

# Bates PTA Minutes

September 2020

## Attendance

See Zoom report from Ray Feldmann

28 participants

Started at 7:03pm

Ray welcomed all on Zoom. Explained our purpose and emphasized utility as source of information and facilitator of communication.

## Agenda introduced

- Extended zoom difficulties
- Minutes from February unavailable. Secretary was sick; note taker from that meeting has since left the school.

Treasurer reported on current state of funds.

- Volunteers will review the Treasurer's reports: Victoria Shellem (vshellem@gmail.com); Jo Linhard. Thanks to both!
- PTA gave funds for new software for Cougar Chronicle. Looks better and can be translated into other languages.

School resource officer:

- Funds still set aside. Our intention to use those funds from the city budget to get that officer in the building when we reopen. Ms. Hicks endorses the desire for the SRO, thinks the relationships built with students are valuable.
- Ashley Hillary: Why is an SRO wanted at Bates? (New parent, 6th grade).
  - Ray repeats equity concern from previous discussions, and that if we had any incident an SRO would have to come from another school.
  - Ms. Hicks answers that it's for safety in case of an incident like a fight or shooting. We are also in line for a vestibule to be added to the entrance, as we're one of the only schools without one.
  - The Gorzkowski's (Catherine G.) note that we had an incident in the parking lot 2 years ago that needed intervention.
- Ashley H. asked if the SRO will have a gun? Answer is yes.
  - Ms. Beller noted that when Bates last had an SRO, he was able to intervene during an incident and the kids listened to him quickly and were kept safe. When random police officers have to enter the building, results have been variable about students listening to them.
  - Ms. Hicks clarifies that in the past, mental health issues have required some intervention from police. Ray reiterates that he believes that an officer with a

relationship to the school is likely to behave differently during a crisis than a stranger.

- Ms.Hicks mentioned Joe Hudson as a city police officer who has relationships with many Bates kids, and is always warmly welcomed by the student body when he is on the premises. He is not assigned to Bates, however.

#### Principal's Report

- PTA closet reclaimed and turned into collaborative planning space
- Sinks have been upgraded to have hot water, and taps now stay on and dispense water to allow proper handwashing
- Teachers now have area to work one on one with students
- We have a 5 year plan for HVAC and roof replacement
- Instructional materials being distributed. 70% given out. Open next week during lunch break. After that by appointment
- Coffee with principal Oct 15, 0800.
- Teachers are figuring out Google Classroom. Good updates coming, like blurred backgrounds. Better security to prevent class crashers and mistakes like going to the wrong school meets.

#### Communication

- One Bates and the regular website are the focus
- School is trying to streamline communications, keep emails to a necessary minimum

#### Other Questions:

- Kenyatta Rowel: Is there a plan to have any outreach events for students who need support? Many are left alone all day to do their work. Might need mentoring, tutoring, and other general support. Could we offer virtual assistance, care packages, lists of willing mentors or tutors (USNA, local sororities, fraternities)?
  - Ms. Hicks: we have a grant which will allow teachers to offer one on one tutoring. Incoming 6th graders flagged by their elementary schools are on the list for contact. We're also working with a group called Links.
  - Ms. Beller: Boys and Girls clubs and many other community groups have relationships with Bates. They provide support of all kinds, including food, supplies, mentoring. Encouraged Mr. Rowel to contact her to work on more ideas.
  - Suggested a directory of PTA members with short bios, so we can work with each other on such initiatives.
- Jennifer Hetherington: Can Mids for Kids go virtual?
  - Ms. Hicks: USNA hasn't given permission for virtual contact

Ray Feldmann asks if anyone has had issues or concerns during these first few weeks?

- Kenyatta R. notes that the systems are a little complex for students to figure out by themselves. Concerned that some students may be falling behind because of this. What support is there for them?
  - Ms. Hicks: we reach out to students who don't attend and ask them if they need help. Counselors contact families to offer assistance. Only 3 kids haven't logged on yet this year, for differing reasons.
  - Ms. Beller: teachers are reaching out, making sure kids know how to do what they need to.
  - KR followup: offer support to parents, teach them how to assist with Google?
    - Ms. Hicks: that's coming. Support sessions will be offered soon
    - Ms. Beller: teachers and counselors doing a lot of that now too

#### Fundraisers

- Spirit wear? Request for volunteers. Ms. Hicks has a recommendation from a vendor Bates already uses.
- Restaurant Night? May have to be adapted for COVID. The Gorzkowski's note that their elementary school is doing a takeout focused effort
- Cookies or Holiday items? There wasn't much engagement last year, but we still made a few thousand. Perhaps we can try again - if it's all digital, we can probably avoid the overhead costs that we had to pay last year.
- KHB asked about holiday bazaar, and Ms. Hicks supports the idea of making it happen somehow.
  - Hicks: Bates bucks will be virtual, but the system has not been fully decided. The PBIS committee at Bates is working on it.

#### New VP?

- We need a new one! Any volunteers?
- The remaining board members have suggested that VP take on Diversity and Equity: make sure PTA is being inclusive, and keep an eye on issues for community.
  - Kenyatta Rowel likes the idea, being pressed to volunteer.
  - We'll confirm by-laws on replacing an officer mid-term when previous resigned.

#### Meeting times?

- Want to confirm convenient meeting times: morning or evening.
- Add topics that are of interest to the community. We've had guest speakers in the past, and would like to continue.
- PTA meeting questions will be included in survey being pushed out by Principal.

End at 2033

Jaye Falls, PTA Secretary