shaughnessy, President

- Heather Wilcox attended the recent President's Council Meeting. The following topics were discussed:
 - ISTEP challenges due to technical issues. Exams were taken with pencil and paper
 - Pearson asked SACS to be a pilot group for new testing materials and techniques. SACS' declined and now the attorneys are involved.
 - For the Referendum, a "Yes for SACS" group has been formed as well as a PAC.
 - The Referendum phone canvassing has been positive. 63 percent polled were in favor of the referendum.
 - Approximately \$4,000.00 dollars was budgeted for phone canvassing and targeted mailers.
- The Parent Club needs to decide if we offer the \$2,500.00 grant that Mr. Ginder requested for Dean Shareski's speaking fee. The speaker will reach a large number of teachers during the October Flex Day from Summit, Woodside, and Homestead. If we offer the grant at this time of year, it means we will need to take it away from the grants usually discussed during the first semester of the 2016-2017 school year. Mr. Ginder asked if we can have an answer within 30 days
- The new Parent Club Secretary is Elizza Wesner. Kim Brown's substitute teaching position has become a permanent one until the end of the semester.
- We need Vice President prospects

Meeting adjourned at 12:50 pm