

PTA Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2011
7:00 pm
RSS Library

Present:

Deborah Weisel
Karen Bronson
Gina Healy
Bill Stark
Robin Gould

Shara Abraham
Kim Palumbo
Cheryl Artabane
Jennifer Schlactus
Maureen Braren

Felicia DePaola
Adele Saunders
Pam Sunshine
Robyn Weintraub

Mr. Stark, Superintendent

- Ran a MS Principal advertisement in NYTimes last Sunday and again next Sunday.
 - Target date for hiring new person: May 9. Ms. Bronson will stay on until August 31.
 - So far 44 applicants; he has done initial interviewing. Anticipates interviewing approx. 20 candidates and sending 4-6 to committee.
 - White Plains, New Rochelle and other local schools also looking for new MS Principal.
- *Race to Nowhere*: 630 attendees. 75 people came out following week for the forum.
 - Need to address issue of stress/anxiety for students, determine what is an acceptable level. Part of character education.
 - Spoke to Ms. Mediate about doing a survey of Westchester schools to determine how our neighbors deal with these issues (mandatory lunch, # of AP classes, etc...). Similar study done on Long Island.

Gina Healy, HS Principal

- Busy week!
 - High school musical was great.
 - Art exhibition with many award-winning pieces.
 - Science fair, robotics competition, Model UN, spring sports underway.
- Met with candidates for Assistant Principal—over 300 applicants.
- Also will begin looking for world language coordinator and new MS/HS health position.
- Students turned in course selection sheets. Master schedule will be put together soon.
- Junior driving night coming up in April.

- Mr. Stark: Reminder—Languages Other Than English (LOTE) presentation next Monday. Will discuss FLES.
- Ms. Healy: LOTE has done a great job gathering info. May recommendations coming out of the study.

Karen Bronson, MS Principal

- Thank you for all your kind wishes. I'm looking forward to learning how to relax.
- Met with Deb Handler about upcoming events: spelling bee, moving up ceremony, etc.
- DARE breakfast in Port Chester was fabulous.
- Had an exchange with some 8th grade Spanish students from PC. They had lunch with some of our 8th grade Spanish students (speaking only Spanish). Great program, looking to do it again.

Deborah Weisel, Elementary School Principal

- Town Hall meetings ongoing. Focus on how we talk to each other at RSS: greetings and sharing.
- Kids are going outside for recess, but field is still too muddy to use.
- Three plastic coyotes are outside to deter geese.
- At the end of the month, author James Dooley will walk students through how to write a book.
- Shared Decision Making Team creating a toolbox for kids and incorporating them into Town Hall meetings.
- Kids want to know how they can help Japan. Tracy Taylor has a contact and will provide more info.
- Upcoming parent conferences April 7 and 14.
- DI had a great showing. Two teams going to state competition in Binghamton.
- Snacks: Patti D. will work to limit snack accessibility via Nutrikids.

Parent Q: With all the education on nutrition in the classroom, why are kids able to buy muffins, ice cream, cookies, chips and churros every day?

A: That comes from Whitsons and is a financial benefit to them.

Monday, March 28 is Superintendent's Conference Day. Also a presentation by Steven Dana on how children learn vis-à-vis brain development. Great presentation.

Motion to accept February meeting minutes: Pam Sunshine. Second: Robin Gould.

Felicia/Jen: lots going on. We want to reinstate some committees.

- Civic Affairs committee—to liaison between school and greater community.
 - Would focus on issues with local and state government, and promote our interests. We attended a meeting of the Sound Shore Consortium.
 - Our needs/wants are very different from other larger districts in area. It's important that we maintain control of our interests. Volunteers needed.
 - Motion to reinstate committee: Jen Schlactus. Robyn Weintraub seconds.
- Health and Safety Committee would address concerns like lice, bullying, etc...
 - Motion to reinstate committee: Jen Schlactus. Felicia DePaola seconds.

New Business

- Constant Contact: The PTA cannot send out emails that are not “calendar events” for the school. Often there are events or info that would be of interest to parents that PTA cannot publicize on school email.
 - A separate CC account will allow emails to be sent on other topics (ie—a Scarsdale presentation on bullying that is open to the public).
 - Will cost \$252 for the year (includes nonprofit prepayment discount).
 - Email addresses will come from Colin Byrne, but parents can unsubscribe automatically.
 - Motion to create CC account: Jen Schlactus. Seconded: Maureen Braren.
- Goodwill Projects—should we establish a committee?
 - Kids Who Care focuses on elementary school. We should create network through district to arrange charitable giving in area.
 - Not sure how charity is set up in the HS. Will look into it.

Treasurer's Report: Adele Saunders

- School photos profit came in above budget.
- Paid for chess classes, etc...
- Received great thank you card from ESL teacher.

Ways and Means: Robin Gould

- After school activities began last week. Need chairs for Bingo Night.
- Comic book fair coming up.
- Mixed Bags fundraiser ongoing.

Programming: Pam Sunshine

- MS Spelling bee in April.
- Heard in Rye is March 30 at Blind Brook.
- Art Fair is being put together by the Arts Advisory Committee.

- Maureen will head up the nominating committee for next year.

DAF addendum emailed out. Need to make plan for DAF for next year. Need input on best program/system to assemble data.

Motion to adjourn: Pam Sunshine. Second: Jen Schlactus