



HVPTO/HBEF Joint Board Meeting
March 17, 2020
Conference Call through Zoom - 7:30pm

Call to Order: 7:31pm

This meeting was held via conference call. On March 13th, 2020, Hermosa Beach School District announced it would close both campuses to avoid possible spread of COVID-19 effective March 16th, 2020. The school would move an online learning platform. In keeping the new social distancing protocol, the Joint Board meeting was done via conference call. Lisa Vargas Garnder and Carol Kluthe led the meeting on behalf of HVPTO and HBEF.

Executive Board Reports

HVPTO President - Lisa Vargas Gardner

Past Events/Old Business

Community Service Book Drive 2/24-3/6

Lisa reported the PTO collected 5,049 books this year. Last year, 4,738 books were collected. The books were donated to The Children's Clinic in Long Beach, a non-profit community health center which provides primary care to low income families.

Read Across America 3/6

Lisa reported that Read Across America was a tremendous success. Lisa praised Courtney Shott for her work chairing the event. Instead of passing out trinkets to the students (pencils, bracelets) the PTO bought books for View and Valley libraries. The books highlighted diversity/inclusion and the guest readers signed them.

MOSA YUMRAISER 2/26

Lisa said the PTO made \$742.50 for the fundraiser.

Upcoming Events

Due to the school closure, the next YUMRAISER at Chipotle was cancelled. It was supposed to be before spring break. Future PTO events will be put on hold as long as the schools are closed.

One of the biggest fundraisers for PTO is the Dolphin Dash which is scheduled for May 1st. Since our schools could still be closed at this time, Lisa requested a special committee meeting to discuss a different direction for Dolphin Dash. Perhaps it can be an online contest...

Thus far, the PTO has raised \$70,000 of it's \$190,000 goal for the year.

Other Reports

HBEF President - Carol Kluthe

Carol started off saying the HBEF has some good news. She wanted to introduce three new members to the board. They filled the following positions:

Matching VP - Melinda Green

Secretary - Kimberly Mergatroit (?)

Investing Committee - David Marcourt (?)

The other piece of good news was the presentation of the Skechers Friendship Walk Check on March 5. It was presented to Carol Kluthe along with Superintendent Escalante, Principals Gluck and Taylor. There were 1,599 registered walkers. The check amount was for \$193,000. Last year's check was for \$175,000. The check has not yet been posted in HBEF bank account.

Thus far, the HBEF net revenue is \$640,000 vs. \$890,000 at this time last year. Carol wanted to mention that the Skechers check has not yet posted. Also, last year, HBEF received a grant for \$50,000 which has not been presented this year yet. So taking those two items into account, HBEF is about where they were last year.

Hearts Of Hermosa

Carol wanted to address HBEF's decision to cancel Hearts of Hermosa this year. She said it was a rollercoaster week leading up to the decision. But in light of recent state and county mandates about quarantine, it was the right decision. HBEF did decide to move forward with the online auction piece of the event. Carol said they did have to pull out a few auction items like sports and concert events because of timing. Also, HBEF will have to reschedule many of the auction parties. The silent auction is set to GO on Saturday at 9:00am. HBEF is currently working on messaging for the auction. She encouraged everyone to forward information about the auction to friends and family.

Carol was thankful that HBEF will not lose big deposits as a result of their cancellation. Kelly Houghton and Carol made sure their vendors included cancellation clauses in the contracts. Carol also said that she is getting a lot of calls from community members asking how they can help.

Spring Give

Carol said HBEF will address the Spring Give a little later.... after the online auction.

School Board Member - Jen Cole

Jen Cole started off discussing the cancellation of recent field trips (Disneyland and California Science Center) as well as school closure. She first reminded everyone that making these decisions are difficult. She asked that people be mindful when they bring up their concerns/complaints to school board members, administrators and teachers. They are trying to make the best decisions possible to ensure the safety of our students and families given the information they have at the time. The situation is very fluid and decisions may change on a daily basis.

Jen wanted to address some of the questions from HBEF/PTO Board Members that were on a shared Google document. They are as follows:

- 1.) It feels like we were held hostage with the threat of not getting school funding should we close HBCSD schools without the LA County Dept of Public Health's blessing. We saw how they dropped the ball in notifying Manhattan Beach about the 2 cases there that most of us had heard from solid sources to be true. Then when they were confirmed we almost didn't get to close our schools b/c of no cases in Hermosa Beach even though Manhattan Beach is so close to us. Is there any talk about getting more local control? We elect our School Board after all.

Superintendent Escalante answered:

She said it's incredible how fast things happen. She agreed there was a disconnect between the Department of Public Health, the City of Manhattan Beach and Manhattan Beach School District. The City of Manhattan Beach was not notified until March 11th about the two Manhattan Beach residents who tested positive for COVID-19 earlier in March. Upon learning about these cases, the MB City Manager issued a letter to the Department of Public Health stating the city should have been notified of the two cases as soon as results were confirmed.

As a result of this information, MB Superintendent Mike Matthews decided on March 12th to close campuses beginning on Monday, March 16, 2020 as a proactive effort to protect the health of their students and staff. The district would begin to provide instruction remotely (via email, google classroom, canvas, video conferencing, or other electronic platforms). There was no official mandate yet from LACOE (Los Angeles County of Education) yet to close the schools.

Since HBCSD is a K-8 school district, the Manhattan Beach School District provides instruction for Hermosa Beach residents in 9-12th grades. There are approximately 500 Hermosa Beach students who attend Mira Costa High School and who would be a part of the school closure. Therefore, out of an abundance of caution and social responsibility, Superintendent Escalante announced on March 13th, that the HBCSD would close View and Valley schools, all offices and Extended Day Program (EDP), starting Monday, March 16, 2020. The school would provide instruction remotely (via email, google classroom, hangout or other electronic platforms).

Fortunately, the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools Debra Duardo announced on March 13th her recommendation that all schools in the county close effective March 16-27, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regarding local control, Superintendent Escalante said there is some wiggle room as to when to go back to school. LACOE recommended all schools close until March 27th. Since our district has spring break through April 10th, our schools will stay closed until April 13th.

2.) What about Governor Newsome's statement about schools being closed until summer break?

Superintendent Escalante said the situation is very fluid and she cannot predict anything right now. The State Superintendent is being very cautious. LA County office of education has a daily call with Superintendents to update us on these ongoing changes. The district website and social media platforms will contain all the latest updated information.

3.) Is the District prepared to close until June?

Superintendent Escalante said the district is prepared to stay closed until June, if necessary. The district had 400 laptops signed out by families. All of the teachers have been extremely nimble and open to this adjustment. They are up and running with an online curriculum. The silver lining to this situation is that our district has an opportunity to re-evaluate how it looks at instruction moving forward. Currently, Vice Principal Ted Scott is communicating with grades 5-8 and Principal Sylvia Gluck is communicating with grades K-4. The district's main focus is on our students and learning. Teachers will continue to be paid. LACOE has been incredibly responsive thus far.

4.) Why is it in our best interest to follow the Manhattan Beach School District?

Superintendent Escalante said HBCSD could act independently but the district needs LACOE to approve all decisions. Therefore, it is helpful to align with MB so our district is not vulnerable. For example, MBSD decided to close school for COVID-19 starting March 16th before receiving direction from LACOE. HBSD decided to follow along with MBSD because so many of Hermosa high school aged kids attend Mira Costa. The decision to close was an emergency resolution. But luckily, LACOE ended up making the decision to close schools starting March 16th - so there was no need for HBCSD to defend the decision.

5.) Why didn't our district follow Redondo Union High School's decisions?

Superintendent Escalante said we don't have as many Hermosa kids attending Redondo Union High. But she was hoping the decision to close down the school would start a daisy chain with the neighboring districts. Superintendent Escalante works closely with five neighboring districts. They are: Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, El Segundo and Palos Verdes.

6.) We are impressed how quickly teachers got things organized for us on google classroom in such a short period of time. Thank you! Is the plan to move to or add bits of true "online education" meaning utilizing zoom or something similar to live teach or have videos of lessons? Particularly for math? At least 30 minute sessions where they can actually teach? Totally understand that this can take some time to put together...just curious if this is the plan.

Superintendent Escalante said the teachers are learning as they are going. Each teacher has a two hour block to answer questions. Right now, there is no one size fits all approach for the teachers and video conferencing. Teachers know their students the best. All the students have the tools to learn math on their own. She also stated that kids are not going to be held accountable for doing their work

right now. Technically, teachers are not supposed to be grading. It's possible the next report card will reflect a combined T2 and T3 grade assuming kids can go back to school.

Principal Gluck also spoke. She said the district is working with the Eureka teachers at Greatminds.org They will have videos available for the math curriculum.

7.) Understanding that this is learn as we go, any discussion around state testing?

Superintendent Escalante said she will know more after her Superintendent conference call on Wednesday, 3/18. But it is looking like the state is willing to cancel testing. There is a Federal Government component to state testing. Under the circumstances, the Federal Government will most likely let state testing go this year.

8.) I know a few parents who didn't get laptops for their children thinking that this would be short term. Will there be another check out window available?

Kim Taylor said if anyone needs a laptop, please reach out to her directly.

**School Board Members Maggie Bove La Monica and Jen Cole wanted to ask parents:
What's working and what's not?**

Feedback from HBEF/HVPTO:

- HW and communication from the Middle School team (specifically 7th grade experience here) has been fantastic. Very clear, "office" hours communicated.
- The teachers are doing an amazing job, btw. An online daily checklist would help so that we aren't constantly looking back to each folder to make sure we haven't missed anything. I spent a lot of time triple checking we finished everything
- As a full time working person (from home now), the flexibility has been super important.
- So far our homeschooling has been going well but today Caitlyn was struggling with the math. I was able to help her through it but that may not be the case for other families...having video lessons available as soon as possible would be helpful for those that need it.
- I would love to see each teacher or even grade level organize a specific time for the kids to get together on Zoom for a read aloud. It would be nice to continue to build our community within our schools this way.
- Does Kahn Academy align with Eureka Modules (greatminds.com) Thanks!

PTO Treasurer Wendy Nussbaum asked how people will find out current information from the district. Superintendent Escalante said the teachers will have the most up to date information. But hopefully something can be posted on the website.

Superintendent - Pat Escalante

Superintendent Escalante had a few more comments on other related matters. She emphasized that the priority for teachers right now is to communicate with their students and provide resources. Unfortunately, there are no campus resources like childcare available for working parents. The school cannot be open because it is a public agency. She mentioned that Torrance Memorial reached out to her. They have approximately 4,000 employees in the South Bay community. It is estimated those employees have about 10,000 kids in HBCSD and surrounding districts. Torrance Memorial asked if there was any way to continue with school since the parents are needed at work. Superintendent Escalante said our district could not provide services to these children. However, she had heard the YMCA was offering care. Since YMCA is a private industry, they are allowed to offer that care. At this point, however, any kind of childcare plan could change.

North School Update:

The construction is still moving forward as of now. The State requested some minor changes. So they made a slight change to the parking lot at North School and even added a space. The steel and crane will be delivered within the next day or two. Once the steel is brought in, then multiple trades can come in.

Pat wanted to thank everyone for their hard work and support. She appreciates everything the HBEF and HVPTO have done to raise money for the school and understands how difficult it is to make such challenging decisions in uncertain times.

School Board Member - Jen Cole

Jen Cole wanted to emphasize the importance of a schedule for kids at home. She also suggested Kahn Academy as a great resource as well as Greatminds.org.

Jen Cole also reminded everyone that Superintendent Escalante will be retiring this summer. The Board is reviewing some very good candidates to fill her position. She wanted to thank those who responded to the Superintendent survey. She is still looking for more comments or feedback from people. Lisa Vargas Gardner said that the firm hired to do the search is hoping to do a focus group conference call with HBEF and HVPTO board members in the near future.

Beach Cities Health District Representative - Ali Steward

Ali Steward said that Beach Cities Health District is dedicated to helping the most vulnerable in our community. They will be offering resources for social emotional wellness. Also, they are developing a plan to help the elderly and those who are health compromised - through delivery services etc.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Amy Schauwecker, HVPTO Secretary