



Catholic Schools
DIOCESE OF BUFFALO

Many members of the BDFHSA have asked questions about “how things work” at other schools. As a result, we created a survey to help us all understand better the activities and accomplishments of the parent organizations at our various schools.

Below are the findings from the surveys returned as of Friday, April 25th.

Meetings

What is the name of the parent organization at your school?

- 73% HSA
- 20% Parent Guild
- 7% Parent Association

When do you hold elections?

- 84% elect in spring (April/May/June)
- 8% have parents volunteer
- 8% appoint their HSA representatives

What officers are elected?

- 46% elected President, Vice president, Secretary and Treasurer
- 15% added at-large members to the above
- 30% had other members including members to act as Ex. Council, fundraising coordinator, recording & corresponding secretaries, moral and appreciation, health & wellness and/or recruitment
- Most schools had 2 year terms

Do you have by-laws?

- All schools have by-laws

Do you have a calendar?

- All have a calendar

Who calls meetings?

- 47% Presidents call the meetings
- 33% Any HSA leadership can call the meetings
- 13% principals and presidents call the meetings
- 7% meetings are pre-set

How often do you meet?

- 50% meet monthly
- 40% meet 5x/year
- 5% meet 2x/year
- 5% have 1 general meeting per year

What time?

- 21% at 6pm
- 65% meet at 7pm
- 14% at other times (6:30, evening)

What is the length of your average meeting?

- 5% meet for 30 min.
- 50% meets for 1 hour
- 40% meet for 60-120 minutes
- 5% average 2 hours

Note: Those who mentioned Executive council/board meetings said those meetings ranged from 2-3 hours each, most met monthly and offered that they used conference calls and SKYPE for Ex. Council meetings.

What is the average attendance (not including board members) at most meetings?

- 33% had 5-10% of the parent population attend meetings
- 33% had 10-20% of the parent population attend meetings
- 20% had 20-30% of the parent population attend meetings
- 14% had over 50% of the parent population attend meetings

Note: Interestingly, those schools that had just 2 general meetings per year had the highest attendance as well as the schools that had six 30 minute general meetings.

Do you take minutes of each meeting?

- 100% of the schools take minutes of their meetings
- 75% post or send minutes to parents
- 25% do not

Is there an HSA page on the school website?

- 85% have an HSA page on their website
- 15% do not.

Who maintains it?

- This question elicited numerous answers including, the advancement director, HSA president, parish and school coordinator, school office, marketing committee chair, rectory with direction from HSA and webmaster

What does it include?

Many answers including: by-laws, committee descriptions, dates of upcoming events, meeting agendas, minutes and reports, board member contact info and photos, volunteer opportunities, booster club winners

Fund raising

What do you project to be the net amount of money raised by your HSA fundraising efforts for the 2013-14 school year?

- 7% Under \$10,000
- 14% \$10,001-\$25,000
- 33% \$25,001-\$50,000
- 20% \$50,001-\$75,000
- 26% Over \$75,000

What fundraiser or event raises the most for your school?

- Answers included, galas, auctions, sweepstakes, theme baskets/tray, candy bar sales, Script, meat raffles, Oktoberfest, wrapping paper, Target take charge, paper recycling, X-mas bazaar, craft show, school marathon

How many large fundraisers do you have each year? (Net of \$5,000 or more)

- 75% had one large event
- 25% had 3 larger events

How many small fundraisers do you have each year? (Net of less than \$5,000)

- 26% had 1-3 smaller events
- 46% had 4-6 smaller events
- 20% had 7-10 events
- 8% had over 10 smaller events

Does the cost of running any event exceed 50% of the proceeds?

- 73% of the respondents did not run events that cost more than 50% of the proceeds
- 20% ran events costing more than 50% of the proceeds
- 7% were not sure

Would any small fundraiser be considered more of a "friend raiser" or social event? If so, how many?

- 54% of schools considered 1-3 of their smaller fundraisers to be friend raisers
- 26% had none
- 7% had 4 or more
- 13% did not answer the question

Do you host any social/non-fundraising events *for parents*? If so, please list:

- 46% of the schools responding did not have a social event strictly for parents
- 40% held events for parents (with items including wellness/self help programs, beer & wine tasting, happy hour, parent appreciation night)
- 14% did not respond to this question

Do you host any social/non-fundraising *family* events? If so, please list:

- 93% of schools had some form of non-fundraising family event
- 7% said they tried but were unsuccessful in hosting an event.

Events included mother /son bowling or dance, father/daughter dance, Santa's workshop, sweepstakes get together, Catholic schools week activities, book fair, student concerts and/or plays, skating with bunny, farm nights, ice cream social, family dance night, movie night, field day, Halloween party/dance, pray 'n play, donuts with dad, multi-cultural

night, variety show, spaghetti dinner, spring arts and/or music night, family picnic, turkey trot, Lenten breakfast club, Bison's family day.

Please list how your fundraising proceeds are used to support the school?

Many answers, including: to the purchase of new lunchroom tables, kindergarten furniture, Smart Boards for every classroom, enhance safety by funding safety committee projects, used to offset operating costs, directly into budget, technology and consumable workbooks biggest cost, funds turned over to parish business manager., our fundraising goes to our assessment, field trips, teacher appreciation, insurance, busses for fieldtrips, bibles for 1st Communion, books, teacher Xmas, general maintenance, new science lab and other classroom needs, sports equipment and uniforms, league fees, teacher and volunteer recognition gifts, student events, principal requests, school wish items, offset school budget expenses, , 8th grade Farewell dinner, student assemblies, start up \$, scholarships, field days, hotdog cookouts, defray the costs of extra-curricular Sports (Soccer, Basketball, Swim Team, Diocesan Track Meet) purchase student planners, 8th grade ribbon ceremony & lunch, Kindergarten celebration, teacher bonuses, technology.

Who decides the priority of how the fundraising dollars are used?

- 33% the HSA leadership and principal set the priority
- 26% the HSA board, pastor or canonical and principal set the priority
- 20% the pastor and principal set the priority
- 14% the HSA & finance committee or board
- 7% the HSA board and committee chairs

Finances

Does your board or other person/group set a school fundraising goal for your HSA?

- 73% have a specific goal
- 27% do not have a specific goal

Do you generally meet the goal?

- 73% reach their desired goal
- 20% do not have a goal to reach
- 7% get close to meeting the goal

Do you have your own bank account?

- 60% of those polled do not have their own bank account
- 33% have their own account
- 7% did not answer the question

If not, please describe your accounting procedure?

- We have our own separate line on budget
- We submit \$\$ to business manager
- Deposit are made to parish account with coding for our activities, we track our allotment
- Follow diocesan procedures
- Requests through business manager
- Treasurer tracks and reviews events, \$ go to rectory deposited in school account

Do you collect HSA dues from each family?

- 73% said no
- 27% said yes

If so, what amount per student or per family?

Of those who collect dues-

- 50% collect \$15 per family
- 25% collect \$10 per family
- 25% collect \$5 per child

Volunteers

Does your school have mandatory parent service hours and/or requirements?

- 71% do not have required service hours
- 29% have required service hours

What are the requirements? (Hours, attendance at events, purchase of tickets...)

Of the schools that have requirements, here is a sample of the requirements they listed:

- attendance and participation at events, in-school activities (stuffing envelopes)
- must participate at Gala and in child(ren)'s classroom
- 15 (\$25) auction tickets, unsold tickets are added to tuition
- Bingo- 13 x/yr and a \$300 fundraising requirement for HSA
- working an event, lunch duty, fieldtrips, meetings
- \$425 in profit/family, this includes selling raffle tickets
- 13 bingos, 25 hrs
- participation at 2 major and 2 minor events
- attendance at events, purchase or selling of tickets, donations for fundraising events

Are families able to "buy-out" their service/volunteer hours and/or requirements?

Of the schools that have required service hours:

- 60% have a buyout option
- 40% do not have the buyout option

If so, what is the cost to buy-out?

- Of the schools that had service hour requirements and a buyout option, the buyout ranged between \$700-\$1200

Do you have trouble getting volunteers for events?

- 42% said sometimes/occasionally
- 29% said yes
- 29% said no

If not, what tips can you offer to schools struggling to find volunteers?

- Create manuals which outline roles and responsibilities with timelines, and support documents
- Build relationships one by one with parents and parishioner base
- More students/families
- Send lists out at the beginning of the year of activities and make follow up phone calls before events for volunteers

- Make it part of the normative culture, remove all optional verbiage
- Parents like to be personally asked and made to feel they are needed
- It's all about the excitement/involvement that is created from the top down. Well run events provide a sense of contribution and go a long way towards the continuance of the volunteer pool

Does your school HSA have committees within the organization?

- 57% of schools have committees
- 43% do not have committees

If so, please list the committee names and outline their responsibilities.

Of the schools that had committees, here are some of the answers we received:

- We have a committee for each event (several schools said this)
- Fundraising and marketing
- Ad hoc based on need
- Publicity – submit event into to parent newsletter, publicize school activities; Advancement – undertake projects to guide the school, alumni communications, grant writing; Volunteers – coordinate volunteer sign-ups, identify room parents and next year's HSA committees; Hospitality – coordinate the Sunshine Committee, orientation, oversee parent ambassador program; Spiritual Life – coordinate the Prayer Line, evening of reflection, advent/lent devotionals, Catholic Schools Week breakfast, prayers at HSA meetings; Social Planner – identify community building opportunities, chair events such as mother/son bowling, fall harvest fest, ice skating party

Does your school have grade parents/ homeroom parent? If so, what is their function?

- 57% of schools have room/grade parents
- 43% of school do not have room/grade parents

Of the schools that have room/grade parents here are some suggested responsibilities:

- Room Parents for each grade. They are the key contact for parents in that particular grade; liaisons between class parents and Sunshine Committee; responsible for coordinating a "treat for teachers" in the month assigned; first opportunity to attend first class field trip; teacher may ask them to assist with holiday parties or special projects/activities; grade specific activities include – 2nd grade parent servers at school for 1st Communion reception and all saints day reception; 3rd grade parents assist in getting children ready for All Saints day; and 7th grade parent are servers for Mass of Hope for 8th grade as well as host the 8th grade dinner dance
- Classroom activities, backpack mailing, follow up phone calls, open houses
- Help with events, coordinate volunteers and donations for parties, gifts for teachers, teacher appreciation day, teacher birthdays
- Calling parents to remind them of upcoming events
- Teacher lunches, holiday parties, field trips
- Relay info. Ideas, concerns also greeter and organizer

What other ways can a parent support your school?

- Guardian angels for struggling families, beautification of school, fundraising, meals for families with illness
- Volunteer to do site words
- Volunteers in class, lunch duty, any way the feel they want to
- Run a club, coach
- Cafeteria volunteer, office help, coaching sports teams
- Attending meetings and participating in activities & functions, volunteering to coach teams or organize them, and volunteer time and talent in and around the school community to meet a specific need
- Lunch monitoring, coach a sports team, volunteer in the library, be on the Prayer Line, help with the Sunshine Committee

Thank you to all who took the time to participate in this survey.