

**FRIENDS OF THE HGM, INC.**  
Minutes

From: Judy McKelvey  
To: Board Members  
Subject: Minutes -- Board of Directors Meeting, April 7, 2010  
Attendees: Harry Geozian, Judy McKelvey, Nita Dixit, Eugene Woo, Tina Kim, Aviva Heston, Fern Wallach, Brent Lowehsohn  
Guests: Phyllis Spadafora, 13 additional HGM Parents

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was held in the school auditorium, and called to order at 7:14 pm.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Judy presented the minutes of the March 24, 2010 Friends meeting. On a motion to approve the minutes as presented made by Judy and seconded by Aviva, the March 24, 2010 minutes were approved as presented with unanimous consent.

**3. Meeting with Tamar Galatzan today (Harry and Brent)**

Along with some Portola HGM parents, Harry and Brent met with Ms. Galatzan to further discuss the District's proposed cuts to the Magnet Coordinator positions next year, particularly the HGM Magnet Coordinator positions. Ms. Galatzan was clearly feeling all the pressures on LAUSD programs that are coming from all sides at this time. Eventually, both Ms. Galatzan and her staff listened to our parents and their concerns regarding cuts to the HGM Magnet Coordinator position (see below).

To help Ms. Galatzan and her staff understand our perspective on this subject, Harry, Brent, and the Portola parents at the meeting offered to supply Ms. Galatzan's office with some suggested guidelines that will help explain why the magnet(s) need a full-time coordinator. Ms. Galatzan indicated that she is open to our forming a parent task force and providing supporting documentation showing what is successful about our programs and why it's important for the Board to make funding decisions regarding magnets not just on the basis of numbers of students enrolled in a program, but to think more deeply about where and how budget cuts should be made.

A pro bono lobbyist has advised us and given very helpful insight into the process that might work for us in putting our message through to the appropriate people. At this point, our understanding is that Superintendent Cortinez and the LAUSD Board want to give the available funds to the schools and programs, leaving it up to them to decide how to disburse funding for next year. Principal Delling has indicated his support for keeping the HGM Magnet Coordinator as a full-time position for as long as he is Principal at North Hollywood High. One possible scenario might be for the District to fund 50% of the position and for the remaining 50% to be funded out of the general fund

money disbursed to NHHS by LAUSD. If this scenario comes to pass, it will be a decent short-term solution for the problem immediately at hand, but does nothing to ensure that the HGM Coordinator position remains fully funded as a full-time position beyond Principal Delling's tenure.

#### **4. Discussion re: Possible Standards for Submission to Tamar Galatzan**

-- Best practices" offer to the District -- we could offer to share our perspectives with interested teachers and staff from other schools re: what we do to make our program work and help our students excel.

-- Send a binder to Cortinez and Board members, governor, mayor, City and County supervisors, with copies of letters from our (1) students, (2) teachers, (3) parents, (4) college admissions people, (and maybe (5) alumni) to tell our story about how public education can be made to work beautifully.

-- Effectiveness: Include fact that we have a long a wait list -- parents in the LAUSD community want to send their students here, rather than opting out for private schools or charters.

-- Need: Include fact that the HGM students, statistically speaking, would be at great risk of low- and non-achievement and dropping out if not placed in the program. (Citations)

-- Emphasize what services the HGM Coordinator provides to our special needs population, and that we need a full-time coordinator to make sure those needs are met. Explain how these service needs impact the HGM staff -- teachers and coordinator. Focus on how cuts will impact the students, not how it will affect the program.

-- Maybe incorporate these points into a flow chart ?

-- We need to get back to Ms. Galatzan's staff with "seed of an idea" criteria very quickly, because LAUSD is making decisions now. If that's successful, we would put together a task force consisting of dedicated parents and key staff from the programs.

-- "Opportunity emerging out of crisis" -- attempt to persuade LAUSD to look to us for best practices that might be transferrable to other schools, even if the population isn't HG.

-- Office of Integration: our goal is to get them to reconsider their position, give them some guidelines/criteria to use that will help them see the necessity of supporting our program.

-- Our coordinator is not an administrator -- she's an out-of-classroom teacher involved intimately and integrally in the day-to-day servicing of our students, and supporting our teachers' efforts at supporting the students.

-- Ultimately, we need to show that the minimal amount of District funds used to support a full-time coordinator are more than worth it in terms of what our program is able to create and do for our students

-- Cutting coordinator will decrease enrollment in the program and probably LAUSD

-- All our points need to avoid the "elitist" backlash that so often faces G/HG students and programs.

-- If we have no other administrative staff dedicated to supporting our program, that's another reason that we absolutely must have a full-time coordinator (unlike some other magnet programs, where there are 2-4 staff people serving the kids).

- Parents to explain that they have no other school options that would adequately serve their students, and why their students would not be as successful elsewhere.
- Why / how are our students “special needs?”
- Our students have no other option within LAUSD -- if our program slides downhill, as it will, our ability to attract and keep our kids will dissipate, and they will have no other place to go within LAUSD.
- Our CST scores are exemplary.
- Educational Success: Our students take a huge number of AP tests and perform tremendously every year. This results in our school being favorably comparable to the best high schools across the country; this will not continue if our coordinator is less than full-time.
- Educational Relevance / Effectiveness of the Coordinator in supporting students’ ability to reach academic and career goals: criteria that would allow programs to evaluate and identify the success of their students in graduating from the institution with proficiency and going on to attain their goals.
- Functions fulfilled by HGM Coordinator that are above and beyond the formal LAUSD job description.

**BRENT’S WHITE BOARD POINTS:**

- Magnet’s demonstrated success in getting students to their goals?
- Magnet’s demonstrated success in attracting and keeping students in LAUSD
- What alternatives, if any, exist for serving the magnet program’s target students (e.g., special needs; gifted/highly gifted; program and curricular emphasis) if the program doesn’t exist? this student population in LAUSD?
- Does the magnet program add to the reputation of LAUSD?
- How many administrators are dedicated to this magnet program?
- Impact of proposed budget cuts on the magnet students?
- Impact of proposed budget cuts on on-site teachers?
- Magnet’s success in meeting local, state, and federal goals?

Brent moves that the Board appoint a task force to negotiate the points/criteria to be submitted to Ms. Galatzan (and ultimately to the LAUSD Board). Aviva seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Friendly amendments were accepted, as reflected above. By unanimous consent, the motion was passed.

**5. Next Board Meeting**

April 28, 2010 at 6:30 pm, Room 109 in Kennedy Hall. Harry to send out email to parents in advance encouraging them to come.

**6. Old Business**

Proposals for SAT preparation courses by Eureka and Revolution. Rowena is going to get back to us with a little further information. Board members will consider that information and make a decision, and vote if possible by email.

**7. New Business**

No new business, other than the items discussed above.

**8. Public Comment**

Parents contributed to discussions re coordinator position, as above.

**9. Adjournment**

With unanimous consent without objection, the Board adjourned the meeting at 9:24 pm.