



Issaquah High PTSA 2.6.45
General Membership Meeting
Via Zoom

February 12, 2021
9:30am

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 9:32am. Proper notice of the meeting was given and a quorum was present. In attendance: Kim Wilkinson, Birgit Aarrestad, Alisa George, Tara Moe, Laura Schmidt, Wendy Maruchek, Satnam Purewal, Wendy Cummins, Sathya Kannan, Kristen Allen-Bentsen, Carla Geraci, Mark Zehnpfennig, Marisa Garcia Struck, Cynthia Lydum, Heather Bratton, Kristin Brennock, Shamitha Sridharan, Tracy Drake, Vivian Mason, Miriam McHugh, Elizabeth McIntyre, Carolyn Kennedy, Kari Mattson, Kelton Jones, Kristin Bendt, Mary Segesta, and Tracie Kinsley.

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

Kim Wilkinson reported the following information:

- Thanks to our January volunteers:
 - *ParentWiser*, "The Upstanders" documentary and discussion with Swedish mental health counselor –Chair Heidi Fuhs and Swedish Mental Health Counselor Tori McBride
 - *Virtual ACT/SAT Practice Tests* – Chair Tracie Kinsley and Rebecca Davidson/Huntington Learning Center
 - *Senior Events Issaquah Celebration* – co-Chairs Betzy Jones and Cynthia Lydum and volunteer Tracie Jones
 - *Nominating Committee* – Karissa Mobilia, Blyth Claeys, and Tracy Drake
- Washington State PTA is offering two competitions - Game Development and Essay Contest; entries are due on March 1, 2021; more information is available at www.wastatepta.org
- No grants were requested in cycle #2
- Thanks to our speakers this month: IHS Principal Andrea McCormick and IHS Counselor Emily Combellick
- Check issaquahhighptsa.org for the most current information about upcoming events

Secretary's Report (*Alisa George*)

The January 15, 2021, minutes were reviewed and filed as submitted.

Treasurer's Report (*Kim Wilkinson for Tara Moe*)

Activity Highlights

Kim presented the January 2021 Financial Report. January income included \$820 for Senior Yard Signs; \$370 in Corporate Matching; and \$350 in SAT/ACT Practice Test income; our corporate and charitable solicitations licenses were both renewed; bank statements have been reviewed by a non-signer (Bhavna Patel)

Mid-Year Financial Review

(*Wendy Maruchek*) The Mid-Year Financial Review was completed on Jan. 20; Wendy presented the completed WSPTA checklist for the period July 1, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2020, and noted that it is posted on our website; thank you to Bhavna Patel, Wendy Maruchek, and Heather Bratton who coordinated to review the documents in compliance with Covid-19 protocols; Wendy noted that the committee made two recommendations: (1) the Treasurer should contact the payee of any check that remains uncashed after six months; and (2) the PTSA check request form should be

amended to include a "PTSA Approval" signature line for a responsible person to approve the requested payment (e.g., a President, VP, or committee chair)

Committee Reports

Outreach (*Birgit Aarrestad for Blyth Claeyes*)

Angel Program

Angel Closet has been asked to supply caps and gowns and yard signs for 12 seniors in need; if you know anyone in need, please have them contact Lisa Hollingsworth at Issaquah High School; PTSA is helping distribute Power Packs; the next Angel Closet clothing distribution event will be on Feb. 24

Parent Education (Kim Wilkinson for Heidi Fuhs)

Two upcoming presentations that are relevant to high school parents:

- "Powerful Study Techniques That Make the Grade" by Academic Life Coach Gretchen Wegner (Mar. 3 @ 7:00pm)
- Encore presentation of "Supporting Your Teen During COVID-19" with Swedish Mental Health Counselors (Feb. 24 at 6:00pm)

Register at www.parentwiser.org

Issaquah Schools Foundation

- Impact Scholarships: The Issaquah Schools Foundation offers two scholarships to students who describe in an essay how Foundation-funded programs have enriched their education. One scholarship will be awarded in each of two categories: Written (\$1,000) and Presentation (\$1,500); deadline is Feb. 28, 2021
- Grants: the Foundation has awarded more than \$35,000 for 15 grants to teachers & staff in the ISD; there were no grant applicants from IHS; a district-wide grant for Learning Ally (\$10,000) was awarded, giving online access to audio books, helping slow readers improve reading and comprehension skills; the program will debut at four pilot schools this year (pilot schools are as yet unidentified)
- "Nourish Every Mind" Fundraiser: virtual online program session will take place on Apr. 29 at 7:00PM; online auction will run from Apr. 16-26

Speaker

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

Principal McCormick reported that:

- As stated in the eNews that was sent out yesterday, the plan is for seniors to have a couple of in-person events at the end of the year
 - *Senior Sunrise*: seniors will be invited to campus for this event on June 9; the details will depend on the Covid-19 metrics at that time, but assuming that we are still in phase 2, the seniors will be put together in groups of 200 or fewer in various outdoor areas of the campus (they will be allowed to request friend groups for this); seniors will be served a prepackaged breakfast and positioned six feet apart to watch the senior slide show; then they will be dismissed to return to their cars and drive through the farewell tunnel to say goodbye to the teachers
 - *Graduation*: plan is to have in-person micro graduations at IHS on June 11; plan is to begin at 9:00AM and to bring in a new group (by alphabetical order) on the hour; each ceremony will be limited to 50 students; IHS will show a video program and each student will be able to walk across the stage and receive their diploma; tickets will be limited to two per family to keep within the 200-person limit per ceremony (50 students, plus 100 family members, plus staff); if Covid-19 restrictions ease by June, IHS will be able to issue more than two tickets per family
- Senior Recognition Ceremony will remain virtual
- Prom is still a question but it is unlikely to happen due to the six feet social distancing requirement
- In-person event priorities are seniors and students who are failing courses; social experiences for 9th graders is next, along with social experiences for all students
- The Administration is aware of student testimonials on social media regarding the stress of remote learning and limited social interaction; six students involved in gathering and posting the testimonials will be meeting with the Administration after the February break to discuss the themes that emerged in the testimonials and to collect specific, actionable, student-driven recommendations to help address those themes; the challenge is to figure out what teachers can do to make it better; the teachers will meet in cohort groups to address the concerns and report

back to the Admin team, but IHS is unlikely to make any schoolwide changes to grading or bell schedule without additional community input

- Regarding homework concerns, the Administration has recommended that teachers directly survey their students to see how much time homework is taking (at the level of particular assignments); teachers should tell their students how long they think a particular assignment should take and then survey them when they turn in the assignment to see how long it actually took to assess whether their expectations are reasonable
- AP courses have not adjusted their scope and sequence for Covid-19, so it is difficult to reduce the rigor of those classes (and the ones that lead up to them)
- Format of school in the Fall will depend on whether teachers are vaccinated and whether students are required to have six-foot social distancing; to even approach meeting this standard would require an A-B hybrid learning model; a lot of planning for this was already done last summer by the Scheduling workgroup; lunches are an issue, as is transportation, which is also difficult because of a driver shortage; Andrea guesses we will be in an A-B hybrid model for the Fall; won't know until late summer
- Summer school hopes to offer a hybrid model but that depends on safety guidelines and negotiation with teachers; summer school usually is two periods per day, but IHS has decided to add at least one more period (maybe two) to give more credit opportunities; IHS also is looking at adding courses that haven't been offered before (e.g., Spanish 1); which classes will be offered will be driven by the classes with higher failure rates; summer school classrooms will have open windows and good ventilation

Speaker

The second speaker, IHS Counselor Emily Combellick, was introduced.

Counselor Combellick reported that:

- The Counseling Office is working on collecting information from students on a range of issues via survey; they will look at the data collected and trying to figure out the best way forward, which may include small groups of students that focus on a specific challenge; watch for information about this soon
- The Counseling Office is offering drop in appointments via Zoom during NEST time on Fridays; Zoom link can be found on Canvas
- Two main upcoming events are:
 - Course selection: this will take place the first week of March; students will watch presentations during SEL, and teachers will use block time on Thursday and Friday that week to recommend next courses for their students; there will also be Q&A opportunities for students
 - Running Start: the Counseling Office will start putting out information about next year on its webpage soon, and will make a presentation around the time of course selection; students will register for a full time IHS schedule then adjust schedule after their Running Start applications are finalized

Committee Reports (continued)

Membership *(Sathya Kannan for Nicole Garcia)*

768 members, 40 staff. We have reached our goal of 800 members!

Programs *(Wendy Cummins and Sathya Kannan)*

SAT/ACT Practice Tests

Next round of tests will be Feb. 27 (SAT) and Mar. 6 (ACT); the scoreback session is scheduled for Mar. 10; national SAT date is March 13, so Huntington can get feedback to students earlier than Mar. 10 if desired

College and Career Planning

Chair Tracie Kinsley has set the Spring '21 Speaker Series:

- *Job Seekers*: Build Your Resume & Interview Skills, featuring panel discussion with Microsoft Recruiters (Apr. 1 at 7:00PM)
- *Entrepreneurs*: Start & Grow a Business or Non-Profit, featuring Kim Guarino Bulgar (Apr. 21 at 4:00PM)
- *College-Bound Juniors*: Essay Writing Help - Feedback & Free Help from College Representatives (May 5 at 2:00PM)

Reflections™

Congratulations to the following IHS student Reflections™ participants who are advancing to the State level: Julianna Carragher, Emily Fitzgerald, Daniel Heechan Lim, Adya Mohapatra, Andrea Schmidt, Aashika Vishwanath, Amanda Winterbauer, Brandon Yeo, and Tina Zou

Community Service

The Community Service award recognizes students who volunteer 100+ hours during high school (any time after 8th grade promotion). Hours can be logged on our website at any time. Seniors will receive an acknowledgment from Chair Nicole Garcia when they reach 100 hours

Events (*Birgit Aarrestad for Kristen Allen-Bentsen*)

Senior Events

(*Cynthia Lydum*) Committee is working on partnering with the City of Issaquah to celebrate our seniors during the "Streatery" event at Front Street and nearby parks; aim is to schedule for a Saturday or Sunday afternoon in late May or early June; will negotiate with restaurants for discounted meals for IHS seniors; also working on booking food trucks and possibly music, keeping social distancing in mind; this event will happen only if we can safely work within state Covid-19 Guidelines; still looking for a tech-savvy individual to Chair the Senior Farewell presentation

Senior Yard Signs

Signs are on sale until Feb. 28; each 18"x24" sign is \$20 (with or without photo); scholarships are available.

Communications (*Wendy Maruchek*)

Social Media

We have increased our followers on most social media channels:

- Facebook 677 followers (672 last month); last month posts reached between 150 – 1,600 viewers; senior grad sign was the most popular
- Instagram 505 followers (494 last month); last month posts reached between 30 – 350 viewers; 30% of the people reached are not followers; most popular post was the return to sports
- Twitter 79 followers (80 last month); posts reached between 50 – 850 viewers; WA State PTA Scholarship was the most popular

Other Opportunities/Committee Updates

Nominating Committee

Information about open positions for 2021-2022 is posted on our website; reach out to a member of the Committee (Blyth Claeys, Tracy Drake, and Karissa Mobilia) if interested

Individual Awards Committee (Carla Geraci)

We will begin taking award nominations after the February break; could use a couple more people to serve on the Committee

ISD Student Equity Council

The Student Equity Council is a newly-formed, student-led advisory board for the purpose of advocating for equity issues related to the ISD's diverse student body; applications to participate will be accepted beginning Jan. 30 and will be reviewed on a rolling basis until Mar. 31; IHS student Grace Roy is very involved with this

Adjourned 11:11AM

Next Meeting: Friday, March 12, 2021 at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted,

Alisa E. George, Secretary