



Issaquah High PTSA 2.6.45 General Membership Meeting

October 13, 2020
7:00pm

Via Zoom

DRAFT

Our PTSA Mission

To expand educational opportunities and enhance the learning and social environment at IHS through programs, volunteers, advocacy, and financial support.

Call to Order Kim Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Proper notice of the meeting was given and a quorum was present. In attendance: Kim Wilkinson, Birgit Aarrestad, Alisa George, Tara Moe, Wendy Maruchek, Satnam Purewal, Wendy Cummins, Carla Geraci, Amy Korb, Toni Hunteer, Karissa Mobilia, Shamitha Sridharan, Cynthia Lydum, Lorna Gilmour, Raquel Koz, Josi Beck, Tracy Drake, Andrea McCormick, Chandyu Lee, Janani Swaminathan, and Karla Knickerbocker.

President's Report (*Kim Wilkinson, Birgit Aarrestad*)

Kim Wilkinson reported the following information:

- Thanks to:
 - *College Week* – College and Career Planning committee, and Programs co-Chairs Wendy Cummins and Sathya Kannan
 - *Angel Program* – co-Chairs Karissa Mobilia and Julie Gamble
 - *Cookie Treats for Staff Photos* – Hospitality Co-Chairs Rachel Stoner and Laura Schmidt
 - *New Family Ambassadors Twin Falls Nature Hike* – co-Chairs Cathy Habib and Lisa Hill.
- “Ask an Academic Advisor Night” is coming up on Oct. 21. The counselors will make a presentation and there will be breakout rooms to ask questions.
- InstaPoll – Best time for PTSA meetings? Most responders preferred Friday mornings (current schedule), second choice was last hour and a half of the school day school day on a week day, last choice was evening on a week day
- One of our goals this year is to build community. Our new social media “Spotlight” series featuring teachers, staff, students, and recent alumni is intended to help people get to know the IHS community. Email ideas for students and teachers who would make good subjects to the Presidents.
- Thanks to our speakers this month: IHS Principal Andrea McCormick and Lorna Gilmore, ISD Equity and Family Partnership Specialist.
- Check issaquahhighptsa.org for the most current information about upcoming events

Business

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included the following documents:

- Minutes of September 11, 2020, Membership meeting
- September 2020 Treasurer's Report

The Minutes and Treasurer's Report were emailed to members with the meeting notice, and were made available on the PTSA website.

MOTION 1 Wendy Maruchek made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded. Voice vote taken, motion passed.

2020-2021 Budget

Tara Moe proposed two corrections to the 2020-2021 Budget related to Membership sales. She proposed halving the Membership income line from \$20,000 to \$10,000, and the State/National PTA expense line from \$12,800 to \$6,400 to account for the fact that a membership purchase covers up to two individuals.

MOTION 2 Tracy Drake made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 budget with the proposed corrections. Motion was seconded. Voice vote. Motion passes.

Panel Speakers

Speaker

The first speaker, IHS Principal Andrea McCormick, was introduced.

Principal McCormick reported that the outlook for returning to in-person learning is not looking good because the Covid-19 case numbers are rising in King County. IHS is bringing back its LRC-II students in a hybrid learning model on Oct. 15. The next cohort would be Kinders and first graders, but the date that that will be allowed is unclear. With the case numbers and the complexity of the HS schedule, it looks like in-person won't happen until Spring, at the earliest.

Regarding sports teams, the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) recently announced new return-to-play guidelines for prep sports based on guidance from the Governor's Office and the Washington State Department of Health. The guidelines use a three-tier system to classify sports by risk, and Title 9 also must be considered, so deciding what sports can return when is complex. KingCo Conference is expected to release a revised plan based on the new guidelines soon. This is a District decision and is being discussed at the School Board level. There are differing opinions about whether sports and clubs should return before in-person academics.

IHS students were surveyed during SEL last week and 1,850 students respond. Overall, they felt good about how things are going. One area that needs improvement is homework balance –some in-class work gets pushed to after-school hours because students take advantage of class period work time to take a screen break, get a snack, etc. Then students end up with five or six 10-15 minute assignments to do at the end of the day, which effectively turns it into homework.

Question: What is the IHS enrollment?

IHS is responsible in some way for 2,500 students, but only about 2,100 are full time students who expect to be in class for seven periods a day. The others are part time or full time running start students, partial home school students, etc.

Question: If IHS is able to return with a hybrid learning model this year, will students have to change teachers?

If we end up going to hybrid at some point, the likelihood that students will have to change teachers is high because teachers can't teach in both models. Students might also have to change classes if they are in a class taught by only one teacher (e.g., Japanese) and that teacher doesn't choose the same option as the student. Students probably won't know which teachers will be coming back before they choose which model they want to follow.

Questions: Why is late work not always accepted by teachers if it's turned in within five days?

Late work acceptance policies vary by teacher and there's nothing in the teachers' contract that allows the school to enforce a uniform late work acceptance policy. The IHS Admin team is working with the less flexible teachers to convince them of the benefits of following a consistent policy, but Principal McCormick does not have the power to compel them to do so. When there's an issue, please email the teacher directly, and copy Principal McCormick and/or another member of her Admin team. The District may eventually take it to the WEA to get some uniform language. The school board is currently discussing creating a uniform late-work policy for the ISD.

Speaker

The second speaker, ISD Equity and Family Partnership Specialist Lorna Gilmore, was introduced.

Lorna presented "Building Community Through Cultural Awareness." Parents who are not familiar with the U.S. school system are often hesitant to contact their students' teachers. The children are often left to fend for themselves to get the help they need, and as a result, they may fail to graduate. Lorna's job is to help these families navigate our school system.

ISD is about 50% students of color, but the staff is about 90% white, and this can create miscommunications and misunderstandings. Language can be a barrier. It's important to help teachers understand both their own culture and other cultures so that they can create good relationships with students of all backgrounds because students who have a good relationship with their teacher will work harder to please the teacher and are more likely to succeed in school.

Lorna used the analogy of a tree for culture. The tree leaves and branches represent "surface culture," the trunk represents "shallow culture," and the roots represent "deep culture." When we think about culture, we often think about surface culture (food, dress, music, etc.) because it's obvious. But it's shallow culture that often causes cultural disconnects. This include the acceptable level of eye contact, personal space, body language, being very direct in speech, what being "on time" means, etc. Deep Culture also causes problems. This includes individualist versus collectivist identity, preferences for competition or cooperation, notions of fairness, etc.

Most people have friends who share their background and culture—they are not exposed to people from other races, ethnicities, and cultures. To build a cohesive culture in the ISD, we need to give parents more opportunities to interact and converse with others, and to learn about each other's cultures. The PTSA can encourage these conversations by having more socials and ways for parents to get to know each other. Sell the PTSA's ability to help parents connect and learn about the system. It's also helpful to talk to people of different backgrounds within the PTSA and find out if they feel a sense of connection.

Adjourned 8:34 PM

Next Meeting: Friday, November 13, 2020 at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted,

Alisa E. George, Secretary