

Westhill High School School Governance Council
Meeting Minutes
April 25, 2016

In attendance:

- Faculty Members: Camille Figluizzi, Maria DeAngelis, Mark Magisani, Chase Dunlap
- Parents & Community Members: Sue Boria, David Greenberg, Sandy Menendez-Aponte, Rick Smeriglio, Patty Denham Travaglino
- Student members Sam Greenberg, Nicole Somerstein

New business: Fall School Governance Council Election

- Alyssa Wallen's term is expiring
- We will hold an election to fill the seat for the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years
- Alyssa is welcome to run for another term
- Plans to advertise the election to potential additional candidates include placing notice in the WPTSO newsletter at the end of this school year, and including information about SGC in summer mailings
- Should any SGC members not wish to serve their full terms, please contact David

Parent Orientation / Parents' Night

- For parents of incoming freshmen
- Scheduled for August 29, 2016 at 6:30 pm
- Co-hosted by SGC and WPTSO
- We would like to have a chair for this event
 - Any SGC members interested in chairing / co-chairing this event, please notify the rest of the Council
 - Ideally the Chair should be someone who intends to remain on the SGC past the current term so he or she can bring experience, lessons learned from the 2016 event forward to planning for a similar event in 2017
 - The PTSO will also have a chair for the event
- Camille and Chase will assist with any on-site details over the summer (including arranging for buses for parents without easy transportation to Westhill)
- To be determined: what assets we have access to at Westhill (for example, cocktail round tables) vs. what we may need to rent vs. what we should buy (food)
- Budget to be determined
- The set up for the evening should be informal and encourage mingling
- Invite LanDCrew to attend to talk to parents, give tours, engage incoming freshmen who attend the event (possibly with an outside activity)
- Consider creating name tags to identify incoming freshmen parents visually, in a way that's differentiated from parents of older Westhill parents, to make it easy for freshmen parents to identify the parents they may wish to talk to
- Consider inviting Flight Crew to play; consider engaging DJ (Patty's son)
- Food: after deliberating more expensive options such as food trucks and renting grills / buying cookout food, the group decided that purchasing six foot sandwiches from Shop Rite / Grade A would be the best option for this event

- Several members offered to bake / contribute dessert
- Raffle: to generate interest in attendance, we will advertise that each attendee will receive a raffle ticket and the chance to win items such as Westhill spirit wear, school supplies, and future parking spots (junior / senior / graduation)
- Incoming freshmen are welcome to attend the event

Suggested communications for the August 29 event

- Parent Link in both English and Spanish
- Inclusion in WPTSO newsletter
- Post on Westhill website
- Include flyer in Cloonan and TOR report cards
- Email incoming freshmen parents who expressed an interest in being mentored (Jenny has list)
- Contact SGCs at middle school to ask how best to reach the parents of their matriculating eighth grade students

Parent Mentors

- Attract parents to act as mentors – and to attend the August 29 event – by advertising the opportunity in the WPTSO newsletter
 - Another mechanism we discussed is mailing a letter to student body parents asking for mentors, if the newsletter does not generate enough interest / volunteers
- Consider drafting guidelines for parent mentors to use
- Talk with WPTSO about attracting parents from various clubs, sports teams, etc
- Consider holding a meetup with mentors and mentees 30 minutes prior to the orientation session for parents the first week of September

Action items

- David will talk to the WPTSO regarding funding for the August 29 event
- Patty will contact the Cloonan and TOR School Governance Councils to ask for their input on advertising the parent event
- Nicole and Sam will start a Class of 2020 Facebook page to advertise the event to incoming freshmen
- Chase will bring the event flyer to Parent University at Cloonan on Tuesday, May
- Anyone wishing to chair / co-chair the parents' night event should contact the SGC group via email
- After reviewing these minutes, all members should think through the suggested communications mechanisms to drive parent attendance; via email, please either refine existing suggestions or bring new ideas forward
- Nicole will update the flyer she created for the parent event to include the raffle
- Mark will recruit fellow guidance counselors for event, and will inform guidance counselors at the middle schools about the event
- Chase will bring parent night flyer to Parent University on May 3 at Cloonan
- Jenny to place notice of our need for parent mentors in the WPTSO newsletter (Jenny kindly let us know if you need assistance)

Next meeting

- The SGC will formally reconvene in the 2016-2017 school year
- An ad-hoc meeting may be held over the summer to further plan the incoming freshmen parents' event