



**Princeton High School PTO General Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> 2022 7:00 PM, Zoom**

Attendees	
Sasha Weinstein (PTO Co-President)	Frank Chmiel (PHS Principal)
Sue Evans (PTO Co-President)	Michelle Simbroski (PPS Student Assistance Counselor)
Betsy Baglio (BOE, PHS Liaison)	Diana Lygas (Dean of Students)

Brief Description / Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome from the PHS PTO and general updates.</li> <li>• Board of Education brief update.</li> <li>• Guest Speaker, Michelle Simbroski, PPS Student Assistance Counselor, will talk about Teen Mental Health.</li> <li>• Monthly update from Frank Chmiel, PHS Principal.</li> </ul>

Summary of the discussion	
Speaker	Items discussed
Sasha Weinstein and Sue Evans (PTO Co-Presidents)	<p>Welcome from the PHS PTO and September update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 300 kids attended the first Homecoming Dance in 7 years!</li> <li>• PTO provided coffee at the PHS Back to School Night.</li> <li>• Introduced a new PHS PTO logo developed by Allie Cassese.</li> <li>• PTOC held a virtual Lunch and Learn on Tuesday October 11<sup>th</sup> called 'Spotlight on Mental Health' which was open to all.</li> <li>• First 'New to PHS' parent gathering was held in person on Thursday October 6<sup>th</sup>. About 25 people attended. Next meeting is on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>. Diana Lygas will be the guest speaker. These are in person meetings at PHS – anyone can attend, not just new families.</li> <li>• The PTO is looking for more family involvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Trying to boost grade specific activities working with grade specific parents. Currently looking for a senior parent as this is the most urgent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Everyone is a member of the PTO!</li> <li>• Visit the PTO website for useful information and some of the activities the PTO does.</li> <li>• Join the PTO Princeton High Parent Connection Facebook group.</li> <li>• Donations are really appreciated.</li> <li>• The PTO spent \$22,000 last year on school community activities.</li> <li>• This year we have even more initiatives which will require funding.</li> <li>• A 'thank you' of PHS stickers are sent to all donors which you can stick on mugs etc.</li> <li>• There will be an in person parent panel meeting on Tuesday October 18<sup>th</sup> in PHS from 8:30am to 10:00am. Experienced parents will share their stories and perspectives and answer questions.</li> <li>• Sustainability team on the PTO is working to raise the 'Sustainable Jersey for Schools' certification status of PHS from bronze to silver. Check the PTO website on how to get involved with this team.</li> </ul>
Betsy Baglio (BOE, PHS Liaison)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next Board of Education monthly meeting is October 18<sup>th</sup> via zoom at 7:00pm. Meeting is open to the public.</li> <li>• The meeting will include a presentation of the mental health services that are being offered in our district for students.</li> </ul>



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Michelle Simbroski (PPS Student Assistance Counselor)	<p>Michelle has worked at PHS for the past 4 years has PPS Student Assistance Counselor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to PHS, she worked at Penn Medicine at Princeton for 12 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crisis Clinician</li> <li>Director of inpatient admission offices</li> </ul> </li> <li>Still works per diem in the ER at Penn Med.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mental Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With the help of funding from the PTO and from the school, 4 Indie Flix documentaries have been purchased. They are an educational series about various mental health issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Like – Social Media</li> <li>Angst - Anxiety</li> <li>The Upstanders - Bullying</li> <li>RACE to be human - Race</li> </ul> </li> <li>A one-week access system has been purchased.</li> <li>The films will be shown to the students during Health / PE class.</li> <li>Parents will also have access to watch these videos during the week with tips on how to talk to your children.</li> <li>Multiple languages available.</li> </ul> <p><b>Substance abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Running a month-long program in October encouraging students to participate in substance use awareness and education with the chance to win prizes at the end. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to <a href="http://www.redribbon.org">www.redribbon.org</a>.</li> <li>Refer to <a href="http://www.drugfreeworld.org">www.drugfreeworld.org</a> – students enroll in the free online courses – different courses each week for the month of October.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Crisis evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the student ok, work with family, counselors and others.</li> </ul> <p><b>Effective School Solutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nick Diaz – short term 6-8 week intervention services for students with mental health issues.</li> </ul> <p><b>General comments</b></p> <p>Substance abuse – all schools have issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alcohol, marijuana, vaping.</li> <li>Fentanyl can easily be interlaced with marijuana.</li> <li>Teachers and parents often approach Michelle with concerns.</li> <li>Talk about which movies / Netflix your kids are watching.</li> <li>What is trending on Instagram, TikTok, to see what is happening.</li> <li>What signs are there as a parent to look for if your student has mental health concerns? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deviation from typical routine</li> <li>Change in friend group; more isolated</li> <li>Change in grades</li> <li>Change in appetite – increase or decrease</li> <li>Change in sleep patterns</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Summary of the discussion	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Change in grooming etc.</li> <li>• Attend meeting on Thursday Oct 13<sup>th</sup> at 7pm titled 'Having Hope: Suicide Prevention for Parents' – this meeting may cover this topic also.</li> <li>• Hug your kids – make them feel good! Make them feel connected.</li> <li>• Encourage your student to attend school events – talk to people, engage, be part of their community.</li> </ul>
Frank Chmiel (PHS Principal)	<p>Principal Monthly Update</p> <p><b>School safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Threat assessment crisis team</b> – any concerns regarding students or staff would be raised. Members include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Principal</li> <li>▪ Assistant Principal</li> <li>▪ Student Assistance Counselor</li> <li>▪ Counselor</li> <li>▪ Case Manager if applicable</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ If any decision has to be made regarding the student, the above team would bring diverse thought. Criteria coming from the state to help make determinations.</li> <li>○ 2023-2024 will become state law.</li> <li>• <b>Reviewing visitor access</b> process / sign in / ID / temporary IDs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Will have additional signage - directive that no visitors can enter through any door except the Tower entrance. Students visiting from other students could be considered trespassers if they enter through these back doors. Also there may be potential consequence for students letting people in through back doors.</li> <li>○ Will be sent out via a Sunday Blast. But please share with your student.</li> <li>○ Trying to balance safety and freedom.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Parking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When coming to PHS, please park in visitor's spots designated with a "V" only. If all "V" parking spaces are taken, please park along the curb, put on your hazards, and come into the Main Office for a temporary parking pass. Main Office staff will then guide you on where to park.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Traffic pattern</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moore, Franklin, Houghton - left turns from front lot causes gridlock at drop-off and pickup – new signs limit left turns during various hours to improve flow and pedestrian safety crossing the streets.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Next PTO meeting is on Wednesday November 2 <sup>nd</sup> at 7pm via zoom.

Meeting ended at 8:15 PM.