

2024-25 Horace Mann PTA Meeting Agenda  
 Wednesday, September 25, 2024, HMS School Library  
 6:00-7:00pm

Agenda Item:	Who:	Time:	Notes:
Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Call meeting to order</li> <li>● Welcome and Thank you</li> <li>● Approval of the minutes: <a href="#">PTA meeting notes- May 16, 2024 – Horace Mann School PTA (hms-pta.org)</a></li> <li>● PTA meetings for 2024-25 (All meetings in HMS Library 6-7pm)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wednesday Sept. 25</li> <li>○ Tuesday, Oct. 29</li> <li>○ Tuesday, Feb 25</li> <li>○ Thurs, May 15</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Grace	5 min	<p><b>Attendees:</b> Christine Halloway; Bethany Hyde; Anne Burrows; Grace Hanson; Gina Corradi; Sam Smith; Ashelyn Wilcox; Brad Arnoldussen; Jim Litwin; Alex Stuart; Tasia Stuart; Dustin Sadnick; Steve Corradi; Howard Kvasnik; Jill Kramer; Amy Karter; Angela Lucio; Sarah Liuzzi; Amy Sack; Katie Bliss; Andrea Gleckner; Solena Fleming; Jennifer Butwinig; Allison Broughton; Allison Deep; Sarah Haley; Degermaa Lkhasusen; Mariyam Nayar</p> <p><b>Definition:</b> A high-level overview of the agenda and business discussed during the PTA meeting.</p> <p><b>Opportunities for Involvement:</b> We encourage anyone interested in getting involved with the PTA to reach out to any PTA members or committee leaders.</p> <p><b>Approval of Minutes:</b> A motion was made to approve the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes were approved.</p>
Principal's Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● College and Career Rediness</li> <li>● Family Engagement</li> </ul>	Mr. Litwin	10 min	<p><b>College and Career Pathways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We showcased a video of students expressing their desired careers for the future.</li> <li>● The counseling program is designed to answer key questions, such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How can we intentionally engage historically underserved families in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Students begin discussing career and college pathways with counselors as early as kindergarten, with formal meetings occurring in 5th grade.</li> </ul> <p><b>Family Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are many ways for families to get involved:</li> </ul>

- Volunteering in classrooms or on field trips.
- We recognize that many potential volunteers may not be visible, and we want to ensure everyone feels valued and included.
- Notably, 60% of our families are white; we should reflect on who is attending events and consider inviting those who might not be present.
- Approximately 25% of families have limited economic resources.
- We discussed the importance of inclusivity and how our community can ensure everyone feels valued.

**Leadership Opportunities for Families**

- Principals have been tasked with creating leadership opportunities for families:
  - The leadership team meets Thursdays from 2:15 to 3:15 PM (not every Thursday, dates will be shared in perspectives)
  - We are seeking three family representatives to participate in this process.
  - An example of policy work from this committee could include refining the cell phone use policy and family input on school events and assemblies.
  - We would love to have representation from the school community.
  - Video call capabilities will be available, though in-person attendance is preferred.

**Questions from the Group**

- **Question:** Why are schools engaging in this initiative?
  - **Response:** This is part of ongoing legislative efforts. Additionally, We want to make sure we're reaching out to the broader community to be sure educational experiences, instructional design, school activities serve the families we have now.
- **Question:** Will there be an application process if more than three families are interested?
  - **Current Focus:** We are primarily looking for feedback at this time.
- **Suggestion:** Ensure that perspectives include representation from all grade levels.

<p>Teacher updates</p>	<p>Mr. Lindskoog/ Ms. Kortuem</p>	<p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Gratitude from Ms. Kortuem on behalf of all HMS teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Kortuem expressed heartfelt gratitude to the PTA, acknowledging the immense value each member brings to the school community. Thank you for your support!</li> </ul> <p><b>Classroom Readiness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers are working to find their "sea legs"; research indicates it takes about six weeks for classrooms to operate at full capacity.</li> </ul> <p><b>State Legislature Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All teachers will receive new training on the science of reading, which will be the main focus of the upcoming professional development day next week, as mandated by state law.</li> </ul> <p><b>New Band Director</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are excited to welcome our new band director, <a href="#">Jack Schabert</a>, who brings a lot of enthusiasm and is a professional musician.</li> <li>The band program will be available for 4th and 5th graders, with a parent meeting coming up soon—stay tuned for details!</li> </ul> <p><b>Question: How does the band program interact with EDL?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most band classes are held during EDL (Extended Day Learning) at St. Paul public elementary schools.</li> <li>Thanks to the PTA's generosity, we can offer band on Mondays during school. Mr. Schabert will be available to work with students on Mondays, but it's challenging to accommodate everyone during that time. The after-school program runs on Mondays and Wednesdays.</li> <li>If students only attend on Mondays, there may be gaps in their learning. The goal is to benefit students through EDL programs, which provide 4-6 hours of engagement for around 50 kids.</li> <li>On Monday afternoons, we will have a full 4th and 5th grade band session during school hours. Individual instrument practice will occur, and band will meet as part of EDL.</li> <li>EDL runs from 2:00 to 3:45 PM on Mondays and Wednesdays, and offers programs like Lego robotics for 4th and 5th graders.</li> <li>Students in band can take instruments home for practice.</li> <li>We will invite Mr. Schabert (band teacher) to the next PTA meeting to discuss further.</li> <li>There are posted positions for more EDL opportunities.</li> <li>EDL programs are free for families.</li> </ul>
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<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and approve 2024-25 budget</li> </ul>	<p>Alex / Sam</p>	<p>15 min</p>	<p><b>Approval of Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The second-to-last column on the right shows the budget for the year, while the rightmost column reflects our year-to-date (YTD) status.</li> <li>Approximately two-thirds of our revenue comes from the silent auction and the read-a-thon.</li> <li>We usually bring in \$100-\$120k in revenue. We spend \$10k-20k per year on fundraising.</li> </ul> <p><b>Allocation of PTA Funds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Community Events and Spirit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yearbooks are provided free to all students.</li> <li>The carnival is another major item.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Residencies and Enrichment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We fund the band program and make significant contributions for field trips and the roller-skating program.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Classroom and School Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each teacher receives approximately \$1,100.</li> <li>We assist with tutoring programs and provide funding for specialists.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Other Expenses:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have a line item of \$22,000 from COVID surplus, which we budgeted for a large donation to redo the field; this is currently on hold.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Questions and Suggestions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a wishlist from teachers? (yes)</li> <li>Could we consider upgrading the yearbook?</li> <li>What is included in the tutoring budget, especially since AmeriCorps is state-funded? We pay Mr. Adams, a volunteer coordinator, to manage volunteer efforts in the building.</li> <li>Are there opportunities for increased spending on tutoring?</li> <li>Do teachers have Donors Choose? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr Litwin has asked teachers to spend money from the district and the PTA before they use Donors Choose. Some teachers have needed reminders about this.</li> <li>It's very rare that teachers have been turned down when they've asked for funding. Some teachers overspend their allocated amount and no one looks twice.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ms Cole, student support, is trying to get a set of books that everyone would receive. She's asked for PTA support for this.</li> <li>● Have reductions in janitorial staff impacted school operations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Mr. Litwin's Response:</b> Yes, there have been some pinch points during the day. We currently have one person per shift. Can the PTA help fund custodial needs due to labor issues?</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Free Family Fun Night:</b> There will be a DJ this time. We need to raise awareness of funding needs, as some committees were unaware they could request more money. We should be sure committee members are aware we have more money.</li> </ul> <p><b>Motion to Approve Budget:</b> The budget was approved.</p>
PTA and Volunteer Open Positions and Updates	Chandra / Christine	5 min	<p><b>Volunteer Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We still need volunteers! Although we received a lot of responses, only 11 individuals expressed interest.</li> <li>● If you're interested in volunteering, please visit Perspectives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conference Meal Co-Coordinator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We need coordinators for conference meals on November 7 and 12. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ They figure out meals for teachers and try to get volunteers to help. E.g. tacos.</li> <li>○ There's currently no budget. Co-chairs always end up providing a lot of the food and spending a lot of their own money.</li> <li>○ Recognition budget can help cover the expenses, but this could be a good thing to spend money on.</li> <li>○ It's 4 nights total - 2 nights each in fall and spring. \$100 in fall and another \$100 in the spring could fill the gaps.</li> <li>○ We need help on this committee.</li> <li>○ Nov. 7 and 12th are fall conference dates.</li> <li>○ We will consider coordinating through Panera - it may just be \$300/night (times 4 for the year).</li> <li>○ There was discussion during the meeting about considering catering for the conference meals</li> <li>○ Chairs have spent their own money in the past, and we want to streamline this process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Make-It-Take-It Activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Make-It-Take-It craft activity has been on hold due to a lack of interest.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read-A-Thon Update</b></p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bethany reported that the Read-A-Thon is scheduled for November. The theme this year is "Camp Read-a-Lot!" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Plans include bringing in a naturalist from Dodge Nature Center and a representative from the Raptor Center for a kickoff event.</li> <li>○ We are partnering with Brandon Mason's group for "Give to the Max," where a donor group will match up to \$6,000 based on a goal of 600,000 minutes read.</li> <li>○ If anyone is specifically interested in the Read-A-Thon, please reach out to Bethany.</li> <li>○ We ordered books. We were able to use some Scholastic book fare credit to offset the cost of the books - this saved us \$600. Each grade gets the same book.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Silent Auction Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allison announced that the first Silent Auction meeting will be on Tuesday, October 1st, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM in the library. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We have a big team this year and are feeling positive about the planning process.</li> <li>○ We are exploring new auction software, as the cost of the old program is increasing.</li> <li>○ The silent auction is a lot of fun and has strong participation. We will be looking for support from local businesses for donations.</li> <li>○ If you're interested in joining the Silent Auction committee, please reach out.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Teacher Appreciation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Katie expressed gratitude for coordinating the teacher appreciation efforts. Thank you!</li> </ul>
<p>PTA Team Updates (see below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Free family fun nights – Sock hop this Friday <b>September 27, from 6-7:30pm</b></li> <li>● Read-a-thon kick off in one month</li> </ul>	<p>Team Chairs</p>	<p>5 mins</p>	<p><b>Community Survey</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A survey will be distributed on Perspectives to gather input on how we, as a community, can better learn about the larger community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Field Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The PTA has set aside some surplus funds (around \$20,000) to support redoing the field. This project has been delayed because of constraints on the district side, so the timeline is unclear.</li> </ul> <p><b>Directory</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Silent Auction / Spring Fundraiser</li> <li>● Family Volunteer Services – complete the interest survey</li> <li>● Directory – thanks to the 250+ families who submitted their information. Planned distribution will be early-October</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We discussed the importance of including families not currently represented in the directory, particularly families of color who have historically been excluded.</li> <li>● It could be helpful for teachers to get a pre-preview so they can see who is missing</li> <li>● Is there a way for families to access a hard copy of the directory?</li> </ul> <p><b>Acknowledgments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thank you to Katie for coordinating teacher appreciation!</li> <li>● Thank you to Gina for managing spirit wear!</li> <li>● Thank you to Samira, Cory, Grace, and Gina for their efforts on the directory! We anticipate it will be sent out next week.</li> </ul> <p><b>Dance Event</b></p> <p>The school dance is scheduled for Friday, and there will be a DJ!</p>
<p>News / Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● HM School website (see below)</li> <li>● Horace Mann Spiritwear Store: <a href="https://shop.game-one.com/minnesota/saint-paul/horace-mann-school">https://shop.game-one.com/minnesota/saint-paul/horace-mann-school</a></li> </ul>		5 mins	
<p>Recognition / Shout Outs / Thank yous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher welcome back – thank you Katie Bliss who coordinated lunch for the teachers to Welcome them back in August</li> <li>● <b>Directory</b> - Thank you to <a href="#">Samira Afzali</a>, Corrie Layfield, Gina Corradi and Grace Hanson</li> </ul>			<p>Thank you to Katie for teacher appreciation!</p> <p>Thank you to Gina for spiritwear!</p> <p>Thank you to Samira, Corrie, Gina and Grace for your work on the directory!</p> <p>Anticipate this will go out next week!</p>
<p>Open Forum / Action Items</p>		5 mins	<p>Some parents have asked why there is a Thursday off for professional development. The school district is working to align holidays, school breaks,</p>

			and teacher training days with cultural holidays to better support our community.
Adjourn			

**HM PTA website:** [www.hms-pta.org](http://www.hms-pta.org) If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please email [web-admin@hms-pta.org](mailto:web-admin@hms-pta.org)

Employer match: We also encourage families to check with their employers as many offer a company match to the cash donations made by their employees

**Team Reports:**

Free Family Fun nights - 2023-24

The Free Family Fun Night Committee is kicking off the year with a back to school dance. This year, music, contests + select prizes will be offered by [Kidsdance Interactive DJs!](#)

This Friday, September 27, 6-7:30.

Other events planned for this year:

- FFF Night || Thursday, November 7, 2024
- FFF Night || Friday, January 10, 2025
- FFF Night || Thursday, March 6, 2025
- Ice Cream Social || Thursday, May 8, 2025

**Read-a-Thon**

Read-a-Thon planned for the month of November with kick off Monday, October 28th.

Once again we joined efforts with the Give to the Max group, enabling matches of \$0.01 per minute read plus another \$7,500 in matching donations. We just ordered our books using book fair credits from Scholastic, saving about \$600.

We are now finalizing the communications strategy, the details of the Principal Challenge, and the special guest of the opening ceremony.

**Family Community Service - Interest Survey**

The Family Community Service Committee's purpose is to coordinate and facilitate community service opportunities for Horace Mann families to give back to the larger community. Please take this [one-minute survey](#) to share your interests and help guide our efforts.

**Auction Committee:**

The auction committee encourages anyone who is interested in helping to plan this year's event to contact Allison Deep at [alli.deep@gmail.com](mailto:alli.deep@gmail.com)

**Directory**



Thanks to all the families for filling out directory information. The directory is currently being compiled and should be available in the next couple of weeks.

### **Field update**

We wanted to provide an update on the progress of the field upgrade project:

- **Staff Changes:** Our main contact and advocate, the Executive Director of Facilities, has recently left the school district. While this is a significant change, we are continuing to move forward with school district support. We have recently been assigned a district facilities planner who will work with us to gather more detailed information about our specific needs. Principal Litwin has had an initial meeting with the planner.
- **Scope of Work:** Field (regrading/soil improvements, irrigation and new grass)- After a school district review, it was determined that the needs for our field are similar to another school's, and both projects are larger than originally anticipated. As a result, the field upgrade will likely be handled through the district's capital maintenance process. We are awaiting more information on what this process looks like.
- **Rain gardens:** Corrie Layfield met with representatives from the Capitol Region Watershed District to explore the potential to incorporate rain gardens in the project. The watershed district may be able to provide designs and partial funding for rain gardens depending on a few factors.
- **Trees:** Parents also expressed interest in planting trees to provide shade and reduce the field area that needs to be maintained. We will explore this portion of the project more once we have better information about the path of the field upgrade.
- **Next Steps:** Field- Principal Litwin has a second meeting scheduled with the facilities planner to get more details in place then will meet with the field committee to discuss some proposals.
- **Rain gardens-** We are working to get the watershed district information they need to inform rain garden design and funding potential. Then they will provide designs and information on funding opportunities.

### **Volunteers needed**

In order to run our amazing events, WE NEED VOLUNTEERS! Please consider signing up for one event or committee this year, using this volunteer interest form. Only have an hour to spare? Great! Check "yes" to the last question on the interest form. Want to get a bit more involved in the decision making for events? Check "yes" on the first question to join our board! We have openings.

For questions contact Christine Holloway at [VOLUNTEER.COORDINATOR@HMS-PTA.ORG](mailto:VOLUNTEER.COORDINATOR@HMS-PTA.ORG)

### **Current Board Members:**

President & Vice President: Grace Hanson & Gina Corradi [president@hms-pta.org](mailto:president@hms-pta.org)

Treasurers: Sam Smith & Alex Stuart [treasurer@hms-pta.org](mailto:treasurer@hms-pta.org)

Teacher Representatives: Amy Kortuem & Mark Lindskoog [teacher-rep@hms-pta.org](mailto:teacher-rep@hms-pta.org)

Communications: Lisa Ortmann [communications@hms-pta.org](mailto:communications@hms-pta.org)

Recording Secretary: Andrea Gleckner & Sarah Liuzzi [recorder@hms-pta.org](mailto:recorder@hms-pta.org)

Volunteer Coordinator: Christine Holloway: [volunteer.coordinator@hms-pta.org](mailto:volunteer.coordinator@hms-pta.org)