

# Garden City PTA

## Joint High School & Middle School Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 10, 2026 | 9:30 AM

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### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Donna Kraus (HS PTA Director)** and **Tara Kelly (MS PTA President)**.

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## High School PTA Updates

### Donna Kraus

- **Skit Night – Route 26:** A wonderful and very successful evening. Thank you to the Skit Night Committee, parent volunteers, administration, and custodial staff for making the event so special.
  - **Active Parenting of Teens:** Began March 5 and will run weekly through April 9.
  - **PTA Health & Safety Awareness Day:** Students participated in CPR and Lifeguarding CPR/AED training.
  - **Spring Musical – *Footloose*:** Performances will take place March 12–14. All are encouraged to attend and support the cast and crew.
  - **Yearbooks:** Last chance to order yearbooks.
  - **Career Skills Workshop:** Scheduled for March 20 and March 27.
  - **Harlem Wizards Game:** March 20 at Garden City High School.
  - **Reflections Awards Ceremony:** March 23.
  - **HS Spring Sports Parent Meeting:** March 26 at 7:00 PM.
  - **PTA Dinner:** March 31 at 6:30 PM. Tickets are still available.
  - **Nominating Committee:** Volunteers are needed. Parents are encouraged to consider nominating themselves or another parent for the 2026–2027 PTA Executive Committee.
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## Middle School PTA Updates

### Tara Kelly

- **Middle School Family Bingo Night:** PTA/SEPTA-sponsored event.
- **GC Cares:** Event was very successful and well attended.

- **Transition to High School Meeting for 8th Grade Families:** Informative and well attended.
  - One additional PTA meeting will be held before the end of the school year.
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## SEPTA Updates

### Sivan Chapman

- **Music Bingo:** Extremely well attended and a huge success.
  - **2026–2027 Executive Committee:** Nominations are currently being accepted.
  - **Best Buddies Friendship Walk:** Scheduled for May 9. Fundraising opportunities and additional ways to get involved will be announced in April.
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## Garden City High School Principal's Update

### Mr. Steingruebner

- **Athletics Highlights:**
  - Girls Basketball team named **Nassau County Champions**.
  - Track athletes and Swimmers competed upstate with strong results.
  - Language Awards were recently presented.
- **Hoops for Hope:** Annual student-run event continues to make a meaningful impact on the community.
- **Skit Night:** Congratulations and thank you to Mrs. Kraus and the entire team for a fantastic evening.
- **Band Trip:** The band performed at Disney for the third consecutive year and had a wonderful trip.

### Upcoming Events:

- **Spring Musical – *Footloose*:** March 12–14
- **Spring Sports Season:** Beginning this week
- **Challenger Basketball Program:** Recently launched
- **Honor Society Inductions:** April
- **AP Exams:** May (over 50% of students take AP courses)
- **Spring Fling Dance:** Mid-May
- **Career Seminars & Interview Practice:** March 20 and 27
- **Decision Day for Seniors:** May 1
- **Prom & Graduation Parent Meeting:** Mid-May
- **Regents Review Sessions:** Begin in May to prepare for June exams

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# Garden City Middle School Principal's Update

## Mr. Escobar

- **GC Cares:** Over 400 students participated; staff were very impressed with student involvement.
  - **School Musical – Newsies:** Performed last weekend and was a fantastic production.
  - **NWEA Testing:** ELA and Math testing will take place this week and next.
  - **Regents Review Sessions:** Will begin in May.
  - **Transition Meeting for Incoming 6th Grade Families:** Well attended and informative.
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## Presentation

### Mandi Stefankiewicz, Director of Guidance

**Topic:** *MS–HS Curriculum Decisions: Myths, Facts & Long-Term Impact*

Ms. Stefankiewicz provided an informative presentation on academic pathways and the importance of building schedules based on authentic student needs rather than outside pressures.

Key points included:

- **Regents, Honors, and AP courses** differ in pace, depth of analysis, and workload expectations.
- Course placement decisions should be thoughtful and based on **student strengths, goals, and overall well-being**.
- Courses taken in middle school **do not permanently determine** a student's future academic opportunities in high school.
- Guidance decisions are based on four factors:
  - Learning style
  - Cross-subject success
  - Life balance
  - Motivation

The goal is for students to feel **appropriately challenged and confident**, rather than consistently overwhelmed.