

Garden City PTA
High School PTA Meeting
November 13, 2019
High School Library

General Membership Meeting and Vote

Meeting started: n/a

Required Quorum of 30: Not Met – No official PTA Business Conducted

Meeting adjourned: n/a

Regular joint meeting of the High School PTA and Middle School PTA

Meeting Starting: 7:38 pm

Meeting adjourned: 9:08 pm

Handouts: Meeting agenda, High School PTA Committee Reports, Garden City High School Guidance Department “Resilience” flyer, Stop & Shop A+ School Rewards flyer, Garden City PTA ‘Let’s Get Social’ Membership Matters QR card and membership envelope, SEPTA Membership QR flyer and envelope, Parent Question/Comments card, Garden City PTA 2018-19 Accomplishments, Garden City PTA 2019-20 Planned Activities;

Sign-up sheets: Nominating Committee Volunteers, Interview Committee Volunteers and PVC (Parent Volunteer Corps)

Updates

PTA News and Committee Updates: J. Turner welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced herself as High School PTA Director along with G. Donovan Middle School PTA Director. Sign-in sheet at the back table along with agenda, High School PTA committee reports and other handouts.

Principal Updates

E. Nezowitz, Principal at Garden City Middle School reported:

- Dr. Nezowitz introduced himself and D. Fasano, Garden City Middle School Assistant Principal
- Home Base - forming Home Base committee comprised of staff and students to reimagine Home Base. Social Emotional Learning will be featured.
- Lunch with Principal - Students are randomly chosen to eat lunch with Dr. Nezowitz. Five lunches have been held so far with more to be scheduled. Lunches are a chance for Dr. Nezowitz to get to know the students; talk about experiences at the middle school; what they enjoy/do not enjoy; feedback about home base highlighted some inconsistencies across rooms.
- Essential Elements Schools to Watch - Garden City Middle School is up for its fourth designation. State sending committee to interview staff, students, parents, community members along with middle school administration on November 19.
- Safety & Security - ahead of schedule for safety drills
- Upcoming Joint Assembly to feature Garden City Police Department discussion about Digital Footprint, Cyberbullying, Safety Online
- Maker Space at MS Library is a work in progress – features STEM/STEAM learning; new 3D printer and color copier; opportunities for students to learn and work on projects collaboratively; space will continue to be revamped.
- Social Media allows for insights not previously available. GCMS teachers are posting more; follow Dr. Nezowitz and Dr. Fasano on Twitter for glimpses into what is happening at Garden City Middle School.
- Unity Day featured special morning drop-off. Dr. Nezowitz, Dr. Fasano and other staff members formed a welcoming line for students arriving to school. Also included students cheering other students on as they arrived to start the school day.
- SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) – high school students visited and presented to middle school students.

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- Questions fielded by Dr. Nezwitz –
 - *German teacher update:* no word yet on status of German teacher out on leave. Good feedback on current substitute teacher. Parents will be updated as information available.
 - *Are middle school locker rooms closed:* Yes, middle school locker rooms have been closed. Students no longer need to change into gym clothes. Allows more time to be spent on PE activities. Also eliminates any locker room behavior issues.
- Upcoming activities include Penny Wars.

K. Steingruebner, Principal at Garden City High School reported:

- Safety & Security update: new consultant Covert Investigations has been retained by the district. Front Door entrance now features three marked doors – one for staff to swipe ID to enter, one for Students to be buzzed in and one for visitors. New self-serve kiosk coming - will allow for visitor photo ID to be scanned and visitor pass to be printed; Safety drills are on schedule - first Lockdown Drill has already been conducted.
- Garden City High school is a Title I school – Federal Title I funds are made available to public schools through the federal government based on the percentage of free and reduced lunch.
- Fall Parent Teacher Conferences have all been completed. Spring conferences to be held in February & March.
- AP Exam registration was completed early this year. College Board made the timing change. Late registration deadline is November 15. Assistant Principal, Mr. Malone, following up with any students not yet registered.
- Add/Drop Date Policy under review by Site Based committee – possible recommendation to eliminate five-day moratorium on Add/Drops; portal will open early for the upcoming school year to allow for error corrections.
- Winter Wonderland to be held December 13 for 11th and 12th graders. Guests must be high school students. Tickets to go on sale soon.
- Recent past activities include: “Intelligent Lives” screening; Steve Dodge presentation; Red Ribbon week featuring positive messaging on mirrors in student bathrooms.
- Library Innovations Lab: features new 3D printer which allowed students to print chess pieces; library renovation next summer will include rug replacement, paint, new layout with larger Innovations Lab space and multi-use flex space, white board tables, flex furniture, mobile circulation desk.
- One School One Book – committee has met and final book choices are coming. Students will get to vote on which book to select. PTA has committed to donate \$1,000 to activity.
- Flex Professional Development – 15 hours of PD required for staff; choice of offerings include mental health/mindfulness, technology/Google Classroom.
- Google Classroom – goal that every teacher will be on Google Classroom by the beginning of next school year. New Google Classroom features match our needs and are free. Canvas was unable to deliver features promised so school has moved on to Google Classroom with significant cost savings.
- Questions fielded by Mr. Steingruebner –
 - *Other Nassau County high schools require high school students wear school ID on a lanyard to allow for easy identification of students. Will GCHS consider implementing this requirement in the future:* Suggestion to require students wear student ID has come up previously and is under consideration.

Special Presentations:

K. Steingruebner introduced students Chris Catalano and Dylan McDonald

- Chris Catalano, High School Senior and member of Peer Educators explained the program is students educating other students about topics not covered in the classroom. Students apply to become a Peer Educator; meet Thursdays after school; Social Worker, Dina Bombardiere, is the program advisor.
 - Vaping Special Section – problem at high school level; lack of education about the dangers. This year revamped presentation to mimic ‘The Game of Life’. Select three volunteers; volunteers state goal they

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wish to achieve; Action cards with decisions and consequences are utilized; game players take steps forward (towards goal) or backwards (away from goal). Poor decisions lead to being unable to attain goal while good decisions allow students to move forward and achieve goal. Game uses realistic situations with decisions and consequences.

- Dylan McDonald, High School Senior and member of SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) explained that SADD educates students on a range of topics from anti-bullying to vaping and drug abuse. Social Worker, Dina Bombardiere is the program advisor.
 - Presenting to GCMS 8th graders about Vaping on 11/13 and 11/20 . Explain what it is, refusal strategies and what to do if someone is vaping. Optimistic that utilizing high school students to educate middle school students about dangers of vaping will have a positive impact and students will choose not to vape.
- K. Steingruebner Vaping Presentation:
 - District wide vaping committee made decision to target and educate students below high school level before they are faced with the choice to vape or not. Goal is to get to students as young as possible.
 - New scientific evidence in the news everyday about dangers of vaping; now able to share facts with students.
 - New Legislation in effect raised the legal age to purchase vaping products to 21; legislation bans flavors including mint and fruit/candy.
 - Have not caught any Garden City students vaping at school so far this year; staff always on the lookout. When students are caught it results in parent meeting, suspension and even a previous arrest for intent to sell at the high school.
 - Utilize preventative education and vaping is part of health class curriculum.
 - K. Steingruebner conducted a “Show and Tell” about vaping featuring vaping paraphernalia that has been confiscated from Garden City High School Students over the last 6 – 7 years.

Upcoming Dates:

- December 3 – 8:15 PM – Board of Education Work Session – Topic – Status of Capital Projects /Future Needs/Reserves and Security
- December 16 – Ticket Sales Begin – Garden City Scholarship Fund – Harlem Wizards
- December 17 – 8:15 PM Board of Education Meeting at Stewart School (7:00 PM Stewart School Building Tour)
- January 6 – Registration Opens – Parent University
- January 6 – Mandatory Skit Night Meeting for 12th Grade Parents
- January 7 – Board of Education Work Session – Topic – Student Achievement Report
- January 23 – 9:15 AM HS PTA Meeting
- January 30 – Parent University
- February 3 – 7:30 PM All Schools PTA Meeting
- February 11 – PTA & SEPTA Parent Event: Dr. Michele Borba, “Building Empathy”
- March 16 – 7:30 PM – Joint MS/HS PTA Meeting: Speaker, Randi Levin – “Stand Out, Get In – College Application Essays”