

# LHMS PTA NEWS

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Dec 3, 7:30pm –  
FCPS Boundary  
Study meeting at  
Westfields H.S

Dec 18 – Staff Holiday  
Sweets & Treats

Dec 19, 7:30pm –  
FCPS Boundary  
Study meeting at  
Oakton H.S.

Dec 24-Jan 1 – Winter  
Vacation

*(There will be no PTA  
meeting in Dec)*

Jan 10, 6:30pm – PTA  
Workshop -  
“Emotional Issues of  
Middle School  
Students”

Jan 10, 7pm – Jan  
PTA meeting

Jan 18, 7:30pm –  
Skate Night

Jan 21 – MLK  
Holiday

Jan 25 & Jan 28 –  
Teacher Workdays –  
no school for students

Feb 7, 6:30pm – PTA  
Workshop -  
“Preparing for High  
School”

Feb 7, 7pm – PTA  
meeting

Dear Langston Hughes Middle School Parents and Families,

Because December is such a busy month, there will **not be a general PTA meeting**. However, your PTA Board will meet to review and plan activities for the second half of our academic year.

On December 18<sup>th</sup> our Hospitality Committee will be coordinating our second annual **Staff Holiday Sweets and Treats**, where families donate holiday cookies and sweet treats for our staff to sample and take home goodies for the holiday.

Our **January PTA meeting** will occur on January 10 at 7:00pm in the media center/library. Prior to the PTA meeting, at 6:30pm, our guidance department will provide a presentation on “The Social/Emotional Issues of Middle School Students”. We hope you can attend.

Your PTA wishes you a **happy and healthy holiday Season!**

*Porque Diciembre es un mes muy ocupado no habrá una reunión de PTA sin embargo el los directivos si se reunirán.*

*El 18 de Diciembre habrá una recaudación de galletas para los maestros y el personal administrativo de la escuela.*

*La reunión de PTA será el 10 de Enero de 2008 a las 7:00pm en la Biblioteca. Habrá una presentación de 30 minutos a las 6:30 pm para hablar de los problemas emocionales y sociales que los estudiantes pasan en Middle School esperamos que puedan atender.*

*El PTA les desea felicidades y saludables dias fiestas.*

*Gracias!*

*Joan Burkhart*

PTA President  
president@lhmspta.com

## BAKED GOODS NEEDED FOR HOLIDAY SWEETS & TREATS

On Tuesday, December 18 the PTA will be treating our hard-working teachers to a wonderful spread of sweets & treats!

The idea is to prepare enough for the teachers to take home to families that they may not have had time to bake for because they were busy making sure our children succeed!

The Hospitality Committee is asking for volunteers to contribute treats and/or help decorate the teacher's lounge for the event. If you can help in either capacity, please contact Claire Cyncynates at [hospitality@lhmspta.com](mailto:hospitality@lhmspta.com).



## CAREER DAY A BIG SUCCESS!

Our LHMS families are the best! Over 46 parents & community members volunteered their time on November 16 to come to LHMS and participate in the school's Career Day program.

Thanks to these generous volunteers, every LHMS student had the opportunity to learn more about careers ranging from biology to geology, photojournalism to publishing, veterinary science to dentistry, electrical engineering to spying!

The PTA would like to join the LHMS Guidance Staff in thanking all the wonderful parents who participated in this wonderful enrichment opportunity! A big thanks also to our parents who provided refreshments for our speakers.

## THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE COLLECTS MORE FOOD THAN EVER!

Members of the LHMS Community Service Club, sponsored by Dawn Dzurilla, coordinated with LHMS staff to collect food for needy LHMS families for the holiday season.

This year their efforts yielded enough food to provide big boxes of food for 13 families – more than ever before!

## MULTICULTURAL FAIR PLANNING MEETING

The first planning meeting for the 2008 Multicultural Fair will be December 13 after school (2:35pm) in Room 112. This year's organizers will be Melinda Rivas (LHMS Parent Liaison), Brunilda Santos (LHMS teacher) and Laura Drain (PTA Hispanic Outreach Coordinator)..

Parents and teachers are encouraged to help plan this annual event, which includes food, music, arts, crafts, information and entertainment. Can't attend the meeting but still have ideas you would like to contribute? Contact Laura Drain at [hispanicoutraech@lhmspta.com](mailto:hispanicoutraech@lhmspta.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

## WANTED: CAMERAS FOR PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

Do you have an old 35mm fully manual camera lying around your house, ignored and neglected since you switched to digital? The Panthers After School Photography Club is in desperate need of more cameras to equip the club's 60+ members!

Donations should be addressed to Amy Taylor, Photography Club sponsor, and dropped off in the front office.

## PIZZA WEDNESDAY UNDERWAY!

Pizza Wednesdays have begun!

Students wishing to grab a snack before boarding their bus or to fortify themselves for an afternoon of clubs and after school activities may stop by the cafeteria to purchase pizza, sodas and snacks. This event is sponsored by the LHMS PTA.

To volunteer, contact Tricia Graves at [pizzawednesday@lhmspta.com](mailto:pizzawednesday@lhmspta.com)

## CLUBS & AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Did your student sign up for an after-school club at the September Club Fair? It's not too late to participate in any of these great opportunities: students may join by showing up at the next scheduled meeting.

Meetings are announced on the Hughes Morning News and also on the "What's Happening At Hughes" wall in the Hall of Nations. Please note that not all clubs are yet up and running, and that the after school program will continue to add clubs and enrichment activities throughout the year.

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**DID YOU KNOW** ... An article about Langston Hughes M.S. appeared in the November 4, 2007 edition of the Washington Post Magazine? The article discussed the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) and suggested that one reason for steady improvements in South Lakes H.S. test scores is that new students participated in the IBMYP program while at Langston Hughes. How about that ... we're smart *and* famous!

**FEEL OUT OF TOUCH?  
SIGN UP FOR KEEP IN  
TOUCH (KIT) TODAY!**

[https://fcps.medianext.com/  
fcps/signup](https://fcps.medianext.com/fcps/signup)

***All the "fashionable" cars in town  
are wearing them ... is yours?***

**Panther Car Magnets  
just \$5!**

Contact [tshirts@lhmspta.com](mailto:tshirts@lhmspta.com)  
to order yours today!

## **UPCOMING PTA NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:**

*Don't wait until the last minute!  
Please submit your newsletter  
articles/announcements at least  
2 months in advance, especially if you  
will be soliciting volunteers or donations*

Announcements for January  
events due  
**Dec 14**

Announcements for February  
events due  
**Jan 18**

**SUBMISSIONS:** Articles or article ideas  
should be submitted electronically to  
[ptanewsletter@lhmspta.com](mailto:ptanewsletter@lhmspta.com)



## NOVEMBER PTA MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT.** *Aimee Monticchio.*

This month we enjoyed recognizing the many LHMS students whose first quarter grades qualified them for the All-A honor roll (78 students) and the B honor roll. Invitation-only team receptions, cake, snacks & certificates recognized the hard work and achievement of these students.

We also recognized students who demonstrated respect and responsibility. Students who earned "High 5" coupons during the first quarter qualified to participate in a pizza party and to win a variety of prizes. (One of the most coveted prizes: "Go to the front of the lunch line" passes!) Next month's PBS program will emphasize attendances, singling out students who have no tardies or unexcused absences during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter for special recognition.

We have a new band director! Jordanna Bergman will replace Melissa Hall, who recently accepted a position at a local high school (good luck Mrs. Hall!). It is anticipated that the December 19<sup>th</sup> band/orchestra/chorus holiday concert will proceed as usual.

The first FCPS Community Redistricting meeting was held on Nov 12 at Chantilly H.S. As the local newspapers reported, over 2000 people from potentially effected high schools attended the meeting. The next community meeting is scheduled for Dec 3 at Westfields H.S. Though LHMS parents are welcome to attend these meetings, Ms. Monticchio reiterated that the only potential direct impact to LHMS would be in the event that the "Madison Island" is reassigned to the SLHS

pyramid, in which case students from this area, in addition to attending SLHS, would attend Sunrise Valley E.S. and Hughes M.S.

The Burke Center has challenged our school to a basketball match. The game will be here at LHMS after school on Thursday, Nov 29.

**PEER MEDIATION COORDINATOR REPORT.** *Melinda Rivas.* Last spring LHMS sponsored an "8<sup>th</sup> Grade Summit" at St. John Neuman Church. At this event, speakers from the community talked to LHMS 8<sup>th</sup> graders about issues to include money management, making choices, leadership, and conflict resolution. Planning is underway to sponsor another such event this coming spring.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT.** *Jody Wolfe.*

Our Dining for Dollars evening at Potbelly's earned \$540 for our school. Also, our November Skate Night earned \$481 – well in excess of the \$350 that was anticipated in the 2007-08 budget.

Parents are reminded to deposit Boxtops for Education in the collection box in the library before the last day of January, as the next window for sending them in to be redeemed will be February 2008.

We have finished setting up a Click & Pledge system for LHMS. As soon as a link is added to the LHMS website, a KIT will be sent to parents notifying them of this easy way to purchase PTA items, including memberships, spirit wear, vendor discount cards and car magnets. To cover the 5% processing fee, a 5% charge will be added to purchases made using the Click & Pledge system. Our hope is that this system will make it easier for our LHMS families to purchase memberships & participate in fundraisers!

**MINIGRANT COMMITTEE.** *Elizabeth Vandenberg.* Two mini-grant requests were submitted for approval at the November meeting, and the following actions were approved by vote:

- \$500 to print & bind a magazine project that will be the culminating activity for ~60

honors English students. The PTA moved to table this grant until more information could be gathered.

- \$320 to purchase a digital camera and 2 mini-digital voice recorders for general school use. The PTA voted to award this mini-grant proposal.

**HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE.** *Joan Burkhart for Claire Cyncynates.* The Hospitality Committee will be organizing a Sweets & Treats event for December 18<sup>th</sup>. They are soliciting volunteers to provide treats and/or help decorate the teacher's lounge on that day. For more information or to volunteer, contact [hospitality@lhmspta.com](mailto:hospitality@lhmspta.com)

**PARENT OUTREACH.** *Laura Drain.* She and LHMS Parent Liaison Layla Alacuoby continue every month translate the school calendar and parts of the PTA newsletter into Spanish & Arabic and to mail hard copies to all students who are enrolled in ESOL classes this year. It is hoped that this will increase the involvement of LHMS families whose primary language is other than English. The PTA agreed to continue to fund copying and postage expenses for this important outreach initiative.

**SKATE NIGHT COMMITTEE.** *Maureen Becker.* The next Skate Night will be Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm. Tickets will be \$7 at the door or \$6 with skates.

**NEW BUSINESS.**

A parent volunteer has expressed an interest in organizing a Science Olympiad program at LHMS. An initial planning meeting was scheduled for Monday, 19 November, and it was suggested that a KIT message be sent out to all LHMS parents to solicit interest and volunteers. The PTA moved to approve provisional funding of up to \$350 to purchase required training CDs and materials\* provided that sufficient interest and enrollment in the program was established. (\*This would be a one-time expense, as the same training materials are reused every year.)

In recognition of the success of the PBS "High 5" program (see Principal's Report), the PTA moved to add \$200 to fund prizes and awards for the next quarter.

**See how much you missed? Please plan to attend our next PTA meeting on Jan 10 and make your voice heard!**

The weather outside  
is frightful ... BE  
PREPARED; order your  
LHMS sweatshirt today!



**These high-quality navy blue hoodie sweatshirts with front hand warmer pocket will keep both your body & brain toasty warm no matter how many trailer classes you have this winter!**

To order your sweatshirt, contact Carol at [tshirts@lhmspta.com](mailto:tshirts@lhmspta.com)

<b>.HMS Sweatshirt (S, M, L, XL)</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>.HMS Sweatshirt (XXL)</b>	<b>\$28</b>

# Family SKATE NIGHT at Skatequest!!



Friday, January 18  
7:30-9:30pm

**12150 Sunset Hills Road**  
**Reston, VA**  
(near the Reston Post Office)

### Admission

\$6 (entrance only)  
\$7 (entrance + skate rental)



25% of all sales made during this time  
will be donated to the Hughes PTA ...  
so come join us and channel your  
inner Michelle Quan!

## LHMS STUDENT DIRECTORIES *on sale NOW!*

Last month all LHMS families received a  
complimentary copy of the LHMS  
Student Directory.

*So, why on earth would you pay \$5 for  
an extra copy? Let us count the  
reasons why ....*

**REASON #1.** Despite being large and blue,  
Student Directories possess uncanny but  
proven ability to vanish without a trace ...  
and then how is your child going to contact  
classmates to find out about homework  
or projects?

**REASON #2.** Your child wants a copy in  
their room to quickly look up phone  
numbers and email addresses. You want a  
copy in the kitchen so you can have easy  
access to Frequently Called Numbers,  
teacher emails, summary information about  
school policies, etc. Why fight –  
order one for each of you!

**REASON #3.** They make wonderful  
mementos of the school year.



## Student Directories \$5 each

Available for purchase in the front office

Register to  
participate in these  
**Grocery Store  
Rebate Programs  
and earn  
FREE MONEY  
for Hughes!**



**Giant A+ BonusBucks  
program**

LHMS Code = 01984  
[www.giantfood.com/aplus](http://www.giantfood.com/aplus)



**Safeway Back to Schools  
program** (managed by  
eScrip)

LHMS CODE = 6517998  
[www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com)



**Harris Teeter Together in  
Education program**

LHMS Code = 5073  
[www.harristeeter.com](http://www.harristeeter.com)  
Select COMMUNITY,  
TOGETHER IN  
EDUCATION. At the  
bottom of the page, click the  
link that says "Link Your  
VIC Card to Your School  
Now!"

## THE WAYS TO THE MEANS

By Suzanne White, PTA VP Ways & Means (Fundraising)

The year has gotten off to a great start with many of our fundraisers underway and some already behind us. Thanks to all who participated in our **Skate Night** fundraiser on Nov 9 – don't forget that there is another one coming up on Jan 18! - and to all who have purchased **LHMS spirit merchandise, vendor discount cards** , and/or other items at Touch Base Day.

I am excited about the pending introduction of our new **"Click & Pledge"** system. This online system will allow LHMS families to purchase PTA memberships & merchandise from the convenience of their home computer and to pay by credit card. (Note that a 5% fee will be added to all "Click & Pledge" purchases to cover the transaction cost levied by our internet vendor.)

It is hoped that this system will significantly increase the number of families that purchase PTA memberships and to facilitate the process of ordering LHMS spirit items throughout the year.

Speaking of **PTA memberships**, the total number of folks who have signed up for membership this year represents a small percentage of the school's total enrollment. To ensure that the PTA truly represents our school's unique and diverse population, we need your voice! Please contact Damita Snow at [ptamembership@lhmspta.com](mailto:ptamembership@lhmspta.com) to do your part.

**Pizza Wednesday** has begun. If your child has a club or after school activity on Wednesday, encourage them to stop by the cafeteria first to purchase a slice of pizza, a snack, or a cool drink.

**This month we are featuring Grocery Store Rebate Programs.** Please take advantage of the "cheat sheet" on this page to quickly go online & register Hughes as your donor school. (*Conflicted because you have children in different schools? Most stores allow you to divide your contribute between multiple schools.*) Remember, even if you've registered your cards before, **YOU MUST RE-REGISTER EVERY NEW SCHOOL YEAR!**

Please don't forget that we will be collecting **Box Tops for Education** throughout the year! The collection box is located in the library.

Thank you, as ever, for continuing to support our fundraising efforts throughout the year!

# BOUNDARY ISSUES UPDATE

On July 11, the FCPS school board finalized plans to conduct a boundary study in the western part of Fairfax County in order to address the issue of underutilization of South Lakes High School and overcrowding at Westfield High School. Included in the boundary study are the following schools: Chantilly H.S., Herndon H.S., Oakton H.S., South Lakes H.S., and Westfield H.S.

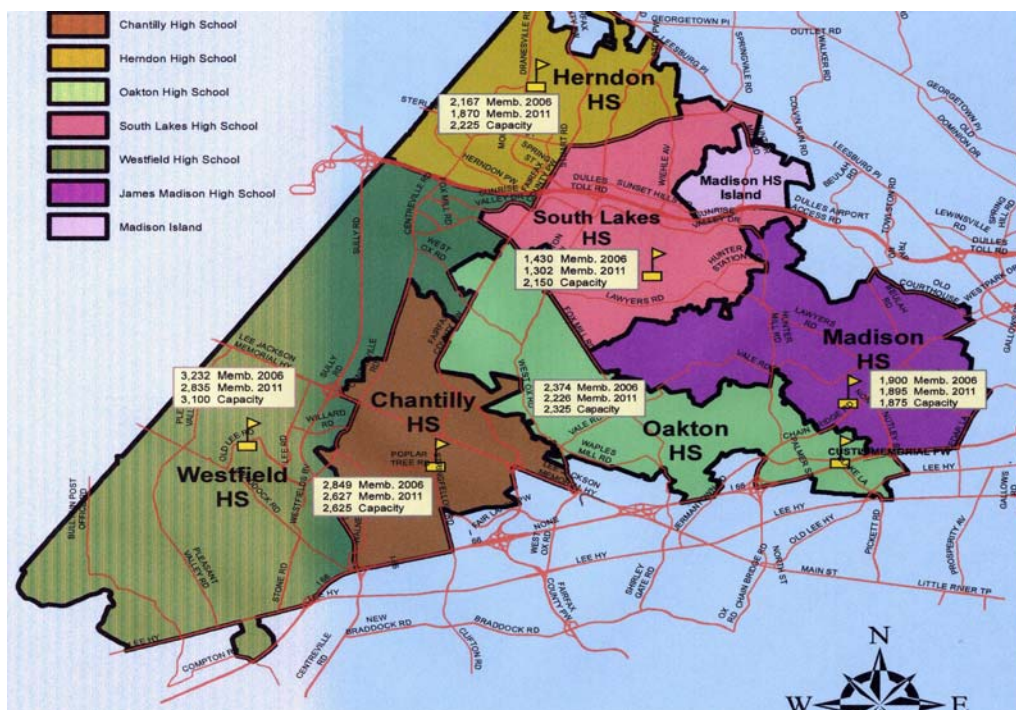
At a recent meeting, FCPS administrators emphasized that **this boundary change would likely impact high schools *only* – it is not anticipated that Hughes boundaries or enrollment will be significantly impacted.**

However, as members of the South Lakes Pyramid, FCPS welcomes the input and participation of the Hughes community in the redistricting process. **It is anticipated that increasing SLHS's enrollment will benefit all current and future SLHS students by enabling the school to offer a wider range of electives, more honors and IB classes, and increasing participation in extracurricular activities and sports.**

All interested community members are invited to attend one or more of remaining scheduled town hall-style community meetings:

- Dec 3, 7:30pm, Westfields H.S.
- Dec 19, 7:30pm, Oakton H.S.

Any such process is enhanced by the free and open exchange of accurate, unbiased information. South Lakes and Hughes families are encouraged to attend these town hall forums to share with members of other impacted communities their personal experiences and insights into South Lakes, Hughes, and the wider Reston community.





## SLHS IN THE NEWS!

*This feature is produced in cooperation with the SLHS PTSA as a service to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade families who will be transitioning to SLHS next year.*

- A Nov 14 article by Jay Matthews in the Washington Post cites a study by the Fordham Institute which finds that while AP and IB classes are both academically rigorous, **IB biology and math classes are slightly more academically rigorous than their AP counterparts**. The article is available at [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/13/AR2007111302024.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/13/AR2007111302024.html)
- South Lakes student Robert Van Trees was highlighted on a recent FCPS video clip. To watch the clip (and to learn more about the IB program & IB internships), go to <http://www.fcps.edu/mediapub/cable-tv/archive/0708/in0708.htm> and click on “**South Lakes IB Student Internships**”
- South Lakes students participated in the first annual **Senate Democratic Hispanic Youth Summit on Capital Hill**. Approximately 100 students from various schools had the opportunity to go to the Senate and hear key Senate committee staff and advocacy group leaders talk about important issues facing Latino youth today.
- South Lakes sponsored a **Senior Ethics Day** in November. The objective of the annual event, held at the Reston Sheraton, was to encourage students to think about ethics and their application to student’s lives within and outside of the classroom.
- 21 exchange students from Germany visited SLHS through the **German American Partnership Program (GAPP)**. The students stayed with local host families for 3 weeks and attended classes at SLHS with their hosts. The school was also visited by a group of exchange students from Russia.
- SLHS has introduced a **Japanese language program** this year.
- In early December the school’s **new band, chorus and orchestra rooms are scheduled to open**. Also, the new main office and guidance suite will be released for occupancy.
- A **joint SLHS/LHMS chorus Skate Night fundraiser** has been scheduled for Nov 28 at the Reston Town Center skating rink. Just mention one of the groups’ names when you pay for admission – no voucher needed. You can skate any time during rink hours on the 28<sup>th</sup> and our schools will receive credit.
- There will be a **Winter Chorale & Orchestra Concert** at St. John Neuman Church on December 6 at 7pm. Also, the **Winter Band Concert** will on Dec 19 at 7pm in the SLHS gym
- The **South Lakes Dance Team** will participate in the National Dance Team Competition (NDTC) in Orlando Florida in the spring. The team is returning for the 7<sup>th</sup> time to compete against teams from all over the country.
- At the last football game of the season **Neil Costello, long-time SLHS announcer, was honored**. Mr. Costello hasn’t missed announcing a home game in 10 years!
- The next **SLHS PTSA meeting** will be Dec 12 at 7:30 in the media center/library.
- Interested in learning more about what goes on at SLHS? Visit the PTA website (see below) and **sign up for “This Week at SLHS”** to receive updated bulletins by email.
- **SLHS contacts**
  - **SLHS website**, [www.fcps.k12.va.us/SouthLakesHS](http://www.fcps.k12.va.us/SouthLakesHS)
  - **SLHS PTSA/Academic Boosters**, [www.southlakesptsa.org](http://www.southlakesptsa.org)
  - **SLHS Band**, [www.southlakesband.org](http://www.southlakesband.org)
  - **SLHS Theater**, [www.sltheatrearts.com](http://www.sltheatrearts.com)
  - **SLHS Athletic Boosters**, [www.seahawkboosters.com](http://www.seahawkboosters.com)



By Joan Burkhart, PTA President

- To Dawn Dzurilla and her **Community Service Club** participants for helping with the Thanksgiving food drive and for helping to keep our Adopt-A-Spot area clean
- To Tricia Graves and their teams of **Pizza Wednesday volunteers** for providing students with an opportunity to purchase snacks before heading to clubs and other after school activities.
- To Claire Cyncynates and Sara McAlpine, our hospitality coordinators, and everyone who helped with this year's **Touch Base Teacher Lunch** and **Career Day** refreshments.
- To our **Career Day presenters** - thank you so much for sharing your time and your expertise with our students!
- To our **Reflections** committee, and especially the judges who helped review this year's entries: Henrietta Penic (who judged *all* our literature entries!), Kathryn Fredgren, Ann Williams, Mark Regan, Patrick Ware, Beth Atkins, Brian Smith, Andrew Loftus, and Dana Schreiner
- To Maureen Becker and Juli Westfall for coordinating **Skate Night** and their volunteers. Also, a big thanks to all our students who participated in this fun social activity.
- All our wonderful **Team Parent Coordinators** and **Team volunteers** who helped make our 1<sup>st</sup> quarter honor roll receptions



- A Dawn Dzurilla por su club de **Community Service Club** quienes ayudaron a el Thanksgiving food drive y ayudar a mantener una area limpia.
- A Tricia Graves y su equipo por **Pizza los miércoles**, por ayudar a manterner su tradición de dar la oportunidad a los estudiantes de comprar pizza y bebidas.
- A Claire Cyncynates y Sara McAlpine, de el comité de hospitalidad por dar de comer a los profesores en **Touch Base** y **Career Day**.
- A los presentadores **Career Day** presentar gracias por ayudar y tomar su tiempo para los estudiantes.
- A el equipo **Reflections** jueces y estudiantes que participaron en el National PTA Reflections program.
- A Maureen Becker y Juli Westfall y sus voluntarios por coordinar el **Skate Night**. Asi como los estudiantes que participaron.
- A nuestros coordinadores de los voluntarios y padres

LHMS's  
07-08 PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD

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