

Glen Rock Federated HSA Meeting
Tuesday, Oct 19, 2021
Zoom - 7 p.m.

Attendees:

Sharon Tishco, Kristin Hodges, Jackie Pappas, Orlee Goldfeld, Colleen Manley, Julia Wang, Stacy Hendl, Heather Olenick, Dr. Brett Charleston, Dr. Michael Parent, Jodie Craft, Sharon Scarpelli, Valerie Merlin, Jen Scherer, Monica Lauro, Alison Pappalardo, Michele Sapoff, Nancy Bermack, Sheila Berard, Valerie Merlin, Neetu Arora, Stephanie Carosella, Lisa Torsiello, Kristen Hochleutner, Maria Jaume-Aponte, Tina Bacolas, Jenelle Wise, Kathryn Morris, Kristen Kurth, Julianna Moore, Joe Goglia, Barbara Whelan, Lisa Bryzek, Megan Findley, Kate Wolfe, Lauren Suero, Mike Escalante, Cathy Lee, Julia Jaffe, Carolyn Stallone, Marina Skurko, Ann Boyle, Keira Perez, Jennifer Wong, Liz Songozi, Christine Murphy, Heidi Leder, Maria Slump, Jackie Schwartz, Jyoti Belani, Felicia Goldberg, Asha Seetharam, Marissa Storinge, Anna Kang Weyant, Phyllis Simon, Kellie St. Laurent, Jocelyn Reiman, Roshma Azeem, Lauren Schept, Rebecca Molnar, Kristine Gifford, Amy Mortko, Desiree D'souza, Stephanie Carusone, Kim Desmond, Jennifer Lota, Jennifer Alexander, Jackie DeVore, Maria Torre.

1. President's Report – Sharon Tishco

Sharon welcomed everyone to the meeting, gave a short description of the Federated HSA.

2. Approval of Minutes

There were no corrections to the minutes, so they were fully approved.

3. SEPAC – Orlee Goldfeld

- SEPAC is following a new format for their meetings. They had their first “Parent Only” meeting last week. November 9th will be their next meeting, which includes everyone and they have a speaker. Author Elizabeth Hamlet, who wrote about transitioning from high school to college, will be their speaker. All meeting information can be found on Federated’s website - grfederatedhsa.org/sepac
- At the “Parent Only” meeting, they discussed many issues such as distractions in the elementary schools due to multiple classes in the same room, a new name for pre-k students, teaching assistant rotations, test accommodations, collaborative teachers in MS not working collaboratively, class descriptions on students’ schedules in MS and Genesis access for non-district families.

4. Online Directory Update – Julia Wang

Data will be released by the end of this week for families to approve.

5. Federated Calendar Update – Heather Olenick

We have a fully approved calendar available on the Federated’s website at grfederatedhsa.org/federated-calendar. It is updated continually and it is nice to have events to add rather than take away this year.

6. Treasurer Update – Jackie Pappas

Jackie shared that Mobile Arq is the only expense at this point and that we have \$2,908.97 in cash.

7. Superintendent Update – Dr. Brett Charleston

- There is a Restart Committee meeting this Thursday, 10/21, where they will discuss the travel guidance for the district. The school doctor will be there as well as the 25 people on the committee. Members of the committee consist of parents, teachers and the GREA. They will

also discuss volunteers in the school. We all want parents back in the buildings, so that will be a topic.

- Tents – There have been some questions regarding adding tents to schools. Dr. Charleston spoke with Don Mutch and unfortunately, there are restrictions to large tents in which they have to be taken down between 11/30 and 4/1. We can consider putting them up in April, but will discuss at a later time.
- Hamilton Expansion – This expansion is fully funded by the capital reserve, not a referendum. There will be 4 classes and 2 SGIs. Expected completion is September 2023.
- Curriculum – We'll certainly meet students where they are, but our students were able to cover what they needed to due to coaches, supervisors, small class sizes, structure of the school day, etc. Students are on target for the most part and the district is working with those kids who are not. Jodie Craft added that she is very pleased with the initial results of the Start Testing for the 4th and 5th graders and that students tested well, in line with her expectations.
- Substitute Teachers – Simply put, there is a shortage of substitute teachers state and nationwide. We have been requesting about 2 per day and very rarely even get 1 across the elementary schools. Dr. Charleston noted that in the case of a teacher's extended absence, the district would work toward replacing a substitute with a teacher for that period of time. Dr. Parent mentioned that in the case of substitutes, students will be allowed to spread out to the cafeteria except for 11am – 1pm. Beginning 10/21, that will be implemented.
- Teacher Morale – Teacher retention is another nationwide issue. Teachers leave for many reasons including salary, relocation, promotion, etc. Dr. Charleston and Dr. Parent both strongly believe that although teachers are certainly stressed in the current environment, there is no indication that teacher morale is down. They have maintained open lines of communication with all staff and the GREA and do not feel that there is low morale. They both noted a better vibe to the year and positive communication throughout.

8. Board of Education Update – Sharon Scarpelli

The next Board of Education meeting will be 10/25 at 7:30pm either in person or through Zoom.

9. Middle/High School Principal Update – Dr. Michael Parent

- Start Strong testing is finishing up this week. The preliminary data is fantastic. We will be able to clinically pinpoint strengths and areas for improvements through is diagnostic assessment. We will really be able to see where the students fall.
- There have been MS celebrations such as BBQs, pep rallies and Homecoming Dance this weekend. Dr. Parent strongly believes in a balance of academics and fun for the kids. The students are excited to be back and are more involved than ever. In November, students will participate in Read Across America, which is nationwide. They will also have a Veteran's Day celebration.
- Professional development is a big focus for Dr. Parent. He is with the staff all day and he meets with the GREA leadership. He believes in fully supporting our teachers. He feels the mood and climate are wonderful and does not sense the narrative of a bad environment at all in Glen Rock.

10. Elementary School Principal Update – Jodie Craft (Byrd)

Coleman Elementary - Coleman School has started off smoothly. We thank our HSA for the kick off coffee and the teacher luncheon during the first week of school.

- BTS Night was again successful as our teachers conducted their presentations via Zoom.
- We thank Mrs. Brunetti and all of her helpers for once again coordinating the hot shots free throw competition(9/24). The students had a blast and having the adjustable BB hoops was beneficial! We thank our HSA for the awesome Farm Fest on October 1.

The weather could not have been better and selling 450 donuts in 30 minutes is a remarkable fete!

- We kicked off the Week of Respect with our new program, "Choose To BE Nice". Each month focuses on a new value including RESPECT, Kindness, Acceptance, Friendship etc. Our students and staff have made the pledge to be NICE by signing a banner displayed in our hallway and we are excited for this new endeavor at Coleman.
- We completed our Start Strong Testing for all 4th and 5th graders on Wednesday, October 13. We look forward to the quick turnaround of these scores in order to gain a clear idea of where are students are academically in relation to their statewide peers after last year's unique learning situation.
- Our Inspire Science program is in full swing and all K-5 students are interacting with this hands-on engaging curriculum.
- We look forward to our annual Halloween parade on 10/29 as we have not had one since 2018!
- We once again thank our HSA for all they do for our students!

Hamilton School - Hamilton Huskies are very happy to be back in school! Thank you to our H.S.A. for welcoming our parents with coffee on the first day of school. Thank you also for welcoming our teachers with an amazing luncheon.

- Our virtual Back to School night went very well and it was great to see so many parents attend.
- Walk to School – We had a great turnout with Mr. Holmgren meeting our students at Starbucks and walking together to Hamilton.
- Hamilton students enjoyed many activities for Week of Respect such as a Smile Wall, Chalking kindness messages in the play area, a mindful scavenger hunt, and several Hey Days for getting to say hello to each other.
- We look forward to the circus residency next week. All students participate and perform one of the many acts the program will teach: juggling, plate spinning, tightrope walking and many more. Although we will not be able to have a show in person by our fifth graders, we will record it and send everyone the link.
- We also look forward to our Halloween parade on Friday, October 29th

Central School - Wonderful Opening! Thank you to my wonderful and supportive HSA for organizing and sponsoring the following activities that have enriched the experience of students at Central.

- Walk to School Day
- Fall Family Fun day – We love our scare crows
- Welcome back luncheon for teachers
- Welcome Back Coffee for families
- And Welcome new Kindergartners and new family ice cream social in August
- Wonderful turn-out for our Virtual Back to School night!
- Week of Respect - Throughout the month of October, all of our elementary school students will be engaged in fun-filled experiences. We are excited to introduce "Say Hey!" Wednesdays, chalk the walks with kind comments, and create school-wide "Smile Walls." - Celebrated with different spirit day around a message of kindness and acceptance.
- Thank you to the fifth grade parents and our 5th graders students for an amazing Haunted House!
- Looking forward to our Halloween Parade on October 29th
- Book Fair on November 9th and 10th

Byrd School - Our school year is off to a great start. Our theme for the year is One Love, One Byrd. It reminds us that we are one community that is built on our love of our children, teachers, families, and learning. Thank you to our H.S.A. for welcoming our teachers with an amazing luncheon.

- Our virtual Back to School night went very well and it was great to see so many parents attend.
- The Byrd School gym is on target to be ready on October 29th. The work is coming along nicely and we are looking forward to using our new gym soon.
- Our Student Council representatives have been elected and are eager to begin their work.
- Thanks to Mrs. Carter, our guidance counselor on the many activities she coordinated for Week of Respect such as a Smile Wall, Chalking kindness messages in the play area, and several Hey Days for getting to say hello to each other.
- Our 4th and 5th grade departmentalized pilot is going extremely well. Our teachers are working diligently to become masters of the content areas in which they teach and our students are getting acclimated to switching classes.
- We also look forward to our Halloween parade on Friday, October 29th.

II. Questions

- Several parents raised the issue of independent learning versus direct instruction at the middle school level. After some back and forth, Dr. Parent noted that he will work with the math department and continue to monitor the learning situation. Multiple parents referred to the idea that students need more direct instruction with math. Dr. Charleston added that it is their job as educators to work with kids based on students' abilities. They should pivot along the way if something isn't working. He believes in all of the above teaching. He apologized if there was a fear of abandonment as that is absolutely not the case. Both Dr. Charleston and Dr. Parent encouraged parents to talk to their children's teachers to make the teachers aware of any issue.
- When will parents receive the results from the Start testing? Dr. Parent said it would be a few weeks as they finish make-ups and teachers receive the scores.

12. Motion to adjourn the meeting – Sharon Tishco