

## CREC Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts – Parents, Friends and Alumni Association (PFAA)

### Minutes – March 20, 2018

**Present:** Donna Hamre, Brandy Ciraldo, Jim Keller, Nick Chanese, Joshua Hamre

- **Administration updates**

Nick Chanese:

- There is no date yet for graduation due to the snow days. It will possibly be June 19<sup>th</sup>. There are several other schools that use the theater for their graduations so they will be working on getting a confirmed date quickly.
- Safe Grad will be June 5<sup>th</sup>
- It is budget season and the school is looking at having to make some budget cuts.
- The SAT has been postponed to April 24<sup>th</sup> due to the anticipated snow storm. Juniors will also be taking the piloted Science standardized test as well as AP Tests in May.
- The school is in the process of considering de-leveling classes. Currently there are honors vs non-honors classes. The idea will be piloted in 9<sup>th</sup> grade only and will change the courses to all honors classes. This will eliminate the chances of a student not getting into an honors class due to lack of space in the class as well as keeping the classes more balanced. The honors classes will be more demanding for the students but will make the program better as a whole.
- The lottery numbers are okay. We have enough applicants to fill the seats and approximately 255 ½ day students. They need to maintain a 50/50 ration for suburban student's vs Hartford Students. A big question is how many middle school students will be continuing onto GHAA High School. Because the students automatically carry over into their system, they are already counted in attendance.
- There will be a shadow day for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in an afternoon.
- The auditions for the departments will be held in June to allow students to choose their departments early and if they do not get selected for the department that they want, they will have the option of a choice to continue with GHAA prior to the school year beginning.
- The school choice office has changed their policy to allow students who are waitlisted for another school to also remain on the list for a ½ day spot at GHAA. The school will receive the students contact information and can

reach out to them to offer a ½ day spot rather than waiting on the waiting list for another school.

- Grants USA is a resource to check out for grants that we may be eligible for.
- National Walkout Day went very well. A reporter from the Hartford Courant accompanied the students. The students marched in silence from the Colt Building to CREC Central and back. There are several of GHAA students who were featured in the Hartford Courant.
- We can use the Colt cafeteria for a PTA meeting to get together with other CREC schools PTA's to share ideas and network. Possibly to join together for an end of the year Color Run. Meeting date TBD.

## **2. Director's Reception**

- The cost of the digital billboard would be approximately \$5000, which is not in our budget for this year. A Hartford Courant ad is possible for Chorus Line though. We can look at different options.
- Joshua will contact the Yard Goats to see if they are interested in donating tickets for the silent auction. Brandy said he can print off the Director's receptions sheet off of the website. Joshua will also check with other community theaters to see if they are interested in donating.
- Flower sales for concessions was light for Anna in the Tropics and taking into consideration the cast size of 8 students in Anna in the Tropics and 18 cast in Chorus Line, we may need to purchase more flowers for concession sales.
- We are considering holding part of the silent auction online to open up the bidding to families who are not able to attend the director's reception. It was discussed to include a QR code for each item so people can bid online and at the live auction.
- We can use the tangible items for the Live Silent Auction and the e-mailable donations for the online auction. We can also post what didn't sell at the Gala online for other bidders and extend the bidding time to 2 weekends for the show span.
- Chorus Line runs 2 weekends, Friday and Saturday nights, it is a 90 minute show with no intermission which will impact our concession sales.
- Invitation have been sent to the printer and are expected to be in by the end of the week.
- Last year, 425 invitations were mailed. Of those mailed invitations, only 10 people attended the Gala. The invitations were sent to past donors and alumni. The average attendees of the Gala range from 20-40 people.
- The Gala is held from 5pm-7pm, upstairs in the Theater Building. There are tables set up and the food is served buffet style, wine is available. Students will be playing Jazz music in the background.

- Invitations can be sent to the parents of the High School and the Middle School students via email. Electronic invitations can also be sent to members of the Arts Councils of the surrounding towns, as well as local businesses in the Greater Hartford Arts Council.
- Brandy will try to draft an email to imbed the invitation image into the body of the email.

### **3. Other Business**

- GHAA students have been invited to participate in “Make Music Hartford Day” which will take place on Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- The cast of Chorus Line was invited to participate in the Connecticut Department Arts Day celebration on April 25<sup>th</sup>
- PFAA is considering business cards to be purchased through VISTAPRINT
- We discussed creating our own website
- It was also suggested that we could be listed in the Playbills for the Theater productions to help increase our exposure.
- The Planet Aid Bin at the Colt Building is emptied quarterly. We talked about doing a “Sneaker Drive” this Spring to help increase donations.
- PFAA will be planning a Recycled Art and Craft afternoon event for students around Earth Day. Students will be asked to bring/donate recycled items.
- An idea from other PTA groups is to possible Livestream the PFAA meetings on Cube.

**Next meeting will be a Board Member meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup>.**

**The next official PFAA Meeting will be held on April 17<sup>th</sup>**

**The Gala will be held on April 27<sup>th</sup>.**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Hamre, Secretary