

**Academic Boosters  
Meeting Minutes  
September 29, 2011**

**Attendance:** Susan Zaboji, Opal Cotton, Lisa Martin, Laura Horvath, Norma Dew, Joann Sullivan, Marge Carrico, Diane Willard, Maria Robles, Joan Burkhart, Krista Vita, Cindy McBride, Jill Feldman, Lesa Schmidt, Nancy Boyd-Mattern, Davina Johnson, Joan Lynch, Kim Shoop

**Discussion of Current Activities:**

**a. FAQ**

Thank you to Caroline Hemenway for 3 years of preparing the FAQ. It was completed and mailed to freshman families with fall schedules. Feedback expressed at the meeting was that it has useful information. Also, that print quality was bad and font too small. A small font is used to minimize the number of pages to keep printing costs down. Copying was done in-house (another outcome of budget cuts) and the copiers were not working well on copy day. The FAQ can be found on the PTSA website (<http://www.southlakesptsa.org/docs/2011%20FAQ.pdf>) and the font size can be increased to help with viewing.

**b. Directory**

Directory production is well under way. Ad revenues are expected to be in the area of \$2000 (about ½ of what they were last year). Thanks to Monica Russ, Mary Ellen Wolfe and Frances Hartnett for contacting all of the advertisers. Thanks to Karen Loehr and Shashi Sraveshankar for turning ideas into a document! We will be adding parents' names and emails (unless they opted out) this year.

Approximately 305 directory orders were received to date. Families had until 10/1 to "opt-out" of directory inclusion. Since Back to School Night is in October this year we are hoping to have them ready to distribute and sell on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

*Status Update after AB Meeting: The directory team faced some production challenges over the weekend so were not able to get a finished file to the printer in time to get copies made for BTSN. We are now hoping for a mid to late October distribution.*

**Discussion of Upcoming Events:**

**a) College Application Essay Workshops (10/6, 12, 27)**

These workshops are made available to seniors who would like some unbiased (read "not my parent") advise on college essays and applications.

Volunteers are still needed to help, so please check out the Sign Up Genius link ([www.SignUpGenius.com/go/college24](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/college24)) and get some experience, so when it is your child's turn, you will be a little more familiar with the challenge! If you can help with any of these workshops please contact [kjshoop@aol.com](mailto:kjshoop@aol.com).

**b) TOK Writer's Workshop (10/13, 26 and 11/30)**

This is a program that was piloted last year at SLHS. Krista Vita was involved with a similar program in New Jersey. Krista worked with Matt Ravenstahl's TOK classes to have an outside adult read the prescribed topic essays (1200-1600 words) for clarity and then be able to discuss suggestions with the student. His class's TOK Essay scores were up from the previous year with the volunteers meeting with students only 1 or 2 times.

Matt Ravenstahl was fortunate to have training as an essay reviewer this past summer so has better idea the areas that students need to work on. The program will be adjusted accordingly; the first student session will focus on "framing" an argument and the second will review the 1<sup>st</sup> draft.

Volunteers must be able to commit to attend the training, to read the essays before class and then to meet with the students during class (which is Wed evenings). This program could provide valuable assistance next year, when the number of students taking TOK is expected to increase significantly. Electronic signup is available at: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/tokwriters>. If you have questions about the program please contact [kristavita@hotmail.com](mailto:kristavita@hotmail.com).

**c) Academic Letter Ceremony (11/17)**

The Academic Letter Ceremony recognizes all students who achieved a GPA of 3.8 in the previous year. In addition National Honor Society Inductions occur on the same evening. Recipients receive a letter, lamp or bar (depending on how often they have achieved the 3.7 GPA). The evening starts with NHS inductions, followed by the letter ceremony (which includes a guest speaker) and finally a reception is held in the cafeteria. Families are asked to donate food for the reception.

Volunteers will be needed to set up and work the reception as well as help prepare the program and envelopes that each student receives. Parents are asked to provide the food for the reception. This year there will be a cake/beverage reception for the NHS inductees as well (cake will be provided by AB). Requests for volunteers will be made closer to the event.

**d) Mock SAT/ACT tests (SAT 10/29, ACT 11/19)**

Mock testing gives students the opportunity to take the actual tests without their scores going to College Board or American Testing College. This was an extremely successful program that was offered as a pilot last year. This year the tests will be offered on different days (to maximize enrollment) and at two different times (fall and winter).

Students who take the tests will receive an individualized feedback report which will tell them how they should study. It also gives them test taking strategies and provides nervous test takers a "stress free" test environment. The feedback report will include suggestions on where to focus their limited study time. For a sample feedback report, a discussion between ACT and SAT and a general FAQ, please go to the Academic Boosters web page (<http://www.southlakespts.org/academicboosters.html>) , scroll to the bottom and click on the documents of interest.

**e) 1Q Honor Roll Breakfast (11/18)**

If you are new to SLHS you might want to see this event. The HRB recognizes students who make the All A and A/B Honor Roll in the first, second and third quarters. Over 600 kids are honored at this "invitation only" event. Because of its immense size all volunteers, bakers, and donators please put that date on your calendar! Volunteers and donations will be requested via an electronic signup form. Contact either [jwestfall16@comcast.net](mailto:jwestfall16@comcast.net) or [Yolanda.Maldonado@fcps.edu](mailto:Yolanda.Maldonado@fcps.edu) for any questions or commitments for volunteering.

**Open Positions:**

**FAQ Creation** - Caroline Hemenway will not have a SLHS student next year so will be "retiring" as AB's FAQ Coordinator. We are looking for a volunteer to fill this role.

A suggestion was made that we produce the FAQ for Curriculum Night in February so that it gets into the hands of the people who need it; parents. This year only minor modifications will need to be made as the document went through a major review in August.

*Status Update: Joanne Sullivan. Thank You!*

**Directory Distribution** – Directories not ready for Back to School Night, so we may need some help w/ labeling and sorting directories, which we will then distribute to Learning Seminar teachers and they will give to the students. (See *Status Update* above)

**Next Meeting:** October 27th @ 7:00PM in the Career Center